

The PERFECT TURKEY Stalk

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #150 —

Everything started routinely; there were turkeys gobbling to my left at 5:45 a.m. — across the creek. Unfortunately, they went the other way, gobbling occasionally. At 8:00 there was another gobble across the creek but farther to the north.

Time to execute Plan B — make a stalk. Down to the creek and across I went, walking quietly through the woods to the other side and slowly out to the edge of the field. Everything was clear; the bird was over the hill, farther to the west. Stepping out, there were two toms feeding 400 yards to my right and above Dragonfly Lake. These weren't the birds I was stalking; not wanting to disturb them, I walked left along the brush line to the south end of the field — staying out of sight of the birds to the north.



It's surprising how long a box of turkey shells lasts, when you only shoot two each year — most years, that is! That's a 10" beard.

The bird to the west was still gobbling, so I moved along the south edge of the field, then north along a hollow in the middle. About half way up, I saw two gobblers come out of the point about 80 yards in front — but they didn't see me. Dropping down immediately, I set up my decoy in the weeds, took cover behind a small cedar and started calling. To my surprise, both birds ran away, stopping at a small island of woods about 50 yards farther north and looking back my way — just their heads showing. After a while, they moved on.

Now begins the final part of the stalk. I crept across 75 yards of open field, to the small island, with the birds over



This old Model 12 and I have chased many a turkey and shot more than I can remember.

the hill to my right. Skirting around the woods, the coast was clear on the far side, so I moved toward the birds.

At the end of the island, nothing; the birds were behind a big mound of top soil, left from lake construction, years before. The mound was perfect cover to get within range. Quickly I crossed the 50 yard opening and moved to the lower end of the mound.

"I could see two birds in range, but too close together to shoot."

Over the top, I could see two birds in range, but too close together to shoot. Then I heard a putt and barely visible out in front was a single gobbler, with his head up walking back to the others — he'd just made me. Positioned my barrel toward a break in the grass that he should pass through, and blasted him. It was a perfect turkey stalk, 1-1/2 hours in total.

**USA
Midway**

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Just Below Dragonfly Lake
Prairie Creek Farm
Howard County, Missouri
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This picture taken from the turkey's perspective; I stalked to the lower end of the mound, for a 35 yard shot.