



# NEWSLETTER

OUR GOAL: To Promote, Preserve, and Experience One of the Greatest Southern Traditions Known... Quail Hunting.

November 2012 • Published Quarterly • N.H. Holt, Editor

## Fall Field Trial

The Alabama Quail Hunters Fall field trial will be held on December 1st.

We are thankful to Gates Shaw for hosting the fall trial. This year we will be using a different field. The new field looks like South Georgia, with scattered large pines. It is sure to add a new degree of challenge and fun to the event.

If you would like to register your dog please contact Bob Carr (205-424-1381) or Frank Harris (after business hours 205-595-0203). Please register by Thursday night (11/29) at the latest.



### Registration fees:

- Puppy Class up to 12 months old - \$35.00
- Derby Class any dog up to 36 months old, \$40.00
- Gun Dog Class is open to any dog, \$45.00
- Senior Dog Class only open to dogs over 8 years old, \$45.00

### Directions to Gates Shaw's Farm

- Take I-65 and Exit at the Montevallo & Calera Exit onto AL Hwy 25.
- Go South on AL Hwy 25 through Calera, Montevallo & Wilton about 13 miles total to Bibb Co. Hwy 65. (about 7 miles from Wilton)
- Turn Right onto Bibb Co. Hwy 65 and go about 1 mile to Carlton Pass.
- Turn Right onto Carlton Pass and go to the dead end.
- The gate at the dead end is the entrance into Gates Shaw's Farm.
- Go through the gate to the designated parking area.



# A Report from South Dakota

By: Mike Barlow

Again this year I was fortunate enough to return to South Dakota with Alabama Quail Association member Harold Ridgeway. This trip continues to be a fabulous adventure for both man and dog. This year we found that drought conditions were every bit as severe as had been reported. We observed striking crop damage as we traveled northward through the Midwestern states all the way to Dakota. Arriving in Rockham we found the toll easier to comprehend because we had the memory of last year's crop to use as a standard. The local farmer said the impact to his corn harvest was about a thirty percent loss. The damage was especially severe with the grasses. With the sparse and thin grasses, Mother Nature let all the pheasant hens know that this was not the year to risk raising young. We saw almost no young chicks. We did have birds to work the dogs but certainly not in the numbers we saw last year.

Some things had not changed. We enjoyed wonderful accommodations and great fellowship with our Texas and South Dakota friends. If you want a great training experience and a wonderful adventure I would suggest you put this trip at the very top of your list.

## Treasurer's Desk

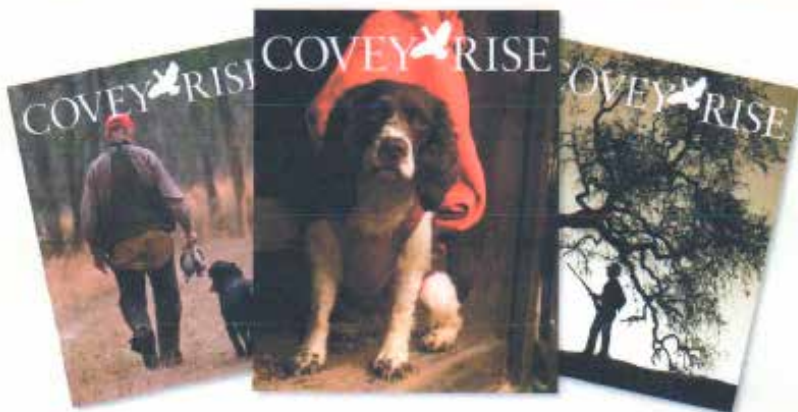
Fall is here and the cool weather gives our dogs a chance to run. Please check your AQH Newsletter mailing label. If "12-12" does not follow your name, my records show that you have not yet paid your 2012 dues payable to all AQH members on January 1st. Please send me your check made out to AL Quail Hunters & mailed to 1901 Morgan Road, Bessemer, AL 35022. Your annual \$15.00 dues are income tax deductible. If I have made an error, email me at coalcarr@bham.rr.com or call me during office hours at (205) 424-1381.

Bob Carr,  
AQH Treasurer

## Welcome To Our Newest Members

Ed Bullard from Hayden  
Christy Fairchild from Irondale

Introducing the new  
**COVEY RISE**



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# HEY FOLKS

Seven years of quail habitat improvement came to an end in May 2012 as our AQH Lease Club was asked by our landlord to terminate the lease to make room for a cattle ranch. Reflecting back, we began with a couple of coveys of birds on 365 acres of old, reclaimed surface mined property. The soil fertility varied from good to weak. Much of it was rocky and hard. The vegetation of prominence was rank fescue. Also present were briars, weeping love grass, sumac, kudzu and plums. Absent were oaks, longleaf pines, and bicolor lespedeza. There had not been a bush hog cutter nor cattle grazing on the land in quite some time. Fire ants produced large mounds all over the property. The landowner had attempted to plant some loblolly pines on the property. All that remained were a few scattered pines. The terrain also included some sink holes ranging from small to huge. Four wheelers trespassed on us regularly.

Larry Campbell, a local farmer and his family became good friends to all members in the club. Larry provided good advice, assistance and security for our equipment.

In year 2 we begin working to improve our property. We scratched in the dirt with borrowed equipment, planted seeds, prescribed burned one-third of the property on an annual rotational basis, and repaired equipment. Looking back, we were definitely not very well equipped. Our mechanical skills were at a minimum. Luckily, we had some older members that could recall how to repair the older equipment. We learned who had access to a welding machine and other needed tools.

The summer 2007 was very disheartening as a wildfire raged across our property destroying cover. The general consensus was it was arson. One bonus from the fire was that the doves fed on the parched seeds all fall and winter. It created the best dove shooting we ever had on our lease. The greatest moment of inspiration came when, early one fall, we saw a fresh hatch of quail chicks scuffle across a field road. When the landowner cancelled our lease, we ended up with 4 to 5 coveys of wild birds. That is a covey of quail per 80 acres of land. All participants should be very proud of this success. I speculate that the ample 2012 rains would have pushed our covey count even higher. A friend near Blountsville told me that he began his quail habitat improvement about the same time as AQH and has produced 3 wild coveys over 200 acres.

What did we learn along the way?

- 1.) We planted sesame as an experiment and it was a winner. The sesame plants grow about waist high providing good overhead cover for the quail. In the fall and winter, the seeds drop over a long period of time providing food for the birds.
- 2.) There is no benefit to weeping love grass. Love grass is tough on a tractor and a rotary cutter. Perhaps it provides some cover, but in my sole opinion, it is not worth planting.
- 3.) Positive results from habitat improvement work comes slowly. Just like all farming, in the dry years, you are lucky if your crop makes seed and your quail population remains stable.

I think we accomplished what we were after, improving quail habitat, having a good time chasing birds, enjoying good fellowship with our fellow hunters and having fun training our dogs. I am thankful to say, there was never a serious accident. Follow us southeast to Talladega County for our next quail challenge.

Frank Harris,  
President

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# MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Office Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_

New Member

Renewal

**2012 DUES – \$15.00**

*Check Payable to "Alabama Quail Hunters"*

For more information call N. H. Holt @ 205-936-6293 or contact:



1901 Morgan Road S.E. Bessemer, Alabama 35022



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