

## Late In The Game Pheasant Schemes

Late season pheasant outings can be the most productive and enjoyable portion of the season. Fewer hunters and no standing crops to compete with, make the late season an excellent time to work off some Thanksgiving feasting. Ringnecks that have survived the season long assault from hunters and their dogs are challenging to say the least. These highly educated birds will out-wit the best tracking dogs. The skills they possess have been honed from daily run ins with the Midwest's finest two and four legged warriors, so special tactics are needed to bag a few.

Keeping noise to a minimum is key any time you are pheasant hunting but it is especially critical when in pursuit of late season roosters. Constant hacking to keep your dog under control will alert any late season rooster that trouble is near. Rather than trying to control my dog with voice and whistle commands, I will give the dog a touch of light stimulation from the electric training collar to remind him he is pushing my gun range. Any dog that has been properly trained with the e-collar will automatically reign in when he feels the light stimulation without any commands. Late season pheasants are notorious for their world class speed used to out run you and your dog. Sparse late season habitat gives the birds fewer places to hide so they are more inclined to sprint to the end of the field and flush wild as opposed to sitting tight. When a seasoned hunting dog hits the hot track, they are inclined to sprint to the end of the field as well, leaving you a few hundred yards back in the dust. Some hunters like to run after the dog, I personally will only quicken the pace just so much to keep up with the dog. Besides the safety issue of running with a loaded gun, is that most dogs will become even more excited when they see you running after them. I think pulling an out of range dog off of a hot track is a must on late season birds. If you don't you can kiss any birds goodbye and maybe your prized gun dog if the rooster decides to flush near a busy road.

Hunters that use beeper/remote training collars to keep track of their dogs in the field may want to shut the beeper off so there is less chance to spook birds. Most these units have a locate only button, so you don't have to listen to the constant BEEP, BEEP. BEEP. A tap on the locate button every so often will help keep track of your dog and cut down on the noise. Another trick is to cover all or a portion of the beeper horn with duck tape to muffle the beeper noise.

Less noise from you and your dog is important when hunting late season ringnecks, these methods won't make the two of you totally stealth but they will help.

Pete Fischer, [www.fischerskennels.com](http://www.fischerskennels.com)