

# 2021 Spring Turkey Hunting Regulations

## Season Dates

Youth Archery	March 25 - May 31, 2021
Archery	March 25 - May 31, 2021
Youth Shotgun	April 10 - May 31, 2021
Shotgun	April 17 - May 31, 2021

**Hunting Area** – Seasons are valid statewide, except on federal and state sanctuaries or refuges, unless otherwise authorized.

## Legal Hunting Methods –

- Shotgun Season – Hunters must use a shotgun with shells that contain shot size 2 or smaller. (See inset box on right)
- Archery Season – Hunters must use archery equipment (long bow, recurve bow, compound bow, crossbow or hand-thrown spear) with arrows or spears that have a sharpened hunting head with a blade of at least 7/16-inch radius, or a blunt (bludgeon) head with a diameter of at least 9/16-inch.

**Spring Turkey Permit** – A spring turkey permit allows the take of turkeys with archery equipment during the archery season and with a shotgun during the shotgun season. A person may have up to three spring turkey permits. No qualifying person may have more than one landowner permit in the spring. Permits must be signed by the permit holder and may not be transferred, loaned, copied or duplicated.

**Bag Limit** – One male or bearded female turkey per permit.

**Shooting Hours** – Thirty minutes before sunrise to sunset. Before sunrise, it is unlawful to take or attempt to take any turkey perched in a tree.

**Habitat Stamp** – Any resident age 16 or older and all nonresidents who hunt turkey in Nebraska must have a valid Nebraska Habitat Stamp, except that landowner permit holders do not need a habitat stamp. Only one stamp is needed for all hunting of any species in a calendar year. Residents who hold a veteran or senior permit do not need to purchase a habitat stamp to hunt turkeys. They must carry their veteran permit or a senior permit while hunting.

**Hunter Orange** – Not required for the spring season.

**Minimum Age to Hunt Turkey** – There is no minimum age to hunt turkeys in Nebraska.

### NEW IN 2021

#### CHANGE TO SHOT-SIZE REGULATION

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission in January 2021 adopted a regulation that allows shot sizes 2 and smaller to be legal for harvesting a turkey. It is awaiting final approval. Check [OutdoorNebraska.org](http://OutdoorNebraska.org) for updates.

**Hunter Education** – Hunters age 12 through 29 must have completed firearm hunter education when hunting with a firearm or air gun. Bow hunter education is not required for bow and arrow hunting of turkeys.

#### Apprentice Hunter Education

**Exemption Certificate** – An Apprentice Hunter Education Certificate provides a novice between the ages of 12 and 29 an opportunity to try hunting and receive help from an experienced hunter before completing Hunter Education. A hunter using this certificate must be accompanied at all times while hunting by a licensed adult age 19 or older. This certificate may be purchased twice – in consecutive years – in a person’s lifetime for \$5 each time. It expires on Dec. 31. Applicable hunt permits are required.

**Accompaniment** – The following turkey hunters must be accompanied:

- Those under age 12.
- Those using an Apprentice Hunter Education Exemption Certificate. The accompanying person must:
  - Be a licensed “experienced” hunter age 19 or older.
  - Be certified in hunter education if he or she is between the ages of 19 and 29.
  - Not accompany more than two holders of an exemption certificate at one time.
  - Be at all times in unaided visual and verbal communication with the hunter/hunters he or she is accompanying.

#### Unlawful Acts –

- Hunting on private land without permission.
- Hunting turkeys within 100 yards of an occupied dwelling or feedlot without specific permission for that purpose.
- Shooting from the right-of-way of a public road.

- Having a loaded shotgun (magazine included) in a vehicle while on a public road.
- Using slugs in shotguns.

Using electronic calls, visible laser or light-projecting sights, or live decoys.

**Tagging** – Immediately after a turkey is taken, the hunter must punch or notch the permit tag showing the date the bird was taken. This automatically cancels the permit tag. This permit must be kept with the permit holder and/or turkey at all times. When the turkey is not with the permit holder, the entire permit must be attached to the turkey. The mobile turkey permit allows a hunter to cancel the permit once a turkey is harvested. If a hunter has a mobile permit, a turkey may be left unaccompanied by the hunter only if a document bearing the hunter’s name, permit number and time and date of permit cancellation is kept with the carcass.

**Transportation** – It is unlawful to possess any turkey unless the legs, thighs, and breast remain together until the bird is consumed or the bird arrives at the permanent abode of the possessor. The breast meat may be removed from the bone but must remain as two entire halves. Birds taken in the spring must have proof of sex consisting of: 1) the legs with spurs naturally attached; 2) the beard naturally attached to the breast; or 3) the detached beard with at least ¼-inch of skin remaining at the attachment site and kept together with the leg, thighs and breast.

