

## OUTDOORSUPDATE

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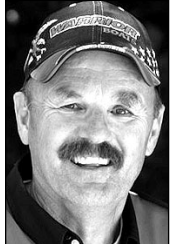
## Doves: A Warmup For Hunting Season

BY GARY HOWEY  
Hartington, Neb.

On September 1st, hunters in many of the upper midwestern states, with the exception for Iowa headed out to their favorite pond, harvested wheat-oat fields and shelterbelts to take a shot at dove hunting.

When I say, "take a shot", I mean numerous shots as dove hunting is challenging.

Doves, the aerial acrobats of the bird kingdom seldom fly in a straight line, darting from side to side and changing altitude continually as they zig zag their way across the sky.



Gary Howey

When it comes to taking down a dove, it doesn't take much of a load to down a dove, as long as you can catch up with and get a bead on the little buggers.

Don't feel bad if you miss quite a lot of them, since studies indicate that the average dove hunter will shoot as many as 10 shells for each bird he drops.

Ammunition manufacturers must be licking their chops as dove season approaches because they know that ammunition sales are going to really take off.

You can use any gauge shotgun for dove hunting. The hunters that hunt with me use every gauge imaginable, from 12 to 20 and 28 as well as the 410 shotguns.

We all agree when it comes to what ammunition we use, as the Winchester AA 8 & 9 loads really work well and the

cases can be reloaded several times. Over the years, our plan on opening day is to set up on several farm dams or stock ponds. By setting up on different ponds located in one section, we're assured that at least some of our group will be on the birds.

This also keeps the birds moving from one pond to another, giving us more opportunities to bag bids.

The best hunting for us comes hunting occurs during the late afternoon until sun down, when doves make their way to these areas to water.

Look for ponds with open ground around the edge of the water and especially those with dead or dying trees nearby as they give doves a place to set and rest or observe the pond before flying down.

Doves aren't in a hurry to get anyplace until you take a shot at them as they'll set in the trees or on a hill above a pond for long periods before coming in.

Open ground around a pond is important, as this is where the birds land and then saunter down to the water.

Ponds with heavy vegetation along the edge just don't attract doves because the heavy cover makes it impossible for the birds to get to the water to drink.

When hunting ponds, a good hunting dog is a must, as much of your shooting will be over the water and a dog can retrieve the doves that fall into the water.

Most hunters enjoy hunting doves because of the challenge, it's also an excellent opportunity to get both you and your dog tuned in and out for some early season exercise and practice.

Doves feed heavily on weed seed, preferring hemp-marijuana, ragweed, oats and wheat. If the pond you're hunting

has one of these patches nearby, chances are you'll get plenty of dove activity in the area.

On large ponds, it's a good idea to have several hunters stationed around the water. Doves are such erratic flyers that you never know which direction they'll come in from and with hunters stationed around the pond or on several different ponds in the area, you'll have more shooting opportunities as well as keeping the birds in the air and on the move.

Other areas where hunters can locate good numbers of doves include areas adjacent to shelterbelts or heavily wooded areas where the birds roost.

During the early season, it doesn't take much to draw doves into a pond, but as the season progresses, doves become more wary and can be tough to attract. In the late season, dove decoys will help to bring them in.

Like the waterfowl hunters those after doves are finding that some sort of movement such as a wind driven or a motorized decoy near the area you're hunting will help to bring these educated migrating birds into range.

The movement of the decoys helps to draw attention to the area you want the doves to move through.

Unlike other types of hunting, camouflage isn't important when you're dove hunting. You can wear a natural or neutral color such as brown or light green to blend in with the area you're hunting. On the small ponds we hunt, it's easy to find a wash out, downed tree or a clump of weeds that you can duck in or hide behind.

Some states like Nebraska, require a HIP number while hunting migratory birds, so be sure to check the state game laws of the state you're hunting in before

## Two Different Birds

There are two types of doves that can be found in the upper Midwest: the morning dove and the Eurasian collared dove.

Morning doves, the smaller of the two species are the variety you'll see every day in town as well as in the country.

The Eurasian collared dove is two to three times larger than the morning dove. It's about half the size of a pigeon with a distinctive black band on its neck.

Eurasian collared doves have a very loud call, which, can be heard throughout the year unlike the morning doves call that is normally heard during the spring breeding season.

