



Washington County Pheasants Forever 11th Annual Mentored Youth Pheasant Hunt



September 19, 2015

On Saturday, September 19, 2015, Washington County Pheasants Forever Chapter held its 11th Annual Mentored Youth Pheasant Hunt. There were 16 youth participants, ages 12 to 15, who attended the event along with 48 volunteers who helped make this event a tremendous success. The sunny, 60 degree weather was perfect for all of our outdoor activities. For the first time our event was supported by 8 volunteer staff from our local partner, Blair Youth Shooting Sports club, which provided multiple discipline experience with youth from the club serving as coaches for shooting, gun cleaning and shot shell reloading. Adults from the club served as mentors for the event augmenting our normal staff. This was a great start to what we anticipate will be a great partnership.

Each youth participant was teamed with a mentor to work with them one-on-one throughout the day's activities. Mentors shared hunting experiences, embraced safety to the youth through many activities including shooting blue rock, the .22 range, learning how to clean shotguns and how to locate downed birds in the field. Mike Luben, our Local Conservation Officer from the Nebraska Game and Parks, also instructed youth about Nebraska hunting laws and the proper way to ask a landowner for permission to hunt on private property.

The highlight of the day was a live pheasant hunt that occurred at the farms of Rod & Curt Jensen and Rodney Madsen. The youth, guided by their mentors, experienced a very realistic field hunting experience using bird dogs controlled by a dog handler. This year all but one youth participant were able to take a shot at a Ring-Neck Pheasant and 62.5% were successful.

After the events of the day, the Washington County Pheasants Forever Chapter provided lunch for everyone. Those who completed the youth hunt received a hunting vest provided by a joint partnership of Pheasants Forever, Nebraska Game & Parks and Boyt Harness. All in all it was a very successful day full of education, sportsmanship, and excitement for all involved.



Our Agenda for 2015

Hunter Safety Refresher Session	Locating downed birds without a dog.	Taking care of your bounty, cleaning and transporting your birds
Shooting Clay Targets	Gun Cleaning and Reloading Demonstration	Shooting .22 caliber rifles at various targets.
Asking permission to hunt.	Pheasant game law review.	Guided Pheasant Hunt with Dog and Mentors.

Here are just some highlights of the event

Participants and Mentors receive a Hunter Safety refresher session prior to the day's activities.



Dog Handlers prepare for the dog demonstration.



Dog is on point to a bird during the demonstration



Mentors illustrate the shot pattern at distance on target at the shotgun safety demonstration. The effects of a shotgun hit to a water jug drives home the importance of safety when in the field.



Youth participate at the Blue-Rock shooting station to practice their skills before the Field Hunt experience. Two of the Blair Trap Team youth helpers offer their expertise to the youth participants along side the adult mentors.

