

**2023**  
**ONLINE WINTER FLOCK SURVEY**  
**SUMMARY REPORT**

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*Wild turkey management and research is made possible by the federal Wildlife Restoration Program, which is funded by an excise tax on the sale of firearms, ammunition, and archery equipment.*

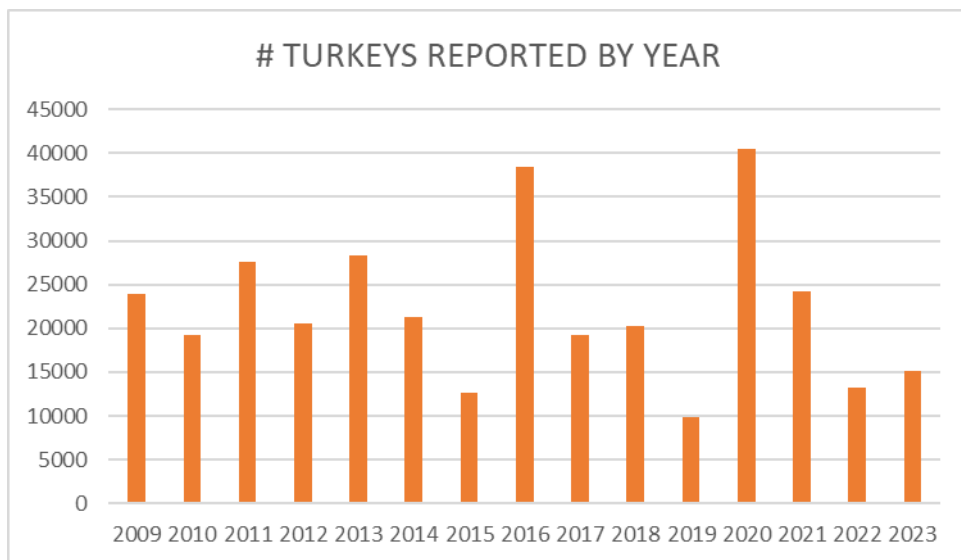
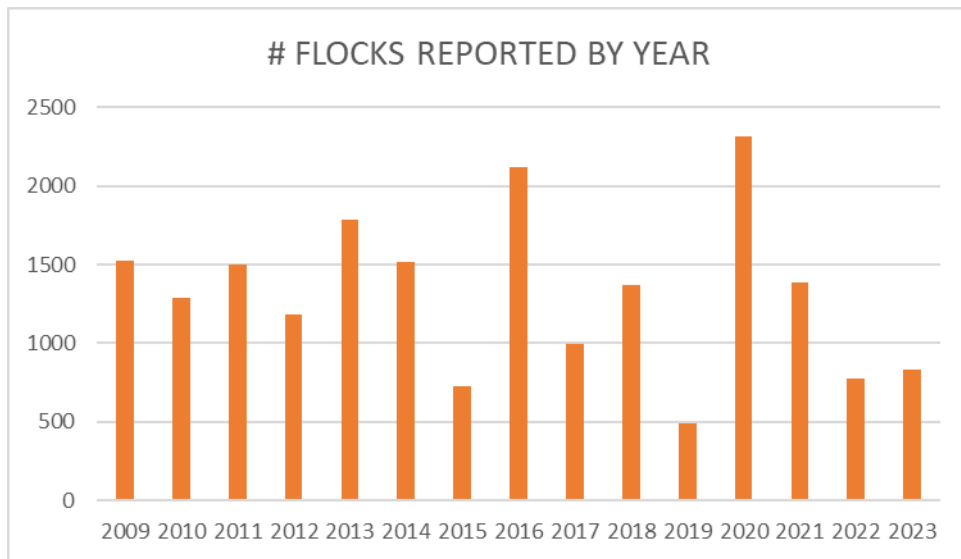


## **Introduction**

Many thanks to all the people throughout New Hampshire who submitted sightings of wild turkey flocks during winter 2023. The results of the survey summarized here will help the NH Fish and Game Department keep track of the status and winter survival of the wild turkey population around the state. This was the 15<sup>th</sup> year of the online winter flock survey which covers observations made between January 1 and March 31.

