

Fall Covey Call Counts

Texas Quail Index

Note: This call recorded for bobwhites only; not applicable for blue quail.

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

Schedule: Repeat counts at least 4 times from October 1 - November 15.

Objective: To monitor and record the “*koil-ee*”, i.e., covey, call of a bobwhite covey as a means of recording the presence of bobwhites on the landscape.

Methods: The covey call is only made for about 20 to 30 seconds per covey. I consider it the “wake up” call for a covey. Your entire morning’s count effort will last no more than a minute or two, so make sure you’re at your station before the quail call, else you’ve missed your opportunity for the day. Generally this call will commence about 20-30 minutes before official sunrise, but the exact timing may vary with cloud cover and other weather variables. I often characterize the light conditions as “just a bit too dark to shoot a rifle with iron sights; maybe you can relate). A particular covey will call, then an adjacent covey will commence, and the call will be contagious to other coveys within earshot.

The counter should be in position at least 30 minutes before official sunrise, but adjust the time to your specific location. You will only be able to monitor one station per morning. If possible, take one or more helpers with you and assign them randomly at one of the mile markers along the standardized 10-mile route. Allow yourself sufficient travel time to be in position in time to count.

Record how many **different** coveys you hear calling; don’t try to count the individual calls within a covey, just the number of separate coveys heard. Repeat the counts on four separate mornings from Oct. 1 to November 15. Also make note of the heading and approximate distance of the covey from your assigned station (e.g., Northeast of Station 4 about 300 yards). A data sheet for recording the data is attached.