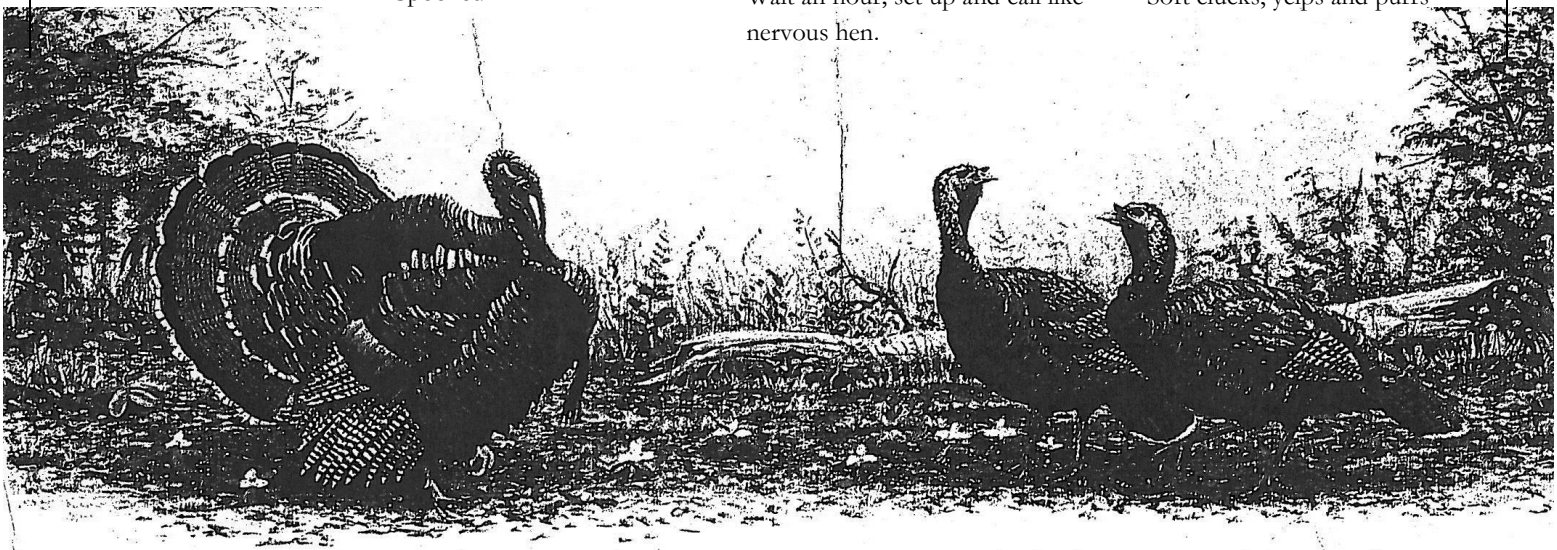


TROUBLE-SHOOTING TURKEYS

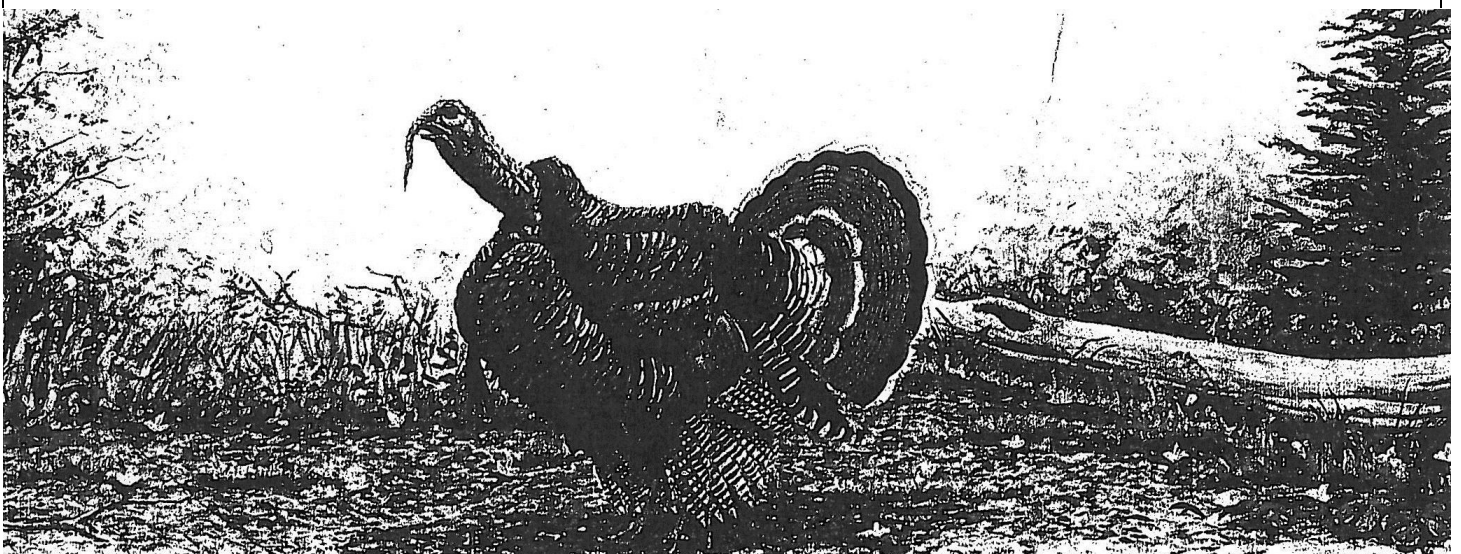
BY MICHAEL PEARCE
ILLUSTRATIONS BY MICHAEL GRAHAM

EVER BEEN PLAGUED BY A GOBBLER GREMLIN? THESE COMMON MALADIES AND CURES COULD BE THE CLOSEST THING TO A TURKEY HUNTING QUICK FIX.