## **Numbers of turkeys reported**

A total of 835 flocks were reported during winter 2023 totaling 15,098 turkeys statewide. This was up compared to last year when 772 flocks totaling 13,201 turkeys were reported.



Throughout the state, 28 towns reported winter flocks of 50 or more turkeys per flock. The largest flocks were from: Haverhill (135), Nottingham (100) and Pelham (87).

**Table 1. Max Number of Turkeys per Flock by County and Town - Winter 2023**

| BELKNAP          | CARROLL       | CHESHIRE        | COOS              | GRAFTON        |
|------------------|---------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| New Hampton 75   | Sandwich 83   | Westmoreland 54 | Colebrook 58      | Haverhill 135  |
| Alton 50         | Tuftonboro 50 | Rindge 50       | Dalton 53         | Lyme 50        |
| Sanbornton 43    | Conway 42     | Hinsdale 49     | Pittsburg 40      | Bath 48        |
| Belmont 30       | Madison 36    | Swanzey 43      | Whitefield 35     | Alexandria 39  |
| Meredith 30      | Bartlett 26   | Jaffrey 42      | Lancaster 30      | Plymouth 35    |
| Gilford 28       | Effingham 25  | Marlborough 39  | Northumberland 29 | Enfield 34     |
| Center harbor 25 |               |                 |                   |                |
| HILLSBOROUGH     | MERRIMACK     | ROCKINGHAM      | STRAFFORD         | SULLIVAN       |
| Pelham 87        | Allenstown 80 | Nottingham 100  | Rochester 70      | Croydon 41     |
| Greenfield 84    | Hooksett 55   | Derry 78        | Somersworth 50    | Springfield 40 |
| Hollis 70        | Concord 50    | Candia 75       | Barrington 48     | Cornish 31     |
| Hancock 60       | New london 50 | Chester 68      | Dover 40          | Newport 31     |
| Merrimack 57     | Chichester 40 | Exeter 67       | Durham 40         | Charlestown 30 |
| Peterborough 53  | Wilmot 36     | Londonderry 54  | Farmington 38     | Washington 30  |
|                  | Newbury 32    |                 | Lee 35            | Unity 25       |

The average number of turkeys in a flock statewide was 18.08 which is up from the previous two years when the average was 17.1 in 2022 and 17.54 in 2021. Unit M (163) had the highest number of flocks reported again this year, followed by unit L (127), and unit J2 (123).

