

Pheasant Hunting Season

Since the late 19th century hunters have been the driving force behind the conservation of wildlife, with hunting being an important feature of wildlife management. Hunting provides a way to control animal populations and prevent excessive numbers of one species endangering habitat and the lives of other species. Pheasant hunting season, as well as hunting seasons of other wild life, was instituted to manage the pheasant population and wild life, as it was realized that all hunted animals needed a time when they were not being hunted to ensure that the species would survive. Of course, the time of year varied from animal to animal based on their requirements, and this necessary time became the basis of the various hunting seasons. Pheasant hunting season generally runs from the 1st of October until the 1st of February.

During pheasant hunting season only roosters can be hunted. One rooster will mate with many hens, and scientific estimates are that 80% to 90% of the rooster population can be harvested during a fall pheasant hunting season without adversely affecting the next spring's hatch. When pheasant populations fall because of severe weather conditions or loss of habitat, many different means of increasing their numbers have been suggested. However, suggestions to shorten the pheasant hunting season or limit the number of birds will not help to increase pheasant populations any more effectively than the roosters-only regulation.

Some pheasant hunting states have any early pheasant hunting season as well as a later one. During the later season, hunters encounter birds that are much more wily and jumpier than the ones found during the earlier period, and different methods are needed to hunt them. Since pheasants depend a great deal on their sense of hearing, it is always necessary to be as quiet as possible, but when hunting the more alert and wary birds in the later season, it becomes even more important. Also, the birds seek heavier cover in the later winter season, so hunters can target areas with very dense cover. Wary birds will also find out-of-the-way cover which many hunters will not take the time to check, such as small clumps of trees or brush in a remote area of a section.

During the early pheasant hunting season, birds are plentiful but it is a good idea to wait until after the opening day excitement and then go over the areas already hunted. Pheasants will move from field to field during the day. Be sure to check thick or out-of-the-way cover, that which some hunters won't take the time to search. Short grass areas adjoining crop fields can yield results early in the season, but quickly become hens-only spots after they are hunted out. Whether early season or late, pheasant hunting season has a significant impact on the economies of the various states, from money spent by out-of-state hunters on lodging, food, guides and other hunting-related products and services.