



2022–23 New Mexico Small Game Voluntary Harvest Report

Small game harvest is managed by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (Department). A Game Hunting License is required to legally take small game. Submission of a harvest report is voluntary, and license holders are able to make submissions through the Department's online Harvest Reporting System. For license holders who submit a report, information is collected on if they hunted, what species of small game was harvested, the number harvested, and the county of harvest. Hunters may report hunting in more than one county. There were 35,264 license holders who voluntarily reported they did not hunt small game, 1,479 license holders who reported hunting without harvesting, and 2,419 who reported hunting and harvesting. The return rate of all game hunting license holders submitting a harvest report for small game was 25.5%.

Successful small game hunters submitted a total of 1,932 species harvest reports, with the potential that some hunters may have filed more than one report if they hunted multiple species. Of the license holders who filed a report, hunters were generally satisfied with their small game hunting experience in New Mexico. Species small game hunting satisfaction ratings ranged from 3.3 to 4.2 out of 5.

More small game harvest reports were filed in 2022–23 compared to 2021–22 (Table 1). Though voluntary harvest reporting makes it hard to draw conclusions about trends in hunter numbers and harvests, small game hunter numbers appear to be up slightly.

Small game harvest can be variable year to year. Small game populations are subject to extreme fluctuations due to annual weather conditions. Poor winter or spring moisture and extreme weather events can reduce the number of breeding adults or lead to poor reproductive success. During years of good weather conditions, populations can rebound very quickly. Late season monsoons during 2022 seem to have helped boost population numbers prior to hunting season.

This report summarizes the reported harvest data for all small game including: quail (scaled, Gambel's, northern bobwhite, and Montezuma), pheasants, dusky grouse, Eurasian collared-doves, and squirrels (Abert's, gray, red, and fox). Information provided from survey results assists the Department with development of recommendations for future small game harvest opportunities.

Table 1. Comparison of the annual number of harvest reports submitted and number of small game reported harvested.

Species	Reports 16-17	Harvest 16-17	Reports 17-18	Harvest 17-18	Reports 18-19	Harvest 18-19	Reports 19-20	Harvest 19-20	Reports 20-21	Harvest 20-21	Reports 21-22	Harvest 21-22	Reports 22-23	Harvest 22-23
Scaled Quail	1,508	27,793	1,431	24,911	988	13,943	1,013	14,161	1,087	13,271	388	3,383	559	4,879
Gambel's Quail	447	4,124	487	5,014	324	2,505	370	3,306	637	6,782	382	3,220	465	4,351
Northern Bobwhite	152	1,838	151	1,894	100	1,039	104	1,392	88	790	30	194	31	290
Montezuma Quail	31	147	28	117	22	99	34	164	26	144	12	77	33	121
Unknown Quail*	204	2,886	159	2,177	106	1,315	103	1,336	102	974	40	299	57	460
Pheasant	40	72	41	89	28	57	33	58	29	53	20	53	28	52
Dusky Grouse	346	1,091	273	805	235	652	249	724	373	1,100	266	734	262	771
Eurasian Collared-Dove	471	14,843	451	10,915	397	8,179	337	5,177	381	5,594	303	3,961	290	4,406
Gray Squirrel	21	90	26	101	11	26	14	35	28	107	8	15	20	67
Abert's Squirrel	140	761	148	723	81	361	103	476	144	534	89	358	87	325
Red Squirrel	34	192	37	153	20	136	41	208	71	533	46	197	42	481
Fox Squirrel	2	10	3	8	1	4	1	2	1	1	1	4	1	1
Unknown Squirrel*	83	308	84	275	64	189	97	347	100	372	79	226	64	225
TOTAL	3,479	54,155	3,319	47,182	2,377	28,505	2,499	27,386	3,067	30,255	1,644	12,721	1,939	16,429

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown.

Species Reports

Scaled Quail

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Bernalillo	2	7	3.5
Catron	1	4	4
Chaves	76	607	3.2
Cibola	1	18	4
Curry	14	206	3.4
De Baca	16	149	3.4
Dona Ana	50	329	3.4
Eddy	111	1,065	2.8
Grant	18	141	3.9
Guadalupe	6	29	3.8
Hidalgo	25	201	3.4
Lea	48	510	2.8
Lincoln	5	78	3.8
Luna	50	366	3.7
Otero	15	64	3.2
Quay	6	77	2.8
Roosevelt	21	174	3.3
San Juan	3	33	3.7
San Miguel	1	20	4
Sandoval	5	29	3.4
Sierra	31	260	3.7
Socorro	45	482	3.8
Torrance	1	2	3
Union	3	5	3.3
Valencia	5	23	2.8
TOTAL	559	4,879	3.3

Gambel's Quail

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Catron	2	37	3.5
Dona Ana	91	756	3.7
Grant	44	618	3.8
Hidalgo	59	588	3.6
Lincoln	4	11	3.8
Luna	66	517	3.3
Otero	16	136	3.7
San Juan	6	107	4.2
Sandoval	3	6	3.7
Sierra	53	503	3.4
Socorro	110	1,025	3.8
Valencia	11	47	3.8
TOTAL	465	4,351	3.6

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown quail.

