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# Hunters Check 3,698 Turkeys During Fall Firearms Season

NOVEMBER 03RD 2016 BY DEE LOFLIN

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The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) announced that hunters checked 3,698 turkeys during Missouri's fall firearms turkey season, Oct. 1-31. Last year's fall firearms turkey harvest total was 6,158. Top harvest counties for the 2016 fall firearms turkey season were Greene with 128, Franklin with 96, and Wayne with 92.

MDC's turkey biologist says this year's low fall firearms turkey harvest total can be attributed to several factors, including a poor turkey hatch, above-average acorn production, and a decline in hunter participation.

"This year's turkey hatch was very poor, so there were far fewer young birds for hunters to pursue this fall," said MDC Turkey Biologist Jason Isabelle. "We had above-average acorn production in much of the state this year as well, which typically results in fewer turkeys being harvested."

In addition to the effects of a poor turkey hatch and above-average acorn production, interest in the fall firearms turkey season has been declining in Missouri as it has in a number of states.

Isabelle noted, "This year's fall firearms turkey permit sales total of 11,696 permits was the lowest on record since the season started in 1978."

Fall archery turkey hunting continues through Nov. 11 and then resumes again from Nov. 23 through Jan. 15, 2017.

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