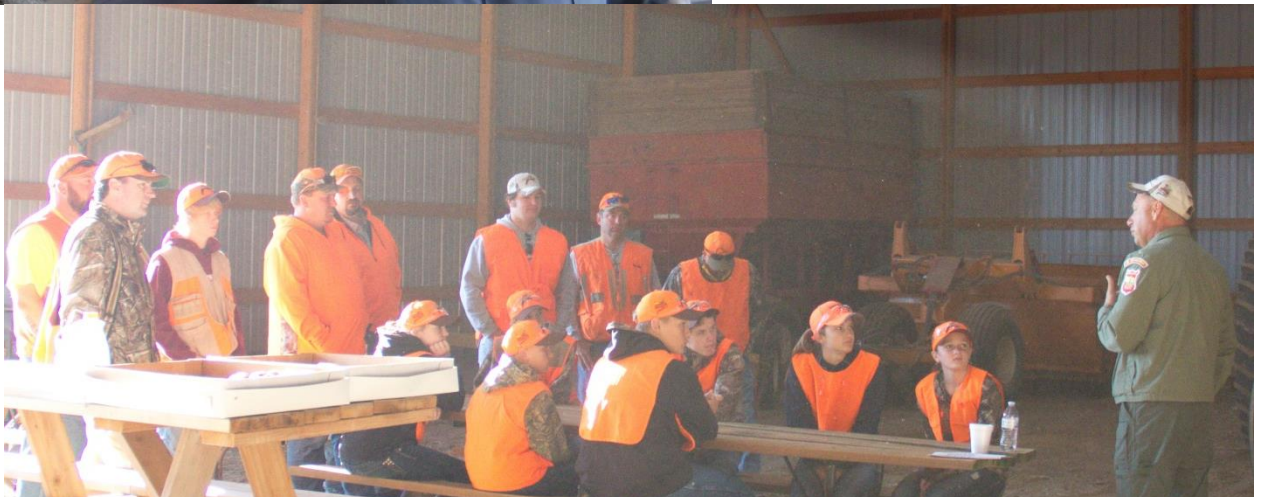


Adult Mentors provide detailed guidance on marksmanship skills





Local Conservation Officer Mike Luben conducts session on Nebraska Pheasant laws and how to obtain permission to hunt on private land and provide a refresher of hunter ethics and game laws.



Mentors carefully demonstrate safe .22 rifle firearm handling and observe marksmanship skills at the rifle range station.



Proper Sight Picture and Shooting Position are the key to accuracy.



Youth keeps a sharp eye out for a shot under the supervision of the mentor and dog handler as they walk a field.



Mentor guides youth as they take a shot and bag a Pheasant



Sweet success after working the native tall grass CRP ground.



Successful youth dress and clean their bounty under the supervision of mentors. The proper field preparation of harvested game is an important part of the hunting experience focusing on the wise use of the harvested game.



Participants get a perspectives of proper shotgun cleaning and reloading practices from two of the Blair Trap Team youth helpers.



Youth enjoy a lunch provided by the Pheasants Forever Chapter.



Fresh pheasant was prepared so that each youth participant would be able to enjoy a taste of pheasant.

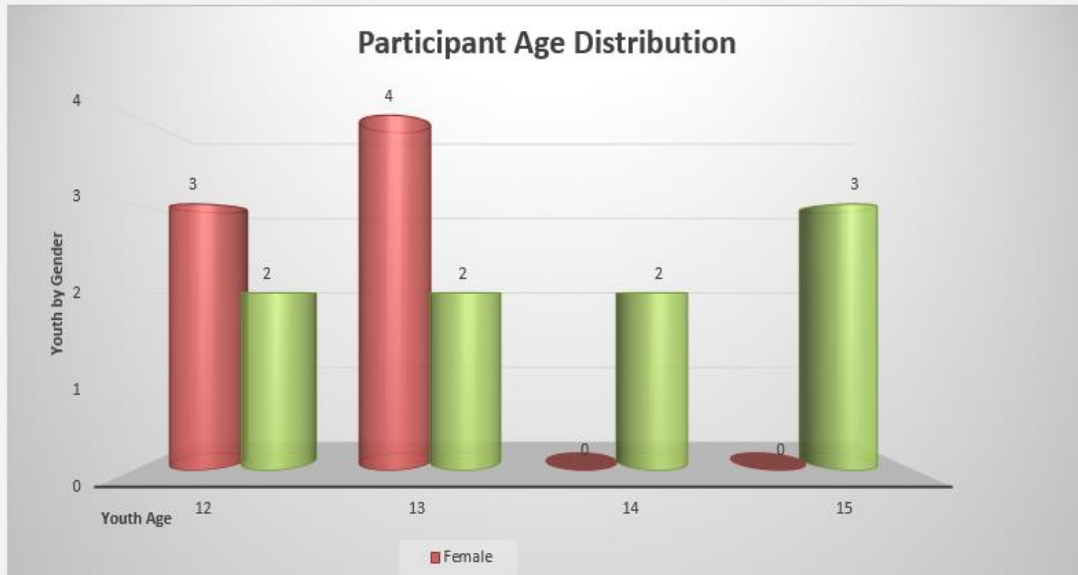


Each of the youth participants were presented a Pheasants Forever and Nebraska Game & Parks donated hunting vest.