Unlike the Morning dove that can migrate south, many of the Eurasian collared doves don't migrate, choosing to stay in the area throughout the winter.

Another difference between the two doves is the area they inhabit as the larger doves prefer city living and are very seldom found in the country.

heading out into the field.

If you're looking for a way to sharpen your wing shooting skills and enjoy some fine eating, give dove hunting a try! It's a great way to get some early season shooting and dog training in.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is the producer/host of the award winning *Outdoorsmen Adventures* television series. For more information on the outdoors, check out [www.outdoorsmenadventures.com](http://www.outdoorsmenadventures.com).

## Training For A New Season: Hunting Dog Experts Offer Advice

BY BRAD DOKKEN

(c) 2010, Grand Forks Herald  
(Grand Forks, N.D.)

GRAFTON, N.D. — Kenny Miskavige gets his three dogs ready for hunting season the way a trainer might prepare an elite athlete for competition.

It's a year-round process, he says, a work in progress. And with fall hunting seasons just around the corner, Miskavige is beginning to kick the training regimen up a notch.

"Now you want to start running them in a little more heat, but you have to be careful," Miskavige said. "You've got to make sure you have plenty of water or access to water."

Owner of Dakota Rose Kennel in Grafton, Miskavige specializes in German wirehair pointers. But regardless of the breed, Miskavige said, dog owners need to focus on obedience and conditioning as they prepare their hunting companions for the field.

It won't be long now. Upland game seasons begin next month, and pheasant hunters will take the field in early October.

"A dog can make or break a hunting trip," Miskavige said. "You get a poorly disciplined dog that starts chasing birds up way in front of the hunters, and it can create some hard feelings."

With young dogs, Miskavige said it's especially important to get them comfortable with birds before hunting with them. One Thursday night, he was putting his year-old wirehair, Minnie, through the paces in his shed, teaching her to hold a point on a training table with a liver chukar partridge.

"Whoa... Whoa," Miskavige said in a reassuring voice, prompting Minnie to hold in place even with the bird just inches from her nose. At one point, he even set the chukar on the dog's back, and still, Minnie didn't move.

Miskavige purchases his birds from a licensed seller. The chukar he trained with Thursday night wasn't harmed.

"Especially with young dogs, now is the time to get them on birds," Miskavige said. "If you want a bird dog, it takes birds — that's the bottom line. You get out of a dog what you're going to put into it, and it will show in the field."

Electronic "shock" collars can help break hunting dogs of certain bad habits such as straying too far afield, but Miskavige said dog owners should avoid becoming too reliant on using them.

"So many people think they can get a dog and grab an e-collar, and it doesn't work that way," he said. "More dogs are probably ruined by an electric collar than problems corrected

BRAD DOKKEN/GRAND FORKS HERALD/MCT  
Kenny Miskavige and his wirehair puppy, Minnie, take a break during a hunting training session on Aug. 19 in Grafton, N.D.

by them. And once you screw up a dog, it's pretty tough to get them to rebound back."

Jim Enlow, owner of North Country Labs in Manvel, N.D., said poor nutrition and conditioning are two of the biggest problems he encounters in the field.

Enlow said hunters should avoid feeding dogs products with ingredients that are high in "byproducts," which could be just about anything. Instead, he said, he prefers to feed his dogs food with pork, pork meal, chicken meal, beef meal or even fish meal as key ingredients.

Miskavige said some hunters switch their dogs to higher-protein, higher-fat foods before hunting season but he sticks with the same food year-round. The key, he said, is to feed smaller portions during the off-season. Measure out the portions based on the dog's weight and avoid overfeeding.

"You don't want to use hunting season as a time to take off the weight," Miskavige said. "Some people think that the dog is going to lose a lot of weight, but the dog should be in good condition prior to hunting season — their tendons, their legs, all of their muscles."

"Dogs are athletes — no different than a basketball or football player — and the

chances of having a leg injury or pulled muscles are higher if the dogs aren't in condition."

Here in the flatlands of the Red River Valley, Enlow said it can be difficult to train dogs for working in more rugged terrain such as southwestern North Dakota pheasant country. So, as hunting season approaches, he'll ride a 10-speed bike and let the dogs run alongside.

