



# Fall Wild Turkey Hunting Information and Online/ Toll-Free Telephone Check-In System

Review this information to ensure you comply with all wild turkey hunting regulations. While hunting, respect the rules of good sportsmanship and the property of others. Have a safe and successful hunt.

## ATTENTION HUNTERS:

**Harvest reporting online at [www.exploremoreil.com/wildlife/harvest](http://www.exploremoreil.com/wildlife/harvest) or call toll-free 1-866-ILCHECK**

**Attention cell phone users:** The most common reason hunters are unable to complete their harvest reporting is because of a poor cell phone connection. Be certain you receive a clear, strong cell phone connection before placing your call.

Successful hunters must report their harvest by 10 p.m. on the same calendar day the turkey was taken by calling the toll-free telephone check-in system at 1-866-452-4325 (1-866-IL-CHECK) or by accessing the online check-in system at [www.exploremoreil.com](http://www.exploremoreil.com). Hunters must provide all information requested by the check-in system and will be provided with a confirmation number to verify that they checked in their harvest. The confirmation number must be written by the hunter onto the leg tag. The turkey must remain whole (or field dressed) until it has been checked in.

When reporting, have a pen/pencil on hand (a permanent marker with an extra-fine tip works best). You will be given a 10-character confirmation number which you must write on the leg tag (as proof you have checked in your harvest). When reporting harvest, hunters will be asked for information to assist biologists in managing Illinois' turkey population. **Look over the questions below prior to reporting your harvest.**

**TAGGING INSTRUCTIONS:** It is unlawful to transport or leave a wild turkey without first affixing the turkey permit securely around the leg in the manner prescribed on the permit. Immediately upon kill and before the turkey is moved, transported or field dressed, you must invalidate the leg tag; the tag must be affixed to the turkey (for over-the-counter permits, the leg tag is invalidated by detaching it from the permit; for permits issued by the Permit Office, the leg tag is invalidated by cutting out the designated notch on the tag). The tag must remain attached to the leg of the turkey until it is at the legal residence of the person who legally took or possessed the turkey, and it has been reported via internet or telephone.

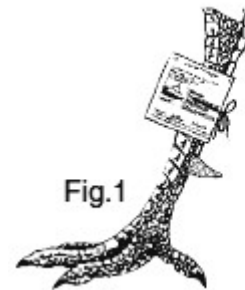


Fig. 1

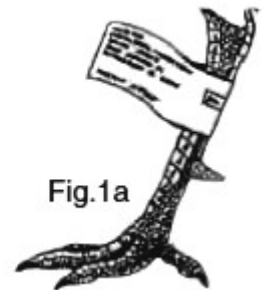


Fig. 1a

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR CHECKING YOUR TURKEY

You will be asked a series of questions when you call, including the county or special hunt area of harvest and the questions below. It will be helpful if you fill in the answers on this sheet before making the call. Use the ruler on the back of your permit to make any necessary measurements.

- ◆ What is your permit number?
- ◆ How many days did you hunt using this permit?
- ◆ Look at the outermost two wing flight feathers (Figure 2). Are the tips of the feathers sharply pointed with no white markings on the last 2 inches? If like Figure 3a, answer "yes." If like Figure 3b, answer "no."
- ◆ What is the sex of the turkey? (male or female)
- ◆ Do any of the breast feathers on your turkey have black tips (Yes or No) (Figure 4).

Brown-tipped feathers may have a black band but not at the very tip of the feather. If all of the breast feathers appear to have light brown tips, brush the feathers forward using your hand and look for new feathers coming in under the outer feathers. Check these as well.

- ◆ To the nearest millimeter, what is the length of the turkey's spur? (Figure 5). Measure from the base of the spur to the tip. If no spur, answer "Zero."
- ◆ To the nearest millimeter, what is the length of the turkey's beard? (Figure 6). Measure from the breast to the tip of the beard. If no beard, answer "Zero."

Fig. 2

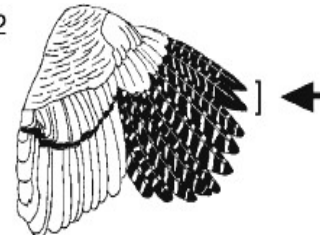


Fig. 3a



Fig. 3b



BLACK

OR

LIGHT BROWN

Fig. 4

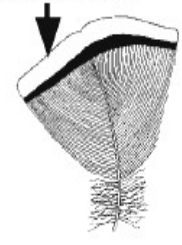
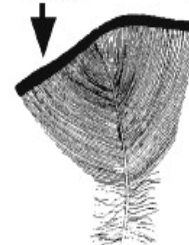
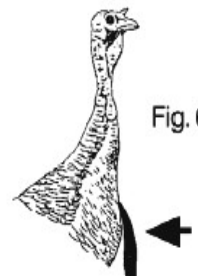


Fig. 5



About 45 mm  
above the  
rear toe

Fig. 6



# 2026 FALL TURKEY HUNTING INFORMATION SHEET

**Permits are not transferable.** Sign your permit before hunting. You must carry the completed permit, along with your Illinois Hunting or Sportsmen's license and Habitat Stamp (unless exempt), while hunting wild turkey. Permission to hunt on private property must be obtained from the property owner or tenant. Your permit does not authorize trespassing.