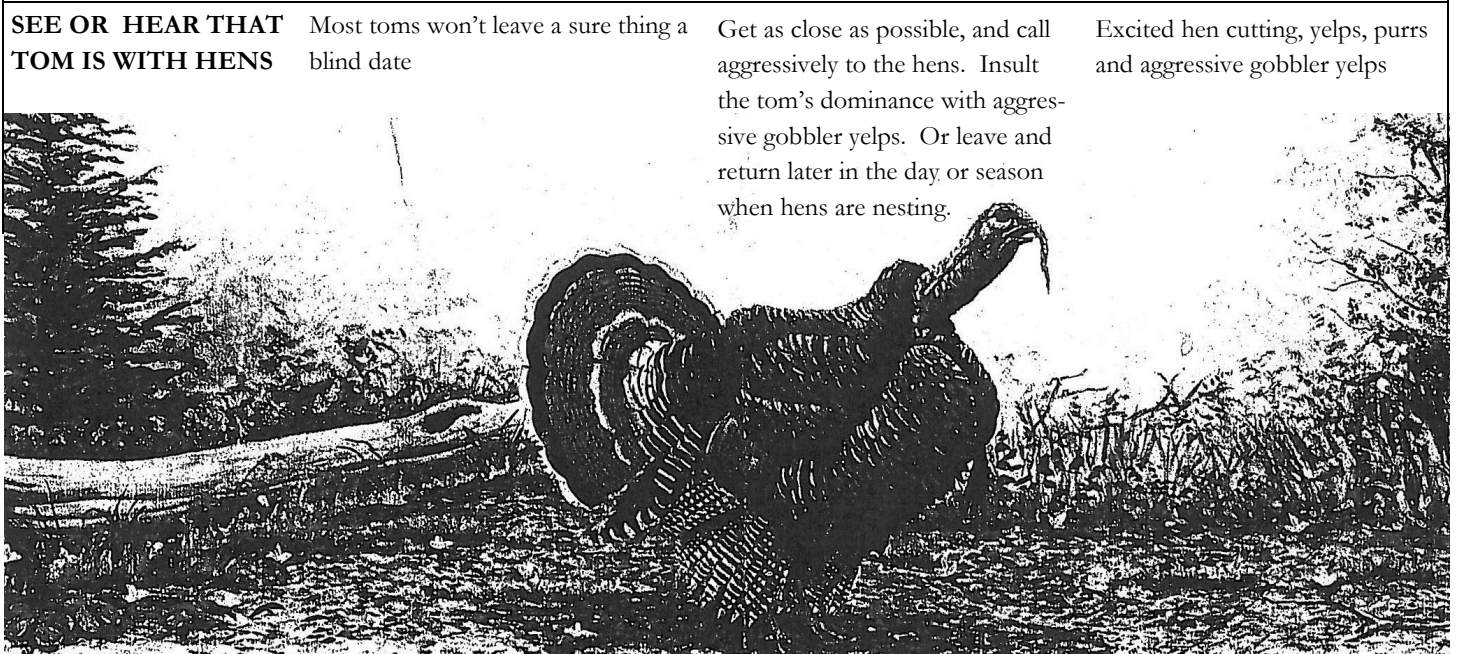
PROBLEM	LIKELY DIAGNOSIS	SOLUTION	PREFERRED CALLS
GOBBLES WHILE WALKING AWAY	With hens	Circle to get ahead, call aggressively to hens or return later when hens are nesting.	Excited cutting, purrs and yelps.
	Obstruction	Change calling position.	
	Outside of daily pattern	Change calling position.	
	Call-shy or subdominant tom	Circle ahead; call softly and sparingly like nervous hen or tom. Be very patient.	Soft, soothing clucks, purrs or gobbler yelps
GOBBLES BUT WON'T BUDGE	With hens	Get as close as possible; try to call in the hens.	Aggressive cutting, purrs and yelps.
	Obstruction	Change calling position.	
	On strutting area	Get as close as possible; maybe set up in strutting area the next hunt.	
	Call-shy	Get close; call very sparingly. Be patient and alert.	Soft, soothing clucks, purrs and yelps
GOBBLES ON THE ROOST, QUIET ON THE GROUND	With hens	Call aggressively to hens; return later when hens are nesting.	Excited cutting, purrs and yelps.
	Call-shy	Call soothingly and sparingly; possibly rake leaves with hand for added realism. Be patient and pay attention!	Soft tree yelps, clucks and purrs
	Spooked	Wait an hour; set up and call like nervous hen.	Soft clucks, yelps and purrs



PROBLEM	LIKELY DIAGNOSIS	SOLUTION	PREFERRED CALLS
GOBBLES WELL, SEEMS TO BE COMING, THEN SHUTS UP AND NEVER SHOWS	Intercepted by hen	Wait 15 to 20 minutes, then call aggressively to attract hen; locate	Aggressive cutting, purrs and yelps
