

Pen-Raised Quail in Georgia

Frequently Asked Questions

(Revised August 2013)

Will releasing pen-raised quail into the wild help restore wild quail?

- Releasing pen-raised quail into the wild is a common question relative to restoring wild bobwhite populations. In fact, during the mid 1900's, a few state game and fish agencies began propagating quail as a means to restore and sustain bobwhite populations but were unsuccessful. We know a small percentage of pen-raised quail that are released into the wild may pair up with one another and even wild birds and mate; however there is no scientific evidence that pen-raised birds have the ability to survive and reproduce in the wild at levels capable of restoring self-sustaining wild bobwhite populations. Additionally, releasing pen-raised birds into the wild can potentially introduce disease and parasites into wild bird populations, create competition with wild quail for food and/or mates, and concentrate and increase exposure to predators. However, most of these concerns have not been adequately addressed through research, but the potential exists. That being said, pen-raised birds are useful for training dogs, providing a quail hunting experience and meeting shooting objectives on shooting preserves and lands where wild quail restoration isn't feasible or practical, which helps to maintain interest and support for conservation of wild quail populations. Restoring wild quail populations requires dedicated and focused implementation of habitat management practices to meet annual habitat needs of the bobwhite.

Is it legal to trap wild quail or collect wild quail eggs and use these as a source for pen-raised quail?

- It is illegal to trap wild quail or collect wild quail eggs as a source for pen-raised quail.

What permits are needed to open a commercial shooting preserve?

- A Commercial Shooting Preserve license (#040) is required to operate a shooting preserve where participants pay to shoot pen-raised game birds. This license is available for further review and download on our website, <http://georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes/commercial>.

Do I need a permit to raise and sell pen-raised quail?

- Yes, a Commercial Quail Breeder license (#026) is required to propagate pen-raised quail for commercial purposes. This license is available for review and download on our website, <http://georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes/commercial>.

Do I need a permit to release pen-raised quail on my land or land I lease for non-commercial hunting and/or training bird dogs?

- A shooting preserve license is not required to release pen-raised quail, on land you own or lease, for the training of bird dogs. However, you must retain proof of purchase of the pen-raised quail, along with the name of the commercial quail breeder where purchased, and have the approval of the landowner if leasing the property.
- Any person who hunts or allows hunting of pen-raised quail, non-commercially, outside the statewide open season for hunting quail will need a private shooting preserve license.

Do I need a permit to hold pen-raised quail for non-commercial hunting or for personal consumption?

- Yes, a game holding permit (quail only) is required to hold and release pen-raised quail for the purpose of propagation into the wild or for other non-commercial purposes. This license is available for review and download on our website, <http://georgiawildlife.com/licenses-permits-passes/commercial>.
- No permit is required if pen-raised quail are held for personal consumption only. However, you must retain proof of purchase of the pen-raised quail, along with the name of the commercial quail breeder where purchased.