



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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RHODE ISLANDERS ENCOURAGED TO REPORT SIGHTINGS OF WILD TURKEY BROODS

PROVIDENCE, RI – The Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM) is again asking the public to report sightings of wild turkeys, as part of its annual [Wild Turkey Brood Survey](#). Biologists from DEM's [Division of Fish and Wildlife \(DFW\)](#) are asking Rhode Islanders to submit observations of females (hens) with or without poults (chicks) and males (gobblers, toms, jakes) to help with research efforts. DFW uses this information to monitor the turkey population in Rhode Island.



Photo Credit: Dean Birch

Reports gathered from the community will provide valuable data on the health, trends, and distribution of RI's turkey population. The number of poults observed provides insight into the number of young turkeys that will be recruited into the fall turkey population while the number of males observed provides an estimate of the male to female ratio. To maintain consistency with protocols developed by the [National Wild Turkey Federation](#), the survey window runs from July 1 to Aug. 31. Typically, this survey provides DFW with hundreds of brood reports and could not be completed without the help of community scientists.

To participate in this year's survey, the public can submit their reports via [Survey 123](#), an online survey platform. This tool allows the public to download the Survey123 app on their smartphones and record observations on the go, or it can be filled out on a computer. If members of the public do not have access to a computer or smartphone, observations can be recorded on a datasheet provided by DFW. We ask that participants using datasheets return them to DFW by Sept. 15.

To report observations via Survey 123, please use the following link on your smartphone (you will need to download the Survey123 app prior to opening the link) or computer: <https://arcg.is/0r48a50>. This survey

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will become available on July 1. For more information, an observation guide, and the datasheet please refer to the [Wild Turkey Brood Survey Packet](#).

DEM works to protect and enhance wildlife habitat in Rhode Island forests and management areas to ensure healthier, more diverse, and abundant wildlife populations. [Wild turkeys](#) were extirpated in Rhode Island during the early 1800s due to land-use changes and overharvesting. In 1980, DEM and the [National Wild Turkey Federation](#) began a wildlife restoration program by translocating 29 turkeys from Vermont to Exeter, RI and continued this effort in the 1990s. DEM's turkey restoration program resulted in increased opportunities for the public to see and hunt wild turkeys. The restoration project released wild trapped birds that established new turkey flocks in Exeter, Burrillville, Little Compton, West Greenwich, Foster, Scituate, and Tiverton. Today, wild turkeys are found in practically all areas of the state and provide recreational and wildlife viewing opportunities. Restoration of the wild turkey was funded by state hunting license fees and the [Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration program](#).

For more turkey facts, visit [DEM's website](#). Follow DEM on Twitter (@RhodeIslandDEM), [Facebook](#), or Instagram (@rhodeisland.dem and @ri.fishandwildlife) for timely updates. Follow [DFW on Facebook](#) and Instagram (@ri.fishandwildlife) to stay up to date on news, events and volunteer opportunities. You can also subscribe to DFW's monthly newsletter [here](#).

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