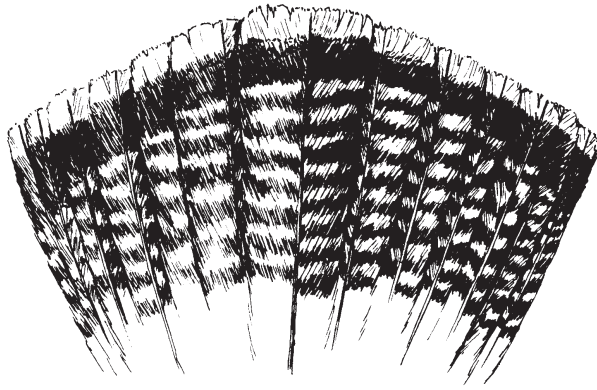
**Possession** – Only the successful permit holder may possess all or part of a turkey. Anyone may receive as a gift any part of the turkey if a statement of such gift is available to inspect. The statement must include: hunter’s name, telephone number, permit number, species and quantity of each, signature of donor, name of recipient and date of transfer.

**Hunting Turkeys and Baiting** – A regulation amended in 2016 states that a baited area may not be established from 10 days before the opening of any big game or turkey season and throughout those entire seasons for the purposes of taking big game or turkey. An area within 200 yards of bait is considered baited and to hunt within that area is prohibited. To be legal, both the hunter and the animal must be outside a baited area.

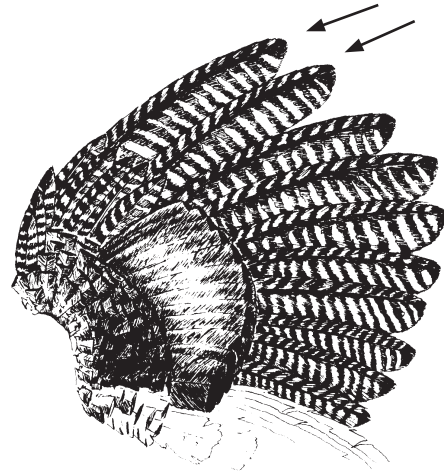
# Determining Turkey Age

## Adult

**Tail:** Adult feathers are of equal length.

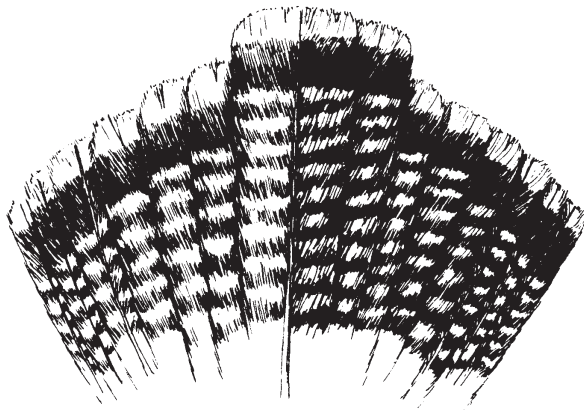


**Wing:** In adults, the ninth and 10th primaries are rounded and barred.

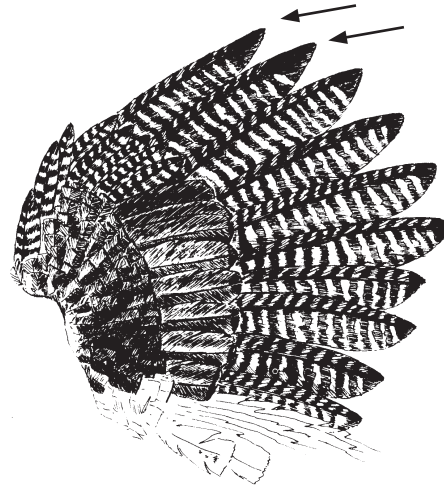


## Juvenile

**Tail:** Juvenile turkeys have two middle feathers that are longer than the others.



**Wing:** In juveniles, the ninth and 10th primaries are pointed and indistinctly barred at the tip.



### Hunter Survey

Following each season, hunters who provided email addresses when they purchased their permits may receive an email survey that is used to determine hunter success and total harvest. Those receiving surveys are asked to reply promptly. It is important when buying permits online that hunters use an updated email address. View survey results at [OutdoorNebraska.org](http://OutdoorNebraska.org).

### Nebraska Wildlife Crimestoppers

If you see a game violation, report it to Nebraska Wildlife Crimestoppers toll-free at 800-742-7627. Your free call will be kept confidential and you may be eligible for a cash reward.



Purchase permits at [OutdoorNebraska.org](http://OutdoorNebraska.org)