**Table 2. Average number of turkeys per flock by WMU - Winter 2023**

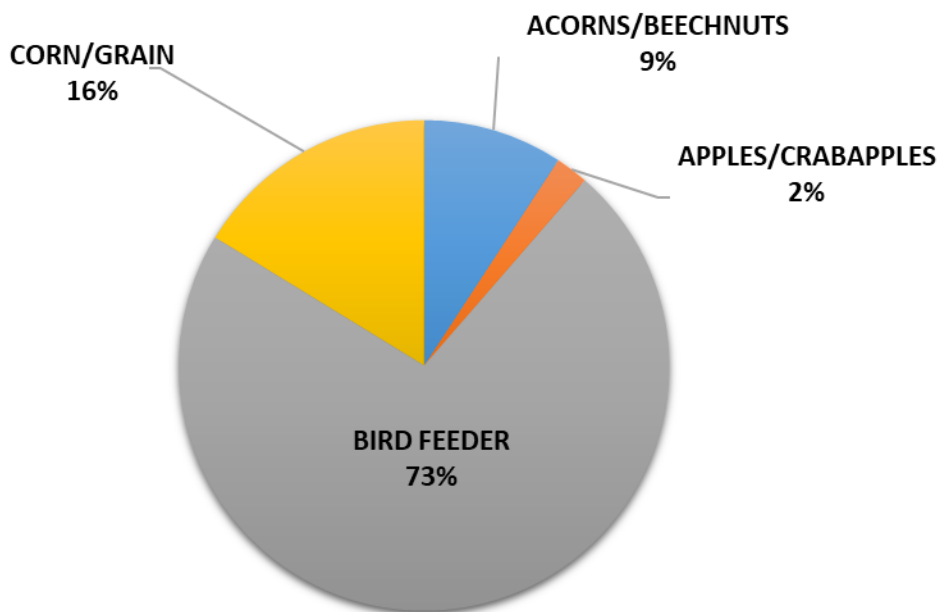
| WMU | FLOCKS | TOTAL | MAXIMUM | AVERAGE |
|-----|--------|-------|---------|---------|
| A   | 17     | 283   | 58      | 16.65   |
| B   | 5      | 67    | 29      | 13.4    |
| C1  | 4      | 89    | 26      | 22.25   |
| C2  | 8      | 108   | 25      | 13.5    |
| D1  | 18     | 252   | 53      | 14      |
| D2  | 25     | 516   | 135     | 20.64   |
| E   | 18     | 284   | 42      | 15.78   |
| F   | 25     | 369   | 35      | 14.76   |

|               |            |              |     |              |
|---------------|------------|--------------|-----|--------------|
| G             | 48         | 811          | 50  | 16.9         |
| H1            | 24         | 391          | 31  | 16.29        |
| H2            | 46         | 826          | 60  | 17.96        |
| I1            | 34         | 537          | 50  | 15.79        |
| I2            | 37         | 587          | 50  | 15.86        |
| J1            | 29         | 575          | 83  | 19.83        |
| J2            | 123        | 1926         | 75  | 15.66        |
| K             | 84         | 1637         | 84  | 19.49        |
| L             | 127        | 2455         | 100 | 19.33        |
| M             | 163        | 3385         | 87  | 20.77        |
| <b>Totals</b> | <b>835</b> | <b>15098</b> |     | <b>18.08</b> |

**Categories of food use**

By far the greatest percentage of reported food use was 267 flocks (73%) feeding at backyard birdfeeders. The next highest category of food usage was 60 reports (16%) feeding on corn or grain. Another 34 flocks (9%) of turkeys feeding on acorns and beech nuts. Reported use of apples/crab apples was only 2% (8 flocks).

**Figure 1. Wild Turkey Food Usage Observations – Winter 2023**



### Disease monitoring

During winter 2023 turkeys with visible lesions which may be indicative of avian pox or lymphoproliferative disease virus (LPDV) were reported from 11 towns from 7 different Wildlife Management Units. Overall, reports of symptomatic turkeys remains low.

**Table 3. Avian Pox/LPDV Infected Turkeys Observed by Town - Winter 2023**

| WMU          | TOWN       | # WITH VIRUS |
|--------------|------------|--------------|
| F            | CAMPTON    | 1            |
| F            | HOLDERNESS | 0            |
| H1           | PLAINFIELD | 1            |
| H2           | SWANZEY    | 4            |
| I1           | NORTHFIELD | 3            |
| I2           | WARNER     | 1            |
| L            | BARRINGTON | 1            |
| L            | EPPING     | 6            |
| L            | NEWMARKET  | 3            |
| M            | MANCHESTER | 2            |
| M            | SEABROOK   | 1            |
| <b>Total</b> |            | <b>23</b>    |

### Attitudes towards wild turkeys

Respondent's attitudes towards wild turkeys remains high with 87.8% of participants indicating they like or strongly like seeing wild turkeys on the landscape. A total of 8.7% of participants were neutral and a combined 3.5% dislike or strongly dislike wild turkeys.

**Figure 2. Reported Attitudes Towards Wild Turkeys – Winter 2023**

