

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and
Social Sciences

Great Plains Studies, Center for

2007

Review of Texas Quails: Ecology and Management

Paul A. Johnsgard

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, pajohnsgard@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsresearch>



Part of the [Other International and Area Studies Commons](#)

Johnsgard, Paul A., "Review of Texas Quails: Ecology and Management" (2007). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 897.

<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/greatplainsresearch/897>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Great Plains Studies, Center for at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

Texas Quails: Ecology and Management. Edited by Leonard A. Brennan. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007. xii + 491 pp. Maps, figures, tables, references, index. \$40.00 cloth.

Texan quail enthusiasts can count themselves lucky, since Texas is one of only two states (New Mexico is the other) supporting native populations of four species of American quails. These include the nearly ubiquitous northern bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*), the scaled quail (*Callipepla squamata*) of the desert grasslands, the Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*) of the upper Rio Grande Valley, and the rare and beautiful Montezuma quail (*Cyrtonyx montezumae*) of the Trans-Pecos and Edwards Plateau's pine-oak woodlands.

The American quails have long received their full share of attention from biologists and wildlife management agencies, and this book attempts to summarize the currently available information about them, with special reference to Texas. In doing so, no fewer than 29 persons contributed to the volume, including some of the best-

known regional figures in quail research and biology. The book's 25 chapters are divided into three sections. The first, of six chapters, reviews the basic biology of each of the four species, as well as quail diseases and parasites. In doing so, it presents the most comprehensive and current summaries of quail biology available for most of these species. The second and longest section, of ten chapters, reviews quail ecology in each of the state's ten ecological regions, six of which are occupied only by northern bobwhites. The final section, of nine chapters, deals with a variety of management, regulatory, social, and economic issues affecting quail and quail hunting. These chapters have particular relevance to Texas, with more limited application or relevance elsewhere. Throughout, there is a liberal array of tabular data summaries and population trend-lines, most of which unfortunately show recent downward trends. There are more than 500 references, a few of which were published as recently as 2003.

All told, this is a masterful summary of the ecology, populations, and management of four of America's most important species of quails, especially valuable for its coverage of the less-documented western species, such as the Montezuma and scaled quails. The summary for the Montezuma quail is especially welcome, as it is easily the least-studied and rarest of all U.S. quails. Coordinating the writing schedules and subsequent editing of about two dozen other authors must have been a horrendous task for the editor, L.E. Brennan, and yet the book reads surprisingly well. Except for the cover photo of a Montezuma quail, there are no color plates, and very few photos of live birds, emphasizing the book's reference orientation. For such a hefty volume, it is reasonably priced, having been subsidized by several Texas organizations, especially the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute. It would be a valuable addition to any biological reference library, or to persons having a special interest in any of the included species. **Paul A. Johnsgard**, *School of Biological Sciences, University of Nebraska-Lincoln*.