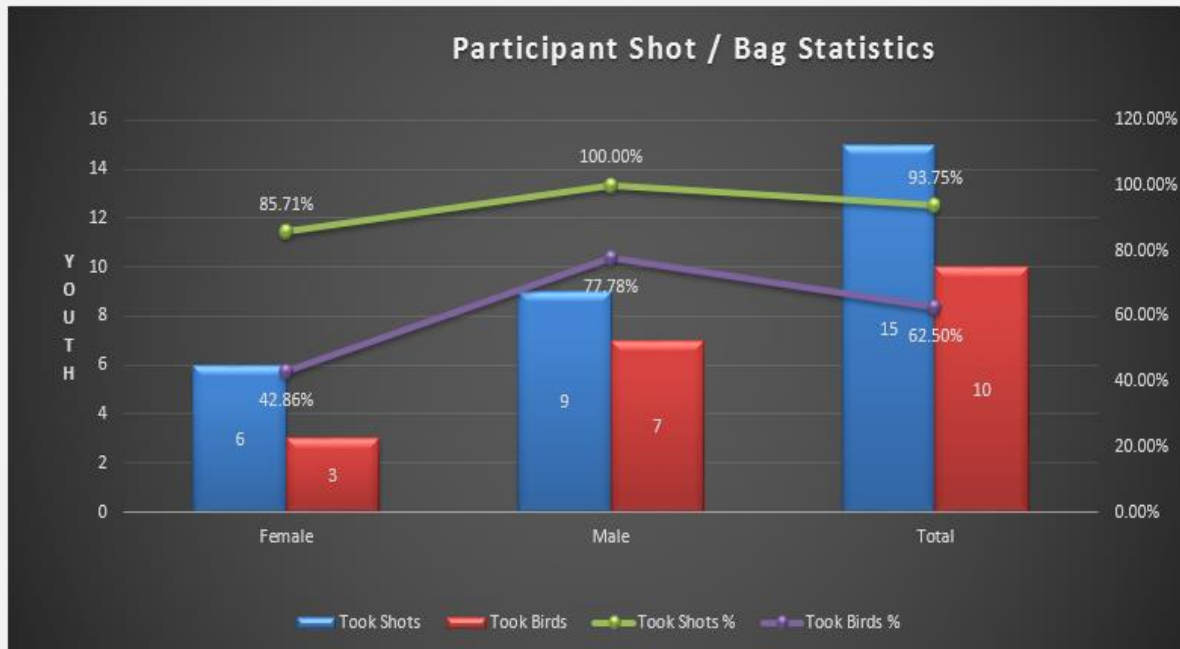
2015 Youth Hunt Statistics

This year's hunt had 16 youth participants, 7 Young Ladies and 9 Young Men ranging from 12 to 15 years of age.



