

Pheasant News and Notes

October 2018



Trivia Question

In a sporting context, what are “church windows” and “almond hearts”?

Farm Bill and USDA News

It now appears certain that the conference committee considering the new Farm Bill will not come to agreement before the current bill expires on September 30th. It is unclear if or when an extension of the current bill might be considered. In anticipation of the expiration, [USDA-FSA plans to stop processing and accepting new CRP offers after September 28th](#), and other non-mandatory programs could experience disruptions as well if no extension is passed (although Senate Agriculture Committee Chairman Roberts is reportedly working with USDA on stopgap measures to minimize such problems). The leadership of the House and Senate ag committees are still expressing a desire to come to agreement in the lame duck session after the elections, but numerous potential election result scenarios could lead to a change of heart, particularly if one or both chambers flip to Democratic control. If nothing happens in the lame duck, they would very probably pass an extension of the current bill (if they hadn't already) and start over in 2019.

Notes from Around the Pheasant Range

This was “meeting month” for both the National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan Management Board and the National Wild Pheasant Technical Committee. The Management Board met in association with the AFWA conference in Tampa, Florida. They discussed the Farm Bill, funding for the Coordinator position, the decline of small game hunter participation and some potential reforms to the Pittman-Robertson Act to address the problem, and some ongoing project updates. Last but not least, Russ Mason of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources was approved unanimously as the new Chair, taking over from Tony Leif of South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks. We owe a big “thank you” to Tony for his able leadership since the Management Board’s inception, and to Russ for stepping up to take the helm.

The Technical Committee met in Etters, Pennsylvania, just south of Harrisburg. They discussed development of a multi-joint venture pheasant habitat model and decision support tool, progress on a national early successional CRP practice, pros and cons of the National Bobwhite Conservation Initiative’s proposed “Natives First” policy for USDA programs, small game hunter trends and potential responses, the status of Coordinator funding, timing of a national plan update, progress made by the translocation working group on a draft recommendations document, Kansas eyeworm research, Iowa research on estimating detection probabilities associated with roadside brood counts, and the possibility of a multi-state effort on that topic. After a fantastic dinner of local Pennsylvania delicacies at our host’s family farm, our second-day field trip was to the Central Susquehanna Wild Pheasant Restoration Area (see photo), as well as to hear from several key Pheasants Forever partners on the restoration area’s management and youth hunting program (and to eat everything they grilled for us that evening – thanks, guys). The meeting ended with state reports and confirmation of the 2019 meeting in North Dakota. Possibilities for the 2020 meeting were either Texas or the Pacific Northwest. Thanks again to Tom Keller of the Pennsylvania Game Commission for organizing a great meeting.



Pheasants in the Media

As you might expect, there were lots of media stories this month detailing August pheasant survey results and state hunting forecasts. Instead of posting links to them all here, Pheasants Forever did a good job of summarizing all the forecasts across the country:

[Pheasants Forever's hunting forecast](#)

Other pheasant-related items included:

[Pheasant shooting to be banned on public land in Wales](#)

[MacFarlane Pheasants fined for killing hawks](#)

[Toms and Jones hunt different birdies in South Dakota](#)

[Prison and pheasants: A lesson from jailbirds](#)

[Group says lowans reap benefits from Farm Bill conservation programs](#)

[Affairs, pheasant feathers and White House stays: 6 big money-in-politics scandals](#)

[Dodge City Bounty Bird, Rooster Roundup returning](#)

[Turning red acres green with Pheasants Forever](#)

[How on-farm conservation can generate financial value](#)

[Roundup linked to bee deaths](#)

[A drifting weedkiller puts prized trees at risk](#)

Recent Literature

For the first time in a year, I couldn't find any new pheasant literature of general management interest making an appearance this past month. If I missed something you know of, please let me know.

Trivia Answer

Names given by fly-tiers to particular pheasant feathers.



“Church windows”



“Almond hearts”

And some samples of the resulting flies...



According to Fly Fishing Hall of Famer Jack Gartside, “There's probably not a bird that flies that has more uses for the fly tyer than the ringneck (sic) pheasant. One cock pheasant of just average size will provide the resourceful fly tyer with enough material to tie thousands of flies.” Wow, just imagine how many a big one will produce.

Enjoy the October pheasant openers!

This update is brought to you by the National Wild Pheasant Conservation Plan and Partnerships. Our mission is to foster science-based, socially-supported policies and programs that enhance wild pheasant populations, provide recreational opportunities to pheasant hunters, and support the economics and social values of communities. You can find us on the web at <http://nationalpheasantplan.org>.