The exercise is a win for the hunter, too, he said. "I don't like to see guys let the dogs run alongside the pickup," he said. "Every year, you hear of three or four getting killed that way, and it just breaks your heart."

Dr. Rick Odegard of Kindness Animal Hospital in Grand Forks said beyond proper conditioning, hunters also should make sure their dogs are up-to-date on vaccinations. Rabies is on the upswing in both Minnesota and North Dakota, he said, and Lyme disease has become prevalent in Minnesota.

Dogs should be vaccinated for rabies every two or three years, he said, and receive booster shots for Lyme disease annually. Odegard also recommends dogs be protected with a product called Frontline Plus, which is administered to the fur and kills ticks, fleas and other

parasites.

Lyme disease is transmitted by deer ticks, which have become more abundant in northern Minnesota in recent years and also have shown up in smaller numbers in North Dakota. Symptoms vary, Odegard said, but dogs often experience stiffness and soreness.

"We've been checking a lot more of the lame dogs for it if they've got multiple leg or joint lameness," Odegard said. "It's surprising how often we find it. We've had three or four dogs that we feel were pretty much only North Dakota dogs that were probably exposed in North Dakota."

In the field, hunters should carry a first aid kit for tending minor wounds.

"Also be a little careful the first few days to make sure the dog doesn't overdo it," Odegard said. "Especially watch the temperatures. If it's warm, make sure there's plenty of water available and take short walks."

Enlow and Miskavige said they also add electrolyte supplements to help hydrate their dogs.

In the fall of 2003, excessive heat resulted in the deaths of numerous hunting dogs during South Dakota's pheasant opener. Signs of overheating, Odegard said, include excessive panting and the dog's tongue hanging to the ground; in severe cases, dogs can go into seizures and die quickly.

To avoid the worst, Odegard said hunters should carry a thermometer in the field. A dog's normal temperature is 101.5, he said, and if overheating is suspected, the animal should be cooled with lukewarm water until its temperature drops to about 103. Then, the dog should be dried off.

"The big things are don't work them too hard and watch the temperatures, and then the vaccines," Odegard said.

It might seem like common sense, but after 40 years in the dog business, Enlow, the Manvel expert, said too many hunters wait until the last minute to prepare their hunting companions for the field.

Still, he said, starting the regimen now is better than not at all. And whether the dog is in shape or out of condition, if they show signs of quitting, it's time to quit.

"A dog will kill himself to please you, and that's the thing," Enlow said. "Once they start lagging behind and slowing down, it's time to take a break."

As Miskavige, the Grafton trainer, said, a good dog is an investment that needs to be protected.

"There's no quick fix to having a good quality dog, no shortcuts," he said. "It takes time — it really does."

## Bag Man: Bowhunter Has Taken 29 North American Big-Game Species

BY PAUL A. SMITH

(c) 2010, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

The location was new, the animal was one he'd never hunted before.

But Gary Martin of Yorkville, Wis., had his bow in his hand and 25 years of experience under his belt.

"I think it's time for a stalk," said Martin, responding to rancher Nolan Twissleman's question of what to do.

It was July 29, the second day of Martin's hunt for tule elk on Twissleman's ranch near San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Though the elk were bugling, they had yet to come to Martin's calls. So with the tawny California hills all around, Martin struck out on foot toward a fine bull he'd spotted in the distance.

Hours later, with sweat dripping from his brow in the 90-degree heat and his heart beating "900 miles an hour" from the excitement of approaching his quarry, Martin eased a few last feet into position

and drew his bow.

The shot found its mark, and within minutes he was fixing his tag to a 6-by-6 bull.

With the kill, Martin had accomplished his quest to take all 29 North American big-game animals with bow and arrow. Although there is no official list keeper at this time, Martin is considered the eighth bow hunter to accomplish the feat, known as the "Super Slam."

"The things that have driven me most are the experiences I've gained, the friends I've made and the conservation good that hunting does for wildlife," said Martin, 56.

He celebrated the last on the list by sharing a fresh tule elk tenderloin dinner with Twissleman.

"It's been a long stretch now," Martin said. "But I can recall the camaraderie of every hunt."

Martin comes from a line of archers and bowhunters. His grandfather Frank Martin owned an archery shop in Racine, Wis., taught archery at area schools and was a hunting companion of Roy Case, the first hunter to take a deer

in a modern Wisconsin bowhunting season.