## BAG LIMIT & REGULATIONS

**Bag Limit:** One wild turkey of either sex per permit. Once you have your limit, you may not participate with a weapon in any turkey hunting party, except that a person without a weapon may accompany a turkey hunter as a caller or observer.

### It is unlawful:

- To use live or electronic decoys, recorded calls, dogs or bait. An area is considered as baited during the presence of and for 10 consecutive days following the removal of bait.
- To possess while in the field, during turkey season, any turkey permit issued to another person.
- To purchase or obtain more than 2 Fall Turkey Archery permits.
- To apply for or purchase more than 2 Fall Turkey Shotgun permits (customers may obtain 1 permit via the Lottery process; the second permit may be obtained via over-the-counter purchase (pending availability). Customers who receive a Landowner Fall Turkey Shotgun permit may only obtain a second permit OTC (pending availability).
- For any person to hunt wild turkeys without having a signed wild turkey hunting permit in possession, except that a person without a weapon may accompany a turkey hunter as a caller or observer.

## LICENSE

In addition to your turkey permit, you must have a valid Illinois Hunting, Sportsmen's, Youth or Apprentice License unless you are:

- A person who is disabled and able to show proof of disability in the form of a:

1) State disabled person ID card (available from the Secretary of State through the driver's license examining station) showing a P2, P2A, H2 or H2A disability **or**

2) Veteran disability card (at least 10% service related); available from local Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs offices.

- An Illinois resident on active duty and on leave from the U.S. Armed Forces.
- A landowner or tenant residing on farmlands, or the children, parents, brothers and sisters permanently residing on such lands and hunting only the lands resided on.

To be issued a license, hunters born on or after Jan. 1, 1980, must show proof that they have successfully completed the DNR Hunter Safety Training Course (except for Youth or Apprentice) or from their resident state, or must show a previous year's hunting license. To obtain information about classes scheduled in your area, visit [www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety](http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/safety) or call 1-800-832-2599.

## HABITAT STAMP

Before any person 18 years of age or older takes, or attempts to take or pursue, any species of wildlife protected by the Wildlife Code, except migratory waterfowl, coots and hand-reared birds on licensed game breeding and hunting preserve areas and state-controlled pheasant hunting areas, he or she must first obtain a State Habitat Stamp. Disabled veterans, former prisoners of war and persons who obtained a Lifetime License before Jan. 1, 1993, are not required to obtain a State Habitat Stamp. Licenses/stamps are available at [www.exploremoreil.com](http://www.exploremoreil.com).

## FALL TURKEY SHOTGUN INFORMATION

**Season Dates: Oct. 24 – Nov. 1, 2026**

**Hunting Hours:** One-half hour before sunrise until sunset during each day of the season. It is illegal for any person to shoot a wild turkey while it is in a tree before 7 a.m.

**Hunting Devices:** Shotgun only (.410 bore to 10 gauge); overall minimum length is 26 inches. Minimum barrel length is 18 inches; #4 shot is the largest shot that may be legally used or possessed while turkey hunting.

**Hunting Area:** Only the county, counties, or special hunt area designated on your permit.

**Clothing:** No special clothing is required.

### Firearm Owners ID Card (Issued by Illinois State Police):

Regardless of who owns the gun, anyone who has a firearm or firearm ammunition in their possession must have in their possession a valid Firearm Owners ID (FOID) Card unless he or she is:

- 1) a licensed out-of-state sportsman hunting in Illinois **or**
- 2) under the age of 21 and under the immediate control of a parent, guardian, or responsible adult who has in their possession a valid FOID Card.

## FALL TURKEY ARCHERY INFORMATION

**Season Dates: October 1, 2026 - January 17, 2027** except closed during the 1st and 2nd Firearm Deer Hunting Seasons.

**Hunting Hours:** One-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

**Hunting Area:** All counties are open to the Fall Archery Turkey Season.

**Hunting Devices:** The only legal hunting devices to take or attempt to take fall turkey are:

1. A long, recurved or compound bow with a minimum pull of 30 pounds at some point within a 28-inch draw. Minimum arrow length is 20 inches, and broadheads must be used.
2. Crossbows. Crossbows used in hunting shall meet all the following specifications:
  - shall use a bowstring to propel the bolt or arrow and have a minimum peak draw weight of 125 pounds;
  - have a minimum length (from butt of stock to front of limbs) of 24 inches;
  - have a working safety;
  - be used with fletched bolts or arrows of not less than 14 inches in length (not including point)

Broadheads may have fixed or expandable cutting surfaces, but they must have a minimum 7/8-inch diameter when fully opened. Broadheads with fixed blades must be metal or flint-, chert-, or obsidian-napped; broadheads with expandable cutting surfaces must be metal. All other bows and arrows, including electronic arrow tracking systems utilizing radio telemetry, are illegal.

**Clothing:** No special clothing required, except during the Muzzleloader-Only, Youth Firearm, Late-Winter, and CWD deer seasons, and on those DNR sites that allow archery turkey hunting during the 1st and 2nd Firearm Seasons. Under the above circumstances, any person attempting to take, or taking a turkey, by use of a bow and arrow shall wear, when in the field, a cap and upper outer garment of solid blaze orange or solid blaze pink color displaying a minimum of 400 square inches of blaze orange or blaze pink material.