

MY FIRST TURKEY

By Charlie Ande

I got started seriously turkey hunting 2 years ago after joining ASI. My first hunt was at Baraboo in 2005 where I saw lots of turkeys, but none close enough to shoot. This year I contacted Wayne Krueger. He graciously offered his land for ASI physically challenged members.

Wayne offered his land, time, experience and physical effort to get me a turkey. He took me out to many spots where we heard lots of gobbling, but again none close enough to shoot. I had a 12 gauge 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " , so he let me use his 12 gauge 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " for more power.

I think it was on the third day of hunting when he had 4 Toms going crazy with their strutting and gobbling. However, they were across a waterway and up a hill. The turkeys would just not come down close to the water. I was going to take a shot, but again thought it being to far. Now, in hindsight and after talking to Wayne, the 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " would have done the job. Well, it was great watching those big Toms put on such a show.

The next day was my last day to hunt. Wayne could not make the hunt, but he set me up with Dan Spindler to help me. That day there was a slight rain and nothing was gobbling inspite of the great calling going on by Dan. We tried several locations, but with no response. Dan said we should go back to one of the ground blinds overlooking a grass field. We felt good about our chances of seeing a turkey at this spot.

It was getting late and the rain started coming down again, but we felt we would see something. It was a treat hearing Dan with his mouth calls. I think he can make any noise a turkey makes. Well, about 3:00 p.m. I saw a Jake coming out of the woods. Then I saw another and another and another. There were approximately 7 Jake's. This was my last chance and I had never shot a turkey. So, I waited until they started to separate and I let that 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " cannon do the job.

When the Jake dropped, the others put on quite a show. They would not leave. They started strutting all around the dying bird. Some of them even started to peck at it. What a show. We almost had to shoo them away to get to my first turkey.

Thank you Wayne and Dan for my first wild turkey.

