

Ring-necked Pheasant and Grey Partridge Hunting Forecast for Southern Alberta– Late Summer 2019

Alberta Conservation Association’s (ACA) late summer upland surveys indicate below average counts for ring-necked pheasant and grey partridge in 2019. ACA worked with volunteers and trained dogs to search in some of the best habitat the South has to offer. The survey sites include large coulee systems that harbour a mix of native and tame grasses, fruit bearing shrubs, creek, and cattail sections, often bordered by crop land. The flush rate for both pheasants and partridge are down from last year and is the lowest that we have seen in the surveys 8 years. Overall, we flushed 52 pheasants and 56 partridge while covering 40.6 km over 16 hours of effort. The dogs had 1.2 pheasant and 0.4 partridge flushes per hour (single or covey). Averaged over the entire sample period this equates to roughly 1.6 flushes of either partridge or pheasant per hour. There are still birds out there but the effort between flushes was greater than normal. If you’re willing to put in the distance, we flushed 1.28 pheasants and 1.38 partridge for each km walked.

The survey location again experienced an extreme winter, couple that with another late wet spring and its no surprise that counts are lower than previous years. With some hard work and dedication wild birds can still be found.

A big thank you goes out to all the volunteers, and ACA staff that helped pull this year’s survey together!

Survey Results	Ring-necked Pheasant								Survey Results	Grey Partridge							
Survey year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Survey year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Distance Surveyed (km)	53.6	60	30	46	47	46	67	40.6	Distance Surveyed (km)	53.6	60	30	46	47	46	67	40.6
Total count	111	215	73	155	263	163	129	52	Total count	354	420	397	292	159	214	151	56
Flushes/hour	1.37	2.59	1.96	2.44	3.32	2.23	1.54	1.21	Flushes/hour	1.37	1.59	3.53	2.15	0.83	0.96	0.82	0.42
Birds/km walked	2.07	3.58	2.43	3.37	5.60	3.54	1.93	1.28	Birds/km walked	6.6	7	13.2	6.35	3.38	4.65	2.25	1.38

Editors note: Although ACA’s study area in Southern Alberta, which is restricted to areas south of the Bow and south Saskatchewan Rivers is experiencing a negative trend in population numbers for grey partridge and ring-necked pheasants, fair to good numbers of grey partridge and sharp-tailed grouse are being reported in the eastern plains area of the province. As well, there are reports of fair to good numbers of ring necks and grey partridge in pockets throughout the Bow River and Red Deer Drainages.