His father, Conrad, is an avid hunter who has encouraged Gary all along.

Though Martin took his first deer with a bow at age 19, he didn't begin to think seriously of pursuing the "Super Slam" until he was in his 30s.

Eventually Martin, who has worked as a technologist for the last 31 years at S.C. Johnson in Sturtevant, Wis., began to devote

all of his vacation to hunting from Mexico to Canada and all spots in between.

He had actually hit his mark two years ago when Pope and Young, the official record keeping organization for bowhunting, added the tule elk to its list of North American big game animals.

The list includes deer, bear, caribou, even musk ox.

Tule elk were once threatened but have since recovered, thanks in part to relocation programs funded

by hunters.

They are big-bodied animals, similar to the more common Rocky Mountain elk, said Martin, but with slightly less antler growth.

Martin thinks the tule elk he shot will score about 250 inches, well in excess of the Pope and Young minimum for the species.

What's next?

"My dad is 80 this year," said Martin. "I'm really looking forward to hunting with him in Wisconsin this fall."

## OUTDOOR REPORT

Pheasant Brood  
Route Survey Shows  
Healthy Numbers

PIERRE — This autumn, hunters in South Dakota will enjoy pheasant numbers that continue to be some of the best in the state's history. The 2010 brood survey count shows a small increase from the 2009 survey.

The Game, Fish and Parks Department completed its annual pheasant brood survey in mid-August, and tallied a statewide pheasants-per-mile count that is up about 3 percent from last year. "We had a very good year in 2009, and this year as we go into fall tells us that hunters can look forward to some great opportunities in the coming pheasant season," said Game Fish and Parks Secretary Jeff Vonk.

The official pheasant population estimate is based on data reported by hunters during the pheasant season, and does not come until after the season is over.

In 2009, South Dakota's official pheasant population estimate was 8.4 million, and hunters averaged 9.9 roosters each for a total season harvest of more than 1.6 million.

Every year from late July through mid-August, GFP personnel survey 110 established routes scattered across the state to estimate pheasant production and calculate a pheasants-per-mile index. The survey is not a population estimate, but rather compares the number of pheasants seen on the routes and establishes trend information.

Survey routes are grouped into 13 areas, based on a local city and the index value of each city area is then compared to index values of the previous year and the 10-year average.

The 2010 statewide pheasants-per-mile average is 6.45, compared to the 2009 average of 6.26 and the 10-year average of 5.71.

"Our goal has been to increase quality hunting areas that are open to the public. South Dakota has worked intensely with private landowners and other conservation partners to promote habitat programs," Vonk said.

South Dakota's regular pheasant season opens on Saturday, Oct. 16 and runs through Jan. 2.

For more information on the pheasant season, including the 2010 Pheasant Brood Survey Report with complete route comparisons for the different local areas, visit the GFP website.

Small Game  
Workshop Set For  
Sept. 12

LINCOLN, Neb. — The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission will conduct a small game hunter's workshop and rifle sight-in at the Lincoln Izaak Walton League on Sept. 12.

Topics of discussion at the noon workshop include small game hunting opportunities, techniques, equipment, calling, and ways to succeed in the field and beyond. Following the workshop, participants may sight-in their rifle at the range.

Space is limited. Register by calling (402) 471-5482 or at [HuntSafeNebraska.com](http://HuntSafeNebraska.com).

The Lincoln Izaak Walton League is located a half-mile south of Nebraska Highway 2 on South 134th Street.

Spirit Mound  
Historic Prairie  
Hosting Experience  
Monarch Migration  
Sept. 9

PIERRE — Spirit Mound Historic Prairie is hosting a Monarch Migration walk in the park Sept. 9 at 6:30 p.m. CDT.

In early fall, Monarch butterflies journey to Mexico. Since migration routes and distances vary, the University of Kansas has developed a research project to help monitor those flights.

"Everyone is welcome to help with the project or to just learn about the travels of monarchs," said Jody Moats, park naturalist in the state Department of Game, Fish and Parks. "Participants will walk the trail to the summit of Spirit Mound, while catching and tagging Monarch butterflies."

If you have questions or would like to pre-register, call 605-232-0873. Spirit Mound is located 5 miles north of Vermillion on Hwy 19.

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