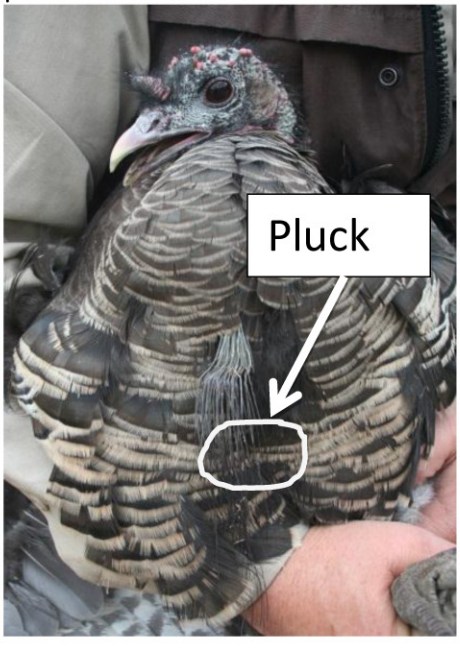
Fall Turkey Season Only

Submitting feathers is vital to proper turkey management

Why do we collect this data? *We use the feather information to determine age and gender of harvested wild turkeys which allows SD GFP to better manage future wild turkey populations.*

1) Please collect the top 3-4 inches of both the 9th and 10th primary feathers using scissors to cut as shown in the picture below. Place feathers in envelope provided by SD GFP.

2) Please collect 4-5 breast feathers by plucking feathers from the area outlined in the picture below. The area for plucking is in the middle of the breast about 2-3 inches below where a beard would be on an adult gobbler or bearded hen. Juvenile males or females may not have beards but feathers should be plucked from this same area. Place feathers in envelope provided by SD GFP.

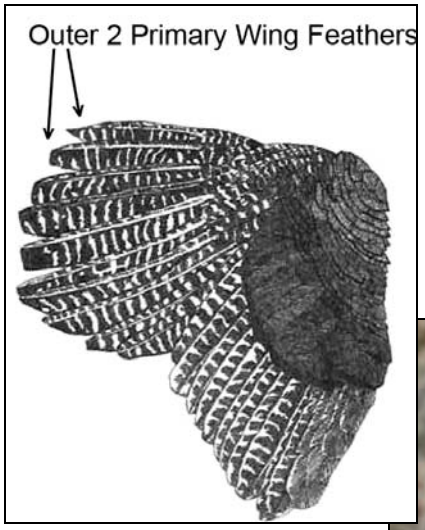


3) Submit feather samples in pre-paid envelope provided by SD GFP.

South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks

Division of Wildlife

Wild Turkey Gender and Aging Guide



Age by Wing Feathers

Place the wing in a fanned position and find the outermost 2 wing feathers (9th and 10th primary feathers). If the tips are rounded and have white bars extending to the tip it is an **adult**. If the tips are pointed and dark or without white bars extending to the tip it is a **juvenile**.

Adult – white bars extend to the tips of the 9th and 10th primary feathers.

Juvenile- wing tips are dark or white bars do not extend to the tips of the 9th and 10th primary feathers.

Gender by Breast Feathers

Look at the breast feathers on the lower 2/3 of the breast. If the breast feathers are dark-tipped it is a **male** and if the breast feathers are buff-tipped it is a **female**.

Male – breast feathers are dark tipped.

Female – breast feathers are buff-tipped