

"Covey up..."

A student of quail

A subtle but assertive whistle of a covey call emulated by the patriarch of the 2022 Quail Masters class, Dr. Dale Rollins, permeates through the room to call our attention and remind us all to, "covey up."

This year as I was scrolling the "innerwebs", seeking some continuing education in wildlife conservation and management, I stumbled across the TWA website and found the registration form for the 2022 Quail Master's Program.

"I am a student of quail!"

This mantra resonates throughout the 12 days we were in class. Its meaning wasn't quite clear at the beginning of session one but when we graduated, Quail Masters became part of our lives forever.

Quail Masters is a series of intense hands-on training sessions designed to teach students about quail conservation and to practice sound management techniques to increase population numbers and maintain suitable



habitats for quail.

Dr. Rollins started the Quail Master's program as an offshoot of the Bobwhite Brigade Youth Leadership Camp to offer landowners, biologists and graduate students or anybody who wants to be a "student of quail" an opportunity to get immersed in quail management. We met four times for two and a half days. During those sessions

we conducted covey call counts, habitat evaluations, quail necropsies, plant identification, public speaking and team building exercises and were also blessed to tour some of the finest quail ranches in Texas.

A huge thank you goes out to the volunteers and the landowners who spent countless hours planting and cultivating the seeds of knowledge in us so that

we may disperse into the world to aid in the efforts to conserve and "sculpt" suitable habitat with hopes to increase quail populations or prevent further population decreases so future generations may enjoy the sport of quail hunting and the experience of a dog on point.

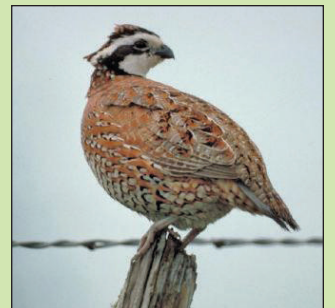
I came into the class with the goal of brushing up on my quail knowledge and receiving some very useful continuing education. When I graduated I not only gleaned a wealth of information about quail but the instructors, guest speakers, and my fellow students reignited the fire in my heart for active conservation and reiterated the importance of being an advocate for wildlife conservation for fellow sportsmen and women.

I urge anyone looking for a change of pace to sign up for Quail Masters if the course is offered again and get involved, stay informed and inspire others to be stewards of the land and students of quail.



QUAIL FACTS:

Quail are birds that are typically found in small flocks, otherwise known as "coveys." Quail spend most of their lives in a relatively small area, with groups of 8 to 25 birds common in a single covey. Quail generally forage twice a day, in early morning and mid-to-late afternoon and eat a wide variety of foods including insects, seeds, leaves, and berries. Rarely, if ever, does a quail die of old age.



- Quail eat insects, seeds and grains
- Quail can only fly for a short distance
- The average lifespan of quail is one year
- Female Bobwhite quail can have up to 3 broods per season
- Breeding season is from late April to October
- An average clutch size is 12 to 18 eggs
- Height - 9 to 11 inches

- Weight - 4.5 to 8 ounces
- Bobwhite quail have a distinct whistle that sounds like "bob-white"
- Good habitat includes a mix of good nesting and brood cover, winter shelter and a year round food source
- Males and females will take turns sitting on the nest