



UPLAND OUTLOOK

The 2023 pheasant hunting season is almost here! Like a large part of the Midwest, South Dakota had a winter to remember. The good news is, spring and summer rains across much of the state set the stage for ideal nesting and brood rearing habitat for pheasant production. Following strong pheasant numbers in 2022, which saw our highest harvest in five years, pheasant hunters can look forward to experiencing another year of hunting like nowhere else in the country.

HABITAT CONDITIONS

Ideal spring weather has produced impressive habitat across most of the pheasant belt. Under these ideal conditions, our models indicate nest success and brood survival should be strong. Due to timely summer rain, hunters can expect to find great hunting cover this fall. These factors lead us to believe that another great South Dakota hunting season is just around the corner.

PHEASANT HUNTING FORECAST

Pheasant population conversations start and end with good quality habitat. While Old Man Winter had a long stay here, quality habitat on the ground helped improve pheasant survival in many areas. Even with last year's good hunting conditions, we are in an even better spot habitat-wise, and reports of large size broods are common. Conditions are excellent in western, central, and northeast South Dakota. Hunters may see some CRP open to emergency haying and grazing in limited counties in Southeast South Dakota, but overall the available habitat left standing is in great shape.

PRAIRIE GROUSE HUNTING FORECAST

The 2023 prairie grouse season is expected to be better than 2022. Abnormally dry conditions were alleviated by snowmelt and timely rainfall in early to mid-spring in much of western South Dakota. The majority of central and western South Dakota has recovered from drought and grassland habitat conditions look wonderful. Although the lingering cooler spring temperatures and snowpack from the winter may have delayed nesting efforts in some areas, we expect the current grassland conditions to contribute to quality hunting cover and great prairie grouse production, resulting in increased hunter success.

SEASON DATES

PHEASANT
Youth Only: September 30 - October 8
Resident Only: October 14 - 16
Traditional: October 21 - January 31

QUAIL
October 21 - January 7

PRAIRIE GROUSE
September 16 - January 7

PARTRIDGE
September 16 - January 7

LICENSE TYPES

RESIDENT
Combination (small game + fishing).....\$55
Senior Combination (65+)\$40
Small Game\$33
One-Day Small Game\$12
Youth Small Game (ages 12-17).....\$5
Habitat Stamp.....\$10

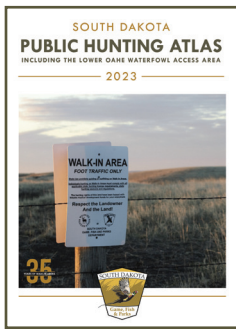
NONRESIDENT
Small Game (Two five-day periods).....\$121
Youth Small Game, ages 12-17
(two five-day periods)\$10
Shooting Preserve (annual)\$121
Shooting Preserve (5-day).....\$76
Shooting Preserve (1-day).....\$46
Habitat Stamp.....\$25

Visit gfp.sd.gov/hunt-fish-license to purchase a license today!



HABITAT AND ACCESS

Pheasant populations, along with all wildlife populations, respond positively to abundant habitat, especially perennial grass habitat. Establishing more habitat and providing additional acres of public hunting access is the number one priority for GFP. We are working hard with landowners through programs and initiatives, at both the state and federal level, to provide pheasant habitat and hunting access. Among the highest priorities are enrolling the James River Watershed Conservation Reserve Program (CREP) to the fully allocated 100,000 acres and enrolling 25,000 in a new Big Sioux Watershed CREP.



WHERE TO HUNT

Great hunting land means great pheasant hunting. South Dakota has incredible amounts of quality public land across the landscape, with plenty in the primary pheasant range. Pick up a copy of the 2023 Public Hunting Atlas or visit our website at gfp.sd.gov/hunting-areas to begin planning your fall hunting trip.

BLAST AND CAST IN ONE TRIP

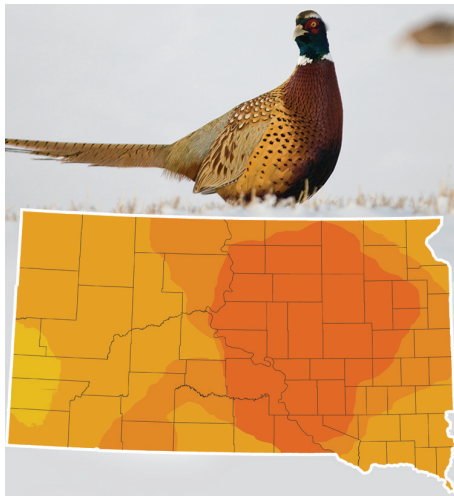
After trekking through the grasslands chasing roosters, relax your legs and spend some time fishing on any of South Dakota's great water bodies. There's not many places where you can experience world-class hunting and fishing in one trip. Find great walleye fishing on rocky shorelines along the Missouri River and in Northeast South Dakota.

PLAN YOUR STAY

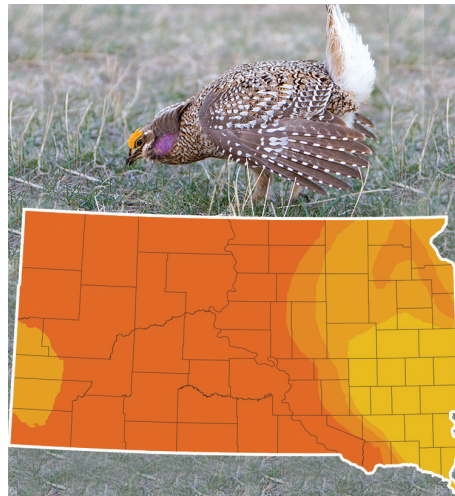
South Dakota State Parks offer a wide variety of options for hunters looking to stay right in the heart of the best hunting. Options include year-round camping in state parks and multiple parks offer more modern options as well. These include lodges, modern cabins, and suites. Traditional camping cabins are also available across the state. Find your perfect place to stay at gfp.sd.gov/camp.

UPLAND GAME DISTRIBUTION

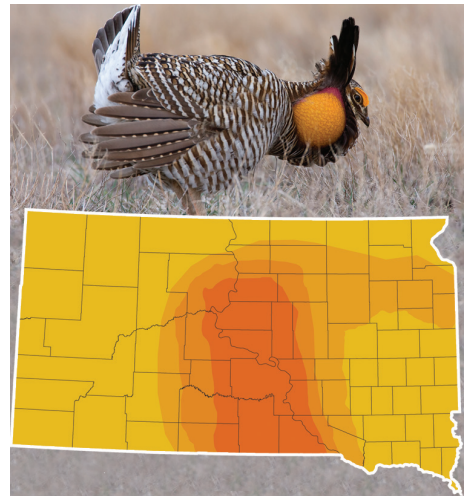
PHEASANT



SHARP-TAILED GROUSE



PRAIRIE CHICKEN



A HUNT IN THE WORLD'S GREATEST PHEASANT COUNTRY IS A THRILL LIKE NO OTHER. NOW IS THE TIME TO PLAN YOUR HUNT.

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