Montezuma Quail

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Dona Ana	2	7	3.5
Grant	10	38	4.1
Hidalgo	6	25	4.2
Lincoln	1	4	5
Otero	1	1	4
Sierra	9	27	4.6
Socorro	4	19	4
TOTAL	33	121	4.2

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown quail.

Northern Bobwhite Quail

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Chaves	2	35	4.5
Curry	7	111	3.9
Eddy	3	10	2.3
Lea	2	17	3
Quay	1	10	3
Roosevelt	15	105	3.9
Union	1	2	4
TOTAL	31	290	3.7

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown quail.

Unknown Quail

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Bernalillo	1	3	5
Chaves	4	32	3.5
Cibola	1	2	5
Curry	6	33	4.2
De Baca	1	10	2
Eddy	30	273	3.5
Grant	1	1	4
Guadalupe	1	9	4
Hidalgo	1	5	4
Lea	5	43	4
Otero	1	4	4
Quay	1	12	2
Roosevelt	1	6	4
Socorro	2	23	5
Valencia	1	4	3
TOTAL	57	460	3.7

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown quail.

Ring-necked Pheasant

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Bernalillo	1	2	5
Catron	1	3	5
Chaves	2	2	2.5
Curry	1	2	3
Eddy	9	10	2.9
San Juan	2	4	3
Socorro	8	17	3.6
Union	1	2	4
Valencia	3	10	4.7
TOTAL	28	52	3.5

Dusky Grouse

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Colfax	18	74	4.1
Los Alamos	3	10	2.7
Mora	9	15	4
Rio Arriba	87	235	3.9
San Miguel	11	33	3.5
Sandoval	13	26	3.9
Santa Fe	13	27	4
Taos	108	351	4
TOTAL	262	771	3.9

*Reports outside of species range were considered an error and removed from analysis.

Eurasian Collared Dove

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Bernalillo	3	22	4
Catron	2	5	3
Chaves	35	533	4
Curry	9	442	3.6
De Baca	3	43	4
Dona Ana	50	889	4
Eddy	49	723	4
Grant	9	109	3.9
Guadalupe	2	24	4.5
Hidalgo	3	34	3.3
Lea	27	416	4.1
Lincoln	2	9	4
Luna	2	11	3.5
Mora	1	2	3
Otero	5	34	4.4
Quay	3	40	3
Rio Arriba	2	13	3.5
Roosevelt	6	126	4.2
San Juan	6	51	2.8
San Miguel	2	7	2.5
Sandoval	4	45	3.5
Santa Fe	5	37	4
Sierra	4	25	4
Socorro	29	369	3.8
Union	2	35	2.5
Valencia	25	362	3.7
TOTAL	290	4,406	3.9

Abert's Squirrel

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Bernalillo	3	29	4.3
Catron	22	96	4.3
Cibola	6	15	4
Colfax	1	2	5
Grant	15	42	4.1
McKinley	1	1	3
Rio Arriba	13	38	4.1
San Miguel	2	6	4
Sandoval	9	45	3.9
Santa Fe	1	2	1
Sierra	5	15	2.4
Socorro	5	20	2.8
Taos	1	2	3
Torrance	3	12	4
TOTAL	87	325	3.9

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown squirrel.

Red Squirrel

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Colfax	1	4	5
Lincoln	6	26	3.2
Otero	10	76	4.3
Rio Arriba	5	12	3.4
San Miguel	5	24	4.4
Sandoval	11	34	3.6
Santa Fe	1	4	3
Taos	3	7	4.7
TOTAL	42	187	3.9

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown squirrel.

Gray Squirrel

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Catron	12	40	3.8
Grant	4	11	4.5
Sierra	1	4	3
Socorro	3	12	3.3
TOTAL	20	67	3.8

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown squirrel.

Fox Squirrel

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Otero	1	1	5
TOTAL	1	1	5

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown squirrel.

Unknown Squirrel

County	Hunter Reports	Harvests	Hunter Rating
Bernalillo	3	15	4.7
Chaves	1	7	5
Cibola	8	32	4.1
Dona Ana	1	15	5
Grant	1	1	4
Lincoln	4	15	3.8
Los Alamos	1	3	4
McKinley	3	17	4
Mora	2	20	4
Otero	7	26	4
Rio Arriba	12	26	3.1
San Juan	1	1	4
San Miguel	2	9	5
Sandoval	8	21	4.2
Santa Fe	4	8	3.5
Taos	4	5	3.8
Torrance	1	2	5
Valencia	1	2	5
TOTAL	64	225	3.9

*Reports outside of species range were considered a misclassification and were changed to unknown squirrel.