

Spring Call Counts

Texas Quail Index

Summary: Participants will record number of individual roosters heard calling during early morning as a means to assess (a) relative abundance, and (b) spatial distribution of bobwhites.

Schedule: Repeat counts at least 3 times from May 1 - June 1.

Objective: To monitor and record the “*bob-white*”, i.e., mating call of bobwhites (“whock” call in blue quail) as a means of recording the presence of bobwhites (blues) on the landscape.

Supplies: Watch with second hand; clipboard, data sheets (11 copies).

Methods:

1. Counts should be conducted during the month of May. Counts should begin at official sunrise and proceed until all stations are counted (about 1.5 hours).
2. Counts should be conducted a minimum of 3 times during the month. Alternate starting/ending points between successive counts (i.e., if you started at mile marker “0” for count 1, start at marker “10” for count 2).
3. When you arrive at selected point, turn off vehicle engine and walk at least 25 yards away to minimize background noises. Note your starting time and time continuously for a total of 5 minutes.
4. Count, and note the approximate location of all individual calling males on the Call Count Plot diagram (attached) heard within the 5-minute span. Use a *separate* data sheet for each station.
5. Count and record all whistles heard during the 5-minute span.
6. When finished with this station, proceed directly to the next consecutive station and repeat until all stations have been monitored.
7. Weather variables can affect calling rates, and also the observer’s ability to hear whistles. Counts should **not** be conducted if (a) it is raining; (b) winds exceed 10 mph.
8. Complete the attached Call Count data sheet (attached) .
9. Complete Spring Call Count Summary sheet; make 1 copy for your records, and fax to D. Rollins upon completion.