	Spooked by predator or hunter	Wait 20 minutes; set up where last heard tom and call like nervous	Soft clucks, purrs and yelps
	Call-shy or subdominant tom	Be patient and watch all angles; call sparingly with soothing calls.	Soft clucks, purrs and yelps
SUDDENLY APPEARS CLOSE BEHIND OR BE-SIDE	Poor setup	Don't move! Wait for tom to move in front or out of sight, then	None, because he'd pinpoint location and flush.
	Different gobbler	Don't move! But keep looking for original gobbler.	None, because he'd pinpoint location and flush.
TURKEY ONLY GOBBLES ONCE	With hens	Call to attract hens. Possibly move closer and try to lure tom into	Aggressive cutting, purrs and yelps
	Subdominant or call-shy	Use soft calls. Be very patient.	Soft clucks, purrs and yelps
	Off gobbling peak	Try to get them excited. If that fails, resort to fall gobbler calls.	Aggressive cutting or gobbler yelps
HANGS UP JUST OUT OF RANGE	Call-shy	Be patient and conservative. If possible, turn and send calls behind you or try scratching in the leaves	None, if you can see the turkey; an occasional click or purr if you can't
	Obstruction	Let bird move off; reposition yourself so that the tom's path is	None
COMES IN UNNOTICED AND BEGINS PUTTING AND WALKING OFF	Bird is alarmed at unknown shape of hunter or absence of actual hen	Mimic the tom's putts and he may pause long enough for a shot. If not, come back the next day and avoid using the same calls and set-up. Be patient, the tom may come in slowly and quietly.	Excited putting



