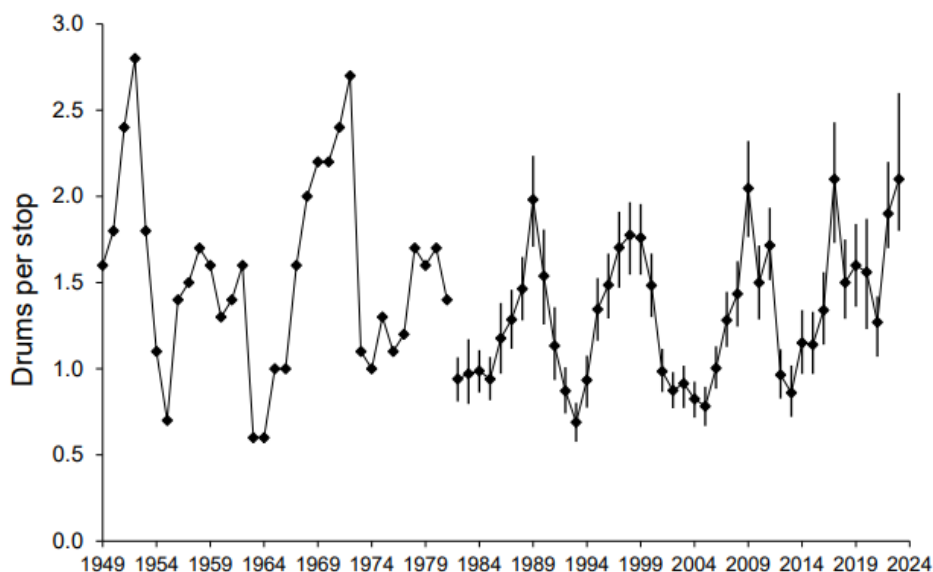


## GROUSE HUNTING IN RED LAKE WMA

The Ruffed Grouse Survey Report is available on the DNR webpage (<https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/hunting/grouse/reports.html>). According to the report, mean ruffed grouse drums per stop were 2.1 statewide, which is up from last year and similar to recent peaks in the population cycle, which usually vary from 8-11 years apart. However, counts were not up in all survey regions, and increases were most notable in the Northeast. Statewide counts near peak values this year might indicate that the low in the population cycle occurred in 2021, but that the cycle did not dip as low as it has in the past. The survey assumes that only the number of grouse varies among years, but there have been lots of changes, including staff changes (possible changes in ability to hear low frequency drums), floods, droughts, and variable snow roosting conditions across the state.

In the Red Lake WMA area, spring and summer conditions were favorable for chick survival and staff are seeing both individual birds and broods during normal field work. We are looking forward to a rewarding grouse season. The ruffed grouse and spruce grouse season runs from September 16 to January 1, 2024.



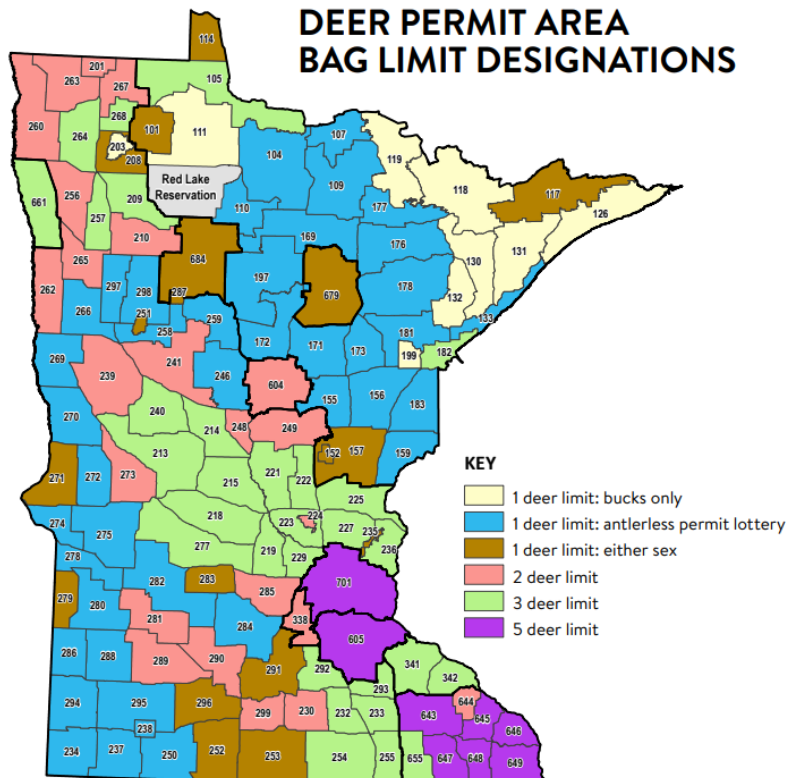
Above: Statewide ruffed grouse population index values in Minnesota from 1949-2023.

## WANTED: SPRUCE GROUSE WINGS AND TAILS

We are looking for the wings and tail feathers from Spruce Grouse. They will be donated to 4H hunter education groups to assist with educational programs and help new hunters learn bird identification. If you harvest a spruce grouse and are willing to make a donation, please bring your bird to the Red Lake WMA office. Call the number on the door if we are out of the office.

## DEER OUTLOOK

Archery deer season begins September 16. The firearm deer season begins November 4. We are still attempting to increase the deer density in Deer Permit Area (DPA) 111, the area encompassing most of Red Lake WMA. Deer Permit Area 111 will have a 1 deer limit: bucks only designation for the 2023 season. Adjacent DPAs 101 and 105 will have less restrictive designations. DPA 101 will be designated a 1 deer limit: either sex, and DPA 105 will be designated as a 3 deer limit.



Above: Statewide Deer Bag Limits for 2023

## SUMMER CAMPGROUND ACTIVITY

This summer, a group of Tribal members from the Red Lake, White Earth, Leech Lake, Cheyenne River, and Ponemah bands, organized by the non-profit Manidoo-Ogitigaan (<https://www.manidooogitigaan.org/>), camped near Norris Camp. Attendees stayed at the Picnic Area and focused on collecting blueberries, but also collected June berries, choke cherries, raspberries, and a few other species as they were available. Overall, blueberry harvesters in the Red Lake WMA area found reasonable success this summer during what was a shorter and earlier season than in recent years' past.

A focus of the Manidoo-Ogitigaan group is to re-connect people, especially Tribal members, to traditional cultural aspects of the outdoors. In addition to harvesting berries, participants worked under the guidance of several experts who guided them on aspects of traditional crafts. They collected birch bark for various crafts, including traditional basket making. They also collected spruce roots and red-osier dogwood stems for use as lashing on various items, including baskets and canoes. The spruce roots were split length-wise and boiled to make them supple for use in baskets. Kyle Johnson, DNR entomologist, spent a day showing the group some of the moths and butterflies of the area.



Above: one of several traditional structures erected by the Manidoo-Ogitigaan group



Above: DNR entomologist Kyle Johnson shows off a catch to onlookers

**CONTACT US:**

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