Age	Female	Male
12	3	2
13	4	2
14	0	2
15	0	3
Totals	7	9
	16	

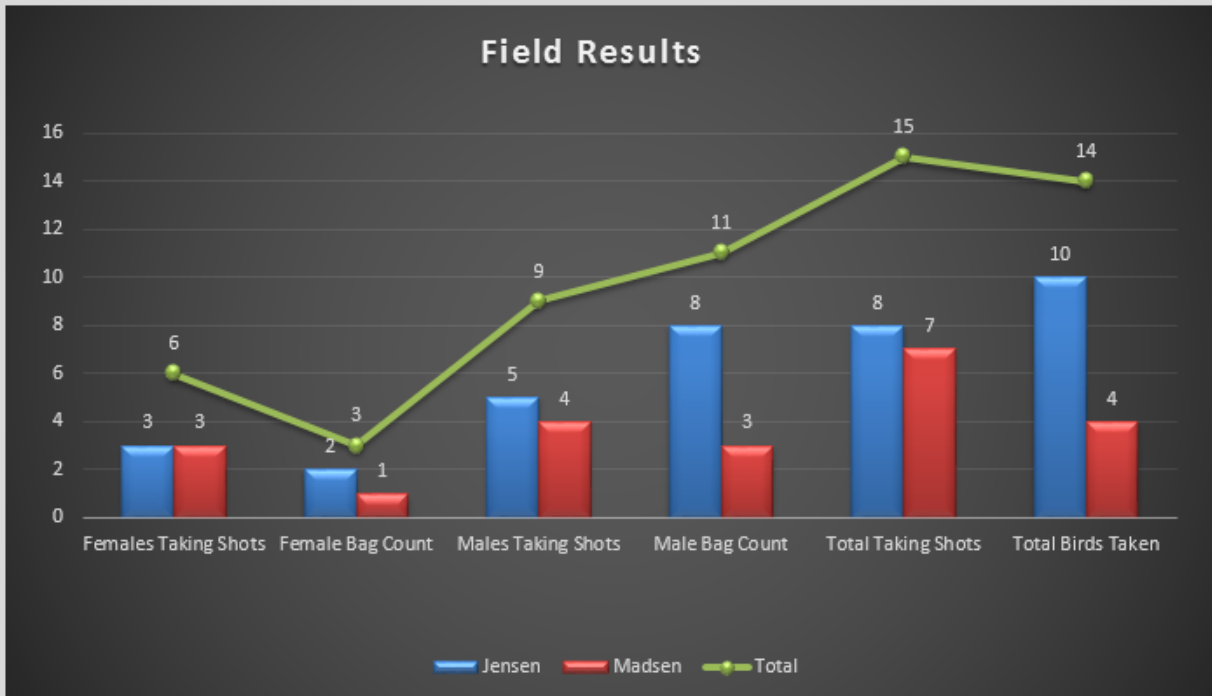
93.75% of the youth were able to get shots at birds this year and 62.5% were successful and some took home multiple birds.



Field Hunt	Female	Male	Total
Participants	7	9	16
Took Shots	6	9	15
Took Shots %	85.71%	100.00%	93.75%
Took Birds	3	7	10
Took Birds %	42.86%	77.78%	62.50%

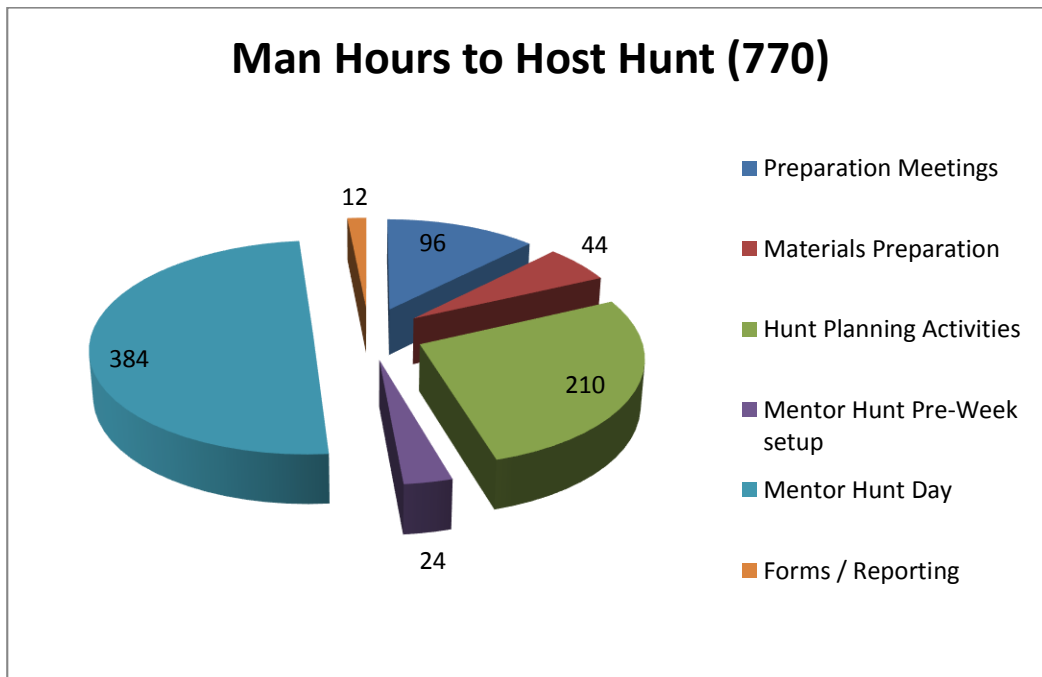
Examining the statistics in more detail examining both of our hunt fields, how many took shots and the bag counts including totals by gender. We can observe that the fields, shots and success rates so we can look for ways to improve next year.

