

# NEWS

## Iowa’s pheasant season evolved over decades

Iowa’s current 70-plus day long pheasant season, opening on the last Saturday in October through January 10 each year, is a long way from how it began. In the early years, from 1926-41, the season varied in length from 2-7 days, and pre-1933, it was only opened in counties where 150 landowners signed a petition to hold a season.

Shooting hours bounced around, too, from opening at noon until WW2 to avoid conflicts with morning farm work, to opening at 9 a.m., and then back to noon, then sunrise to sunset (for one year) before settling on 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., in 1966.

“It was surprising how ultra-conservative the seasons were early on, at a time when staff were fielding complaints that pheasants were damaging crops,” said Todd Bogenschutz, upland wildlife research biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. “But wildlife biology and management were a new science; the impacts of hunting and habitat on populations were not well understood.”

As the field of wildlife biology expanded, new research allowed staff to lengthen the season because the data showed harvesting only roosters had little impact on the population as a whole. Research also found that the pheasant population can be impacted by hunting late into winter, because hens are flushed along with roosters and exposed to risks from weather and predators.

Quail, Iowa’s other popular resident game bird, is often compared to pheasants, except quail are legal to hunt through the end of January. Research has also shown that late winter hunting does not impact Iowa’s quail population largely because quail can offset this loss through reproduction; quail can hatch four nests in a year whereas pheasants only produce one nest per year.

“That’s a common question we get since South Dakota extended its season through the end of January in 2020 to encourage nonresident hunters to come. But we know that in states where the average snowfall exceeds 30 inches, hunting pheasants into late January can impact next year’s population,” Bogenschutz said.

“Weather in late

January and February is almost always more severe than in November and December, and quality habitat becomes more limited due to the impact of deep snow on grassland habitats. Now with this past mild winter, it probably would have been fine, but in a severe winter it would really hammer the pheasants.”

Winter is an important time for hen survival, he said, which has the largest influence on future populations. “On the flipside, we’ve had requests to open the season earlier in October, but this comes with its own set of issues,” Bogenschutz said.

“It’s a curve – this past fall we had a lot of young roosters that hadn’t fully colored up due to later nesting because of the floods in June,” he said. “An earlier opener would also mean warmer temperatures which can impact both hunters and dogs, and likely lead to more standing crops on opening day. It can also conflict with duck and goose openers.”

“We know that hunters like consistency of the current season structure. It’s a reasonable time when most roosters are recognizable, most of the crops are harvested, and it protects pheasants for future generations.”

Did You Know: Iowa moved its opening day of pheasant season back one day in 1959, to avoid a conflict with the Iowa-Minnesota football game (won by the Hawks 33-0).

**A century of pheasant hunting**

The Iowa DNR and Pheasants Forever are celebrating 100 years of pheasant hunting in the Hawkeye State. The first season was held Oct. 20-22, 1925, when 13 counties in north central Iowa were opened to pheasant hunting. Hunters were allowed a three-rooster limit, for a half-day of hunting. An estimated 75,000 hunters participated.

Hunters can commemorate the 100th anniversary by purchasing a hard card featuring Iowa Pheasants Forever Print of the Year when they purchase their 2025 hunting and fishing licenses.

Information on places to hunt, the August roadside survey results and more is available online by clicking the 100 Years of Pheasant Hunting graphic at [www.iowadnr.gov/pheasantsurvey](http://www.iowadnr.gov/pheasantsurvey).

## More violations found at hotel previously cited for roaches, bed bugs and garbage

**Clark Kauffman**  
**Iowa Capital Dispatch**

A Dubuque hotel recently cited for more than two dozen health-and-safety violations, including bed bugs, cockroaches and hallways strewn with garbage, has been cited for additional violations.

In January, a Dubuque city inspector visited the 98-year-old Canfield Hotel at 36 W. 4th St., Dubuque, and cited the business for 14 regulatory violations — an exceptionally large number for a hotel. Two weeks later, the inspector returned and cited the hotel for 12 additional violations.

