



The Gobblers

The gobbling was intense. We had spotted 13 birds and were able to sneak to within 50 yards undetected. From 800 yards across the ravine, across the deadfall bridge, it appeared to be 3 gobblers, a few jakes and tons of hens. One of the gobblers was just enormous. We had rounded a corner in a perfect little ambush clearing and spotted the flock. Now, crouched under some Cedar trees we waited while I guide called.

All the gobbling responses were coming from the right side of the opening. That is where we saw the birds and backed away from. All eyes were trained in that direction with shotguns pointed just so. The responses grew louder, but seemed to hang up beyond view. Patience and more patience were called for.

Gradually however, I heard footsteps approaching from the bush and tree line we climbed to the left. No gobbling just footsteps, louder and louder. I thought it must be a deer and that this whole set up was going to crash. Like Poe's *Tell Tale Heart*, louder they grew. I turned my head and just then, walking right up the path into the clearing was the biggest turkey I had ever seen. He was 10 feet away and immediately noticed me as well. "Puck, puck, puck" he spit out as he spun on his heels and headed right back from where he came. A second later the Hevi-Shot #5's silenced his retreat.

Had I not heard this bird slipping up the hill toward my position, I could never have made the shot. My buddy and the guide were not in position to see him, they didn't hear him, and besides, we all knew to look toward the right side. Oh yeah, did I mention I was wearing **PRO-EARS**? This camo device not only protected me from the potential damage of a shot gun blast, but augmented my already excellent hearing. The pounding footsteps were really just the careful cadence of the dominant bird going for a look see.

This cross between a Merriam and an Eastern had a foot long beard, 1 1/8 spurs and weighed in at 23 lbs. There is no question that if I were not wearing **PRO-EARS** he would still be out in Nebraska today. Next year when we go with Don Schwandt, owner of D & E outfitters (719-591-8934, aksheephunter@msn.com) I'm bringing my bow and leaving the shotgun at home. While the gun will be left at home, my **PRO-EARS** are as essential as a sharp broad head!