1. Accuracy was stellar this year with 15 shots and 14 birds bagged !
2. The Jensen field was much more successful than the Madsen field this year – we will examine this in more detail.

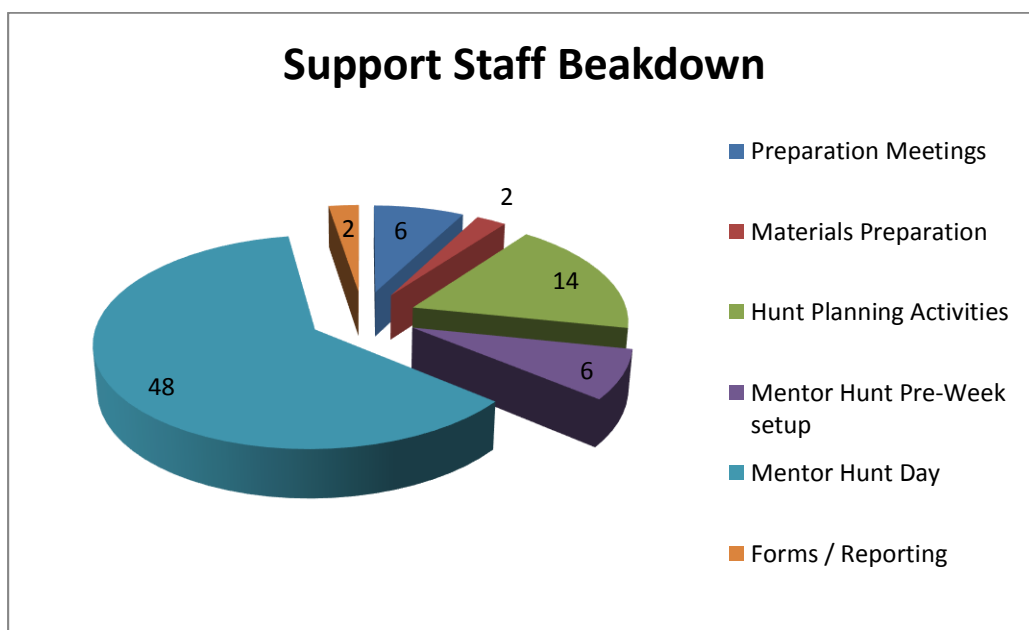


Field	Females Taking Shots	Female Bag Count	Males Taking Shots	Male Bag Count	Total Taking Shots	Total Birds Taken
Jensen	3	2	5	8	8	10
Madsen	3	1	4	3	7	4
Total	6	3	9	11	15	14

