

It won't be long

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I expect to hear one or two any morning. The Music City Star will come by about 5:50 and sound their cursed horn. One or more will sound off as a reflex. The later it gets into the year, the more will sound off.

A turkey will gobble at any strange sound. I use a \$2 air horn from Wally to make them gobble. I have heard them gobble at dogs barking and shotguns booming. They love to gobble at outboard motors, kinda heavy to carry in the woods, though. I think veteran turkey hunters call it a shock gobble.

They are not very smart birds. But turkey hunters are not all that sharp, either. Right about now, I would bet some of them are spending some early morning hours, standing around in the woods, listening for a gobbler to brag about his presence. Our spring turkey season opens in about a month. Hard to say where that bird will be then. For adults, the season opens Saturday, March 30. For juveniles, it opens the weekend before. Remember, the limit is one gobbler per day, no more than four for the season and no bait.

It has not been all that long ago that just to see a wild turkey in TN was front-page news. Now, they are everywhere. It is not at all uncommon to see them in my yard or roosted in a tree in the backyard. Through the efforts of the TWRA and the National Wild Turkey Federation, turkeys have almost become as common as crows. They fly through car windows with regularity.

Three flocks live almost in my backyard. I estimate the total number of birds in the three flocks at well over 100. You would think that would make them easy to kill. Sometimes, that might be true. Then there are times such as opening morning of the spring season last year. Despite having seen five big gobblers just the day before, I did not even hear a single gobble. I do not know where they went. They just did as turkeys do. They went some place else.

It was the only time I turkey hunted last year.

I am not much of a turkey hunter. I killed two with my crossbow last fall. I did that while deer hunting. Both were young gobblers, maybe 2-years old. As I always do, I gave the meat away. I don't like to eat turkey -- any turkey. It is just something I do not eat. Oddly enough, I love liver and onions. Go figure.

In a small way, I do enjoy hunting them in the spring. I enjoy the spring mornings in the woods and I enjoy hearing them gobble and seeing them strut. The rest of it, I don't care much about. To be perfectly honest, I am a tad fearful of shooting that big shotgun off my bad shoulder. The Whiteners, Carroll and Betty love it. Carroll would rather shoot a turkey than get 8% interest on his money. If it is a dreary day, I won't go even if they are gobbling their heads off.

However, plenty hunters will go. And I wish them well. We need some of these birds in Wilson County killed. We have too many. The fox and bobcats have moved back in to take advantage of the young birds. The coyotes are happy-happy-happy. We have a lot of turkeys. Snoods everywhere.

I'll be writing more about turkeys as we get closer to the season. In all probability, I will go hunting some once the season opens. That will depend on how good the fishing is.

The Cedar Roost Chapter of the NWTF will host their Hunting Heritage Banquet, this Friday night, March 1, at the Mill in Lebanon. I will be there. Good food and a lot of neat products to be auctioned off.

A single ticket is \$50 and that includes a one year membership in NWTF. Pretty good deal and money going to a great cause. Then, we can all get up the next morning and go listen for one to gobble. Listen for that harsh string of gargled notes to float on the air.

That's hard to resist.

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