State records show the inspector, Tim Link, returned to the hotel on March 18 and cited the business for many of the same violations found earlier in the year, including worn carpet, damaged walls, broken window glass, dirty bathrooms, “a large amount of pest-control powder” behind a guest-room bed, peeling paint and several areas that were in need of a “thorough cleaning.”

“Pest control has treated entire premises once and will return,” Link wrote in his report. “Repairs of hallway walls has started, staff are removing garbage regularly. In speaking with owner by phone, he stated he plans to hire housekeeping staff.”

It’s not clear what the next steps are for the city. Link said Tuesday the hotel staff has made progress addressing some of the violations, but added that “I’m not done with them.”

Among the problems reported by Link in January and February were “infested rooms” that had not been adequately treated to eliminate infestations of roaches and bed bugs. Litter and

garbage had accumulated in some of the hallways and guest rooms.

At that time, Link also indicated the Canfield Hotel had guests registered for weekly, biweekly and monthly stays — and he noted that those individuals were not receiving linen service or housekeeping services as required by regulations. The draperies in “many rooms” were reported to be visibly dirty, and the bedding for guest rooms was “not maintained clean,” Link stated in his report.

**‘The guy is a real tool bag. Don’t answer your phone...’**

On Feb. 24, the Iowa Capital Dispatch formally requested access to the city’s copies of its 2025 inspection reports, as well as all attachments and photos, that pertain to the Canfield Hotel.

In response, the city provided a Word document listing the violations found during the January inspection. It also sent the Capital Dispatch a link to access the requested photos, but the link indicates the photos are currently password protected.

The same day the Capital Dispatch made its record request, it called the Dubuque city health department to speak to Public Health Director Mary Rose Corrigan about enforcement efforts at the Canfield Hotel.

Administrative Assistant Connie Mueller said Corrigan was in a meeting and took a message. When Corrigan didn’t call back, the Capital Dispatch contacted Mueller and asked for Corrigan’s cell phone number, which Mueller eventually provided.

City records obtained through the Iowa Open Records Law show Mueller then texted Corrigan

to complain she had been “bamboozled” by the reporter.

“He wanted to speak to you,” Mueller texted. “I said you were gone. He wanted your cell number and I told him no and he said if it’s a city-issued device that was public information. The guy is a real tool bag. Don’t answer your phone if (the reporter’s phone number) comes in on it.”

Corrigan responded: “He called me but I didn’t answer — he left a voice mail.”

Corrigan has not responded to subsequent calls from the Capital Dispatch.

**State changes law to legalize less frequent inspections**

In 2022, the Iowa Capital Dispatch reported that the Department of Inspections, Appeals and Licensing acknowledged that for the previous eight years, it had violated a law requiring the routine inspection of Iowa’s hotels and motels.

By law, the agency had been required to inspect all hotels within its jurisdiction at least once every two years. The department was instead conducting preopening inspections and complaint investigations, and any others were based on an agency risk assessment.

Last year, the Iowa Legislature approved, and the governor signed into law, legislation that codified the department’s long-standing practice. The bill repealed the requirement for biennial inspections at all hotels. Under current law, Iowa’s hotel and motel inspections are to be conducted “upon receipt of a verified complaint signed by a guest of a hotel.”

## Friends of the Library book sale

Friends members may drop off their donations between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 9, at the Chariton Senior Center Annex. Use the side door from the south parking area.

The book sale will be 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Thursday April 10th and Friday, April 11 from 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

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## School board approves budget guarantee for 2025-2026

**Bill Howes**  
**Associate Editor**

The Chariton Community School Board considered a resolution to participate in the Budget Guarantee for 2025-2026 at their regular monthly school board meeting Monday, March 17.

Chariton Superintendent of Schools Brad Baker explained that this is property tax to make up for the lost revenue from declining enrollment. After Supt. Baker spoke briefly about the guarantee, the board

approved the budget guarantee for 2025-2026.

**Final reading of policies approved**

The board approved the final reading of the following board policies: 103-103R-1, 105-106, 303-307, and 401.14.

The board also approved the second reading of the attendance section in the High School, Middle School, and Elementary Student Handbooks.

The board also approved the AEA Purchasing Agreement for the 2025-2026 school year.

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