

# BIG DOG FIREARMS

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516 SARALAND BLVD SOUTH  
SARALAND, AL



Photo by John N. Felsher

Daniel Felsher admires a pair of mourning doves he bagged while hunting in south Alabama.

## DOVES: Most hunters sit but others get impatient

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consume their weight in seeds each day.

When feeding, doves prefer bare ground where they can get at the seeds, but with leafy canopies above them to hide them from hawks and other predators. Sunflowers provide an excellent combination of good food at dirt level plus overhead concealment.

To hunt doves, most people sit on comfortable folding chairs along timberlines, fencerows or field edges to watch the skies hoping to intercept birds flying from their roosting to feeding or watering areas and back. People too impatient to sit and wait for birds might try jumping doves. Slowly walk through pastureland with low brush or along forest edges and fencerows. When birds flush, their broad, elliptical wings make distinctive fluttering whistles. That unmistakable whistling clatter instantly alerts anyone hunting the birds.

Sportsmen occasionally bag doves in the Upper Delta Wildlife Management Area, but doves typically don't like swamps or thick forests. Hunters might find some birds in clearings or along powerlines running through

forests. The Perdido River WMA offers sportsmen more fields where people would likely find doves. Hunters might also find some doves at Barbour, Blue Springs or Geneva State Forest WMAs.

"I think dove numbers will be great this fall," predicted Thomas Harms, area biologist for the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division in Spanish Fort. "We're banding a lot of young doves. Many of those birds will stay in the local area. We should have a good dove season. Perdido has some good dove fields. They have a lot of open lands. They usually do pretty good on doves in that area."

Young sportsmen could participate in youth dove hunts planned throughout the state including some in Baldwin and Monroe counties. A young hunter must be 15 years old or younger and accompanied by a parent or adult at least 21 years old.

For a schedule of planned youth dove hunts and registration information, see [www.outdooralabama.com/youth-hunting/youth-dove-hunts](http://www.outdooralabama.com/youth-hunting/youth-dove-hunts). For more information on youth hunts in Baldwin or Monroe counties, call 251-626-5474.