PROBLEM	LIKELY DIAGNOSIS	SOLUTION	PREFERRED CALLS
STAYS IN ROOST	Bad weather Spooked by predator (coyote or bobcat)	Set up as close as possible and be patient. Be patient. Begin with soft calls and later get more aggressive, if you need to get the tom excited. Or hunt elsewhere and return an hour or town later. Return later, and call sparingly like a nervous hen. Be ready for silent approach.	Everything from tree yelps to cutting
GOBBLER RESPONDING WELL BUT NOT CROSSING CREEK OR FENCE	Wants “hen” to cross	Carefully change position to same side of obstruction, if possible, and use same calls as before. If not, set up at easiest crossing spot use excited calling. Be patient.	Continue with what’s been working—excited cutting and yelping
FLUSHES OVERHEAD WHILE YOU’RE WALKING IN	Spooked	If confident was a tom, move in direction of flushed bird; wait 20 to 30 minutes; begin calling like a spooked hen and gradually build excitement. Be patient, or leave the area and return several hours later.	Soft clucks, purrs, yelps and eventually lost calls and more aggressive yelps
GOOD AREA, BUT BIRD WON’T GOBBLE AT LOCATING CALLS	Heavy hunting pressure Off gobbling peak (weather, later or early spring) With hens	Set up in a good area; use realistic sounding clucks and purrs. Be patient. Try excited cutting and yelps. Or try blind-calling with traditional yelps and clucks. Don’t overlook blind-calling with gobbler yelps. Call aggressively to hens, or return later when hens are nesting.	Soft clucks, purrs and yelps Aggressive hen yelps and cutting; gobbler yelps to excite a tom. Aggressive cutting, purrs and yelps
SEE OR HEAR THAT TOM IS WITH HENS	Most toms won’t leave a sure thing a blind date	Get as close as possible, and call aggressively to the hens. Insult the tom’s dominance with aggressive gobbler yelps. Or leave and return later in the day or season when hens are nesting.	Excited hen cutting, yelps, purrs and aggressive gobbler yelps



PROBLEM	LIKELY DIAGNOSIS	SOLUTION	PREFERRED CALLS
BAD WEATHER/ NO GOBBLES	Weather changes has subdued gobbling activity	Concentrate on prime areas, possibly out of the wind or rain. Sometimes excited hen cutting will fire a tom into gobbling. If not, try blind-calling. Start soft and build excitement. Be patient and ready for silent toms coming in.	Everything from soft hen talk to excited gobbler yelps
NO GOBBLING WHERE THERE WHERE PLENTY OF TOMS WHILE SCOUTING	Heavy hunting pressure	Break away from pattern of other hunters. Hunt midday or midweek, and enter area from unusual direction. Rely on sparing use of realistic sounding friction calls (which birds probably aren't used to). Watch for gobblers coming in silently.	Soft clucks and purrs
	Turkeys moved	Possibly scouted too early. If fresh sign is absent, scout new areas that have fresh food and good nesting cover.	
	Lull in gobbling	Try calling aggressively to get a tom excited. Try blind-calling from likely areas, using soft hen talk mixed with gobbler yelping.	Excited hen cutting, yelping and gobbler yelps

