During the past few decades, wild quail populations plummeted across the Southeast, including Alabama, making wild birds difficult to find. Some pockets of good habitat still hold a few wild bobwhites.

“The wild quail population in Alabama and across the Southeast has been going down since the 1960s,” lamented Steve Mitchell, the Upland Game Bird Program Coordinator for the Alabama Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Division. “The population probably declined 80 percent across the Southeast, but there are pockets on private land and some wildlife management areas that still hold wild quail populations.”

Bobwhite numbers declined for many reasons including predation. However, as a species, bobwhite quail endured tremendous predation for eons, but still survived where they found good habitat. In a spot with excellent habitat, the prolific birds can reproduce abundantly to replace their numbers and fill available habitat. Each female lays about 12 to 15 eggs per nest.