

Fort Sill Turkey Time By Glen Wampler

Its time for turkey season! But the problem is there just aren't many turkeys around. Because of that there will only be a Youth Spring Turkey hunt and the Regular Spring Season is cancelled. As usual there are several possible reasons for this and as usual it is possibly caused by a combination of some of these. Most biologists suggest a change in weather patterns, predation, and habitat change as possible reasons. These all have an effect, but the population has been going down for several years and most of these have remained fairly constant on Fort Sill during that time.

Another one that has been noticed on Fort Sill is an occurrence of Avian Pox in some of the hens brought in during several of the past fall seasons. Avian Pox seems to affect hens more and causes death to most birds that contract it. Put it with the possible affects from small changes in the other areas and we might have the answer.

Finding the way to fix it all is the problem. Weather is a little above our ability. Predator control is constant with helicopter, trapping and hunting efforts. Habitat management is a continual effort with prescribe burns, cedar control, and mechanical efforts. That leaves the Avian Pox which pretty well must run its course.

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has seen this reduction in numbers across most of the state and has made changes in their regulations also. Season doesn't start till 16 April and spring turkey harvest limit is restricted to one tom statewide. If you're going to hunt somewhere off Fort Sill, make sure you check all their changes.