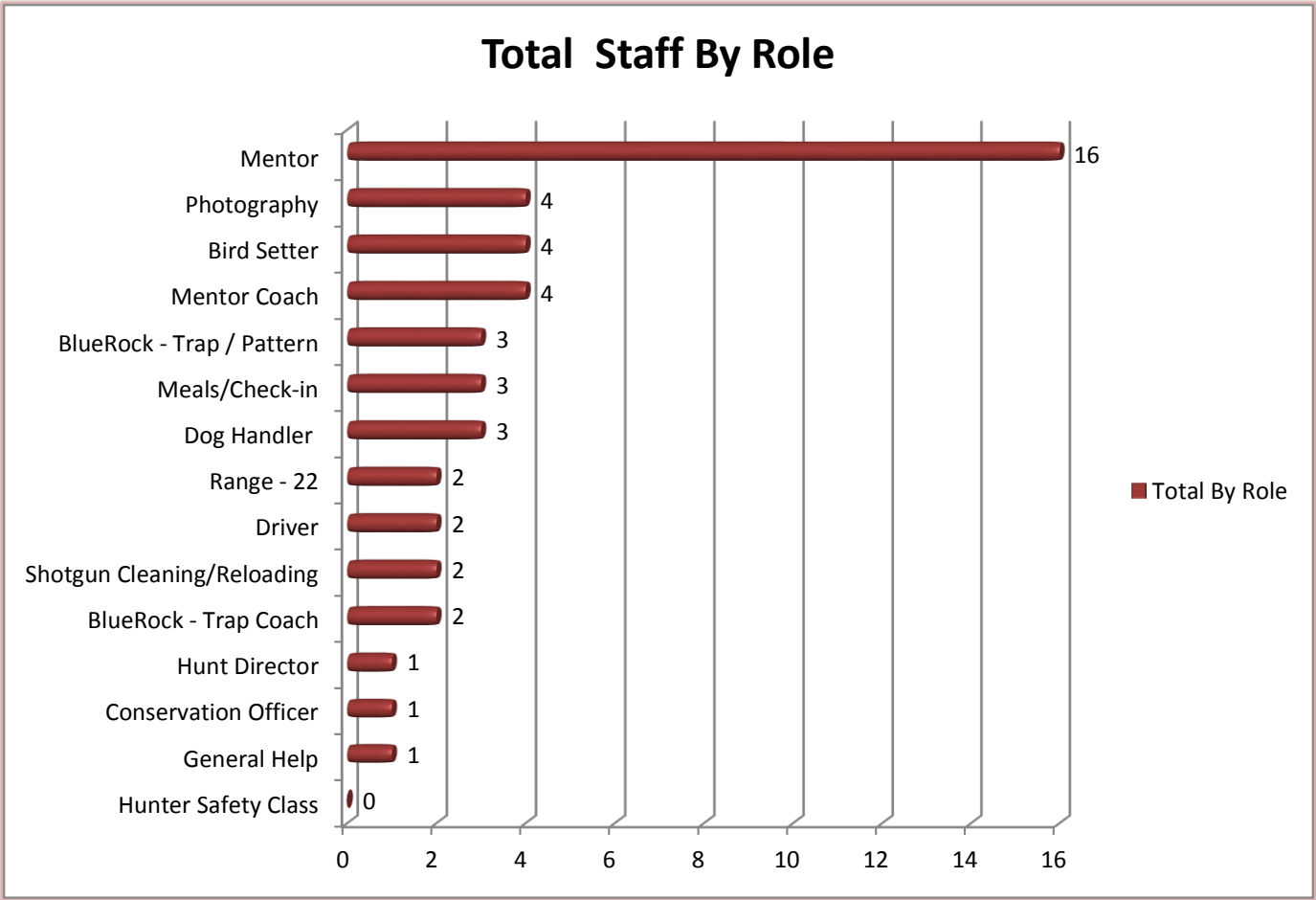
Hosting the annual hunt requires considerable volunteer efforts each year. This year approximately 770 manhours were invested by 48 volunteers supporting various tasks.



The number of volunteer staff members that participated in various parts of the hunt preparation and execution.



The Staff Roles on the day of the hunt break down the 48 volunteers as follows:



Each annual hunt takes considerable funding. This year pproximely \$3,831.25 was used to accomplish the hunt, 71% from the Washington County PF chapter and 29% in donations from various organizations and individual contributors.

