



**Greater South East Michigan
Ruffed Grouse Society**

This year we will do it differently

Our committee meetings will be activity meetings this year! These may include meeting at a shooting range, having a guest speaker or other possibilities. We will still have business to do but we can accomplish this by spreading out the responsibilities and using small groups to handle our fun events.

In the past our local chapter meetings have been once a month and used to just conduct

business. Most of us have been doing this for a least several years and for the most part we started for the same reasons. The reason I personally got involved was equally to meet other grouse hunters and to give back to the resource that is very important to me. To be honest, the chapter meetings are pretty dry, and even though it is only two hours once a month, it does get to be like having another hob at times. The plus is that we are a diverse group of some great people from different backgrounds that enjoy each others' company.

Events to look forward to:

- . March- Gun dog fun trial
- . March- booth at Fly Fishing Show
- . May/June- Sorting Clay shoot
- . September- Sportsman Banquet
- . October to November- Grouse and woodcock camp

Come join us at the Livonia Civic Center Library 32777 Five Mile Rd (between Farmington and Merriman) January 17, at 7:00 pm as we get to meet our new Michigan RGS Biologist. We will

recap our season, and look forward to some special events being planned for 2011. This is the 50th year of RGS!!! A big pot of Chilli, and soft drinks will be provided.

Jeff Clyma, President

Local Habitat Work

Your local RGS chapter is working with the DNR to promote habitat work on local state game areas. This winter, work will be done in the Waterloo Recreation area to create early succession forest to benefit grouse and woodcock. Many of our gray-haired members may recall decent bird numbers in this area 30-40 years ago. We realize we will never have the high bird numbers found up north, but hope to return some of this land back to more suitable bird habitat.

This same timber work is in the planning stages at the Sharonville State Game area this winter. Areas of the game area will be surveyed and prioritized for management. If any of you are familiar with the area and would like to suggest areas you feel need work, please send them to Brad Utrup at - greatersemirgs@gmail.com.

Woodcock and Ruffed Grouse Surveys

Coinciding with this habitat work, we are also organizing surveys to monitor the impact these habitat improvements are having. We will be conducting woodcock singing and grouse drumming surveys during their respective breeding seasons. We will be operating these surveys strictly through volunteers. If you would like to volunteer to help with the surveys please contact Brad Utrup at - greatersemirgs@gmail.com.

Brad Utrup

Hello, I am a bird hunter.

I feel as though I should be standing in front of a podium confessing my vices to my peers in hope that with their help I can overcome this problem. I have spent lots of hard to come by free time training, putting up with messes, cleaning the yard and trying to keep my dog from slobbering on my mother-in-law. That does not count the puppy stage; the teething and house training and midnight potty breaks when I get into the pen to "look over the litter," and end up picking up the next great prospect. I guess if I really just wanted to kill

some birds, I would take a slow walk through grouse cover with my gun at the ready. It would be effective enough, and I would not have dog fur all over the house, and nose prints on the windows. I know some guys who hunt this way and take more birds than I do.

Although it is hard to explain to friends who don't hunt birds, it is all about the dog for me. Right now it is a long legged setter that has looks to go on a magazine cover along with the old guy wiping down his Parker. I was told by a friend that I wouldn't take many birds over her, because I'd be taking too many pictures. Before her it was a sweet Brittany, and who knows what the next will be.

We all know how a young dog can flush birds well out of any shotgun range, but put your best trained prospect into a cover loaded with migrating woodcock, and watch the scent overload short out all his circuits. All your careful training goes out the window. At first. Second day in that field is magic. Then comes doggy adolescence when the only thing that interests them is over the next county line. Then the dog is 3 or 4 years and you get to enjoy the prime years when every bird is pinned down perfectly and your hunting partners jealously dream of having a dog like

that. And that dog is what you had in mind when you picked out the cute little fur ball.

In reality, my dogs tend to be similar to each other in traits good and bad. My four year old has turned into at least an average grouse dog that on some days seems to have forgotten everything, and on others is a superstar. She is a reflection of me and my hunting style and ability as a hunter and as a trainer. And I would have it no other way. The company of my dogs will surely be my fondest memories cherished long after my legs will no longer allow me to walk the north woods.

But for now, I have to wipe the nose prints off the windows before the company comes.

Jeff Clyma

Happy New Year