

GUIDING the GUIDES

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #73 —

Brenda has a great passion for turkey hunting – far greater than mine -- and it was she that came up with the idea of hunting the Ocellated Turkey, that lives mostly down in the area of the Yucatan Peninsula of old Mexico. For her it was part of a collection of turkeys she wanted to complete, for me it was just the love of hunting – new places, new game, new people and new customs.

It's interesting to think how the Mayan people must have related to this turkey, during the time they were building what we now call the Mayan ruins – some of which we visited after the hunt; they were only a short drive away.

The jungle is very thick there and likely there are some ruins deep in the brush that have not yet been discovered.

These turkeys don't compare with the Eastern Turkey that we hunt in Missouri. They're quite a bit smaller and

don't gobble or come to a call. Also, they look like first cousins to a peacock, and are stunningly beautiful, when mounted in a strutting pose.

Hunting was from makeshift blinds, over shelled corn thrown out on the roads and trails -- or near water holes in the afternoon, where the birds came to drink. Everything was routine, except for Brenda's second turkey. We were set up a few hundred yards apart, watching separate water holes, when I heard her shoot. As it was about time to quit for the day and her waterhole was on the way out, we pulled up and walked on over to hear the story.



Beautiful bird; notice the thickness of the brush.

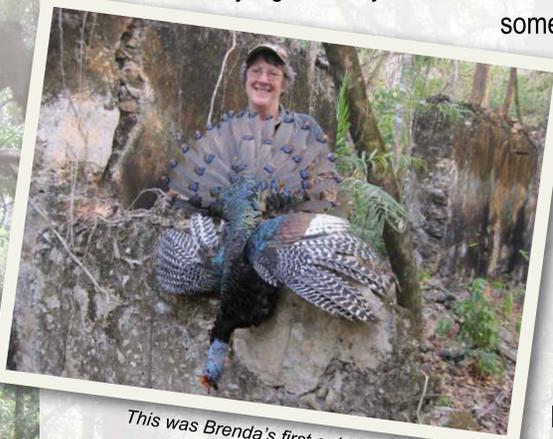
She had taken the shot across a water hole and the turkey flew off. The guides were just going to go after another bird, when I suggested that we take a look for feathers where the bird was standing. We saw some evidence that it had been hit at which time the guides pointed in the direction the bird had flown; so we lined up in pheasant drive formation and proceeded forward.

"Everything was routine, except..."

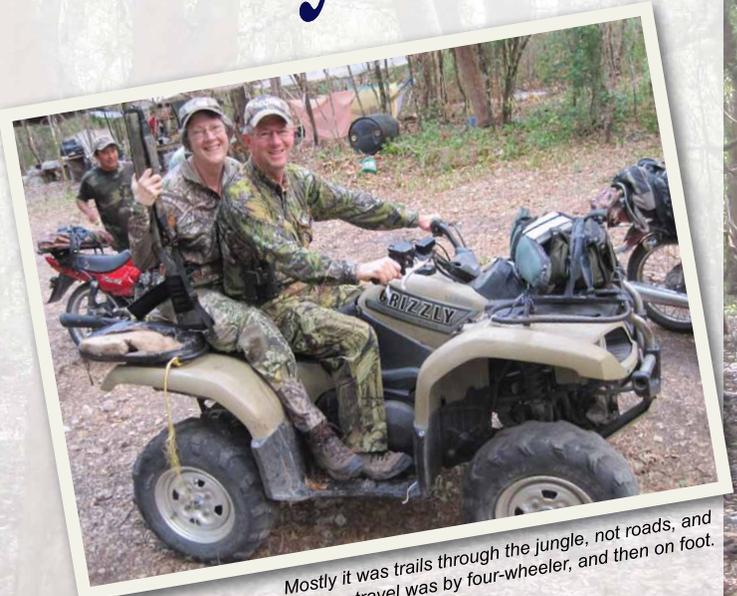
We flushed him about 100 yards out, and I got off the only shot, missing him as he flew back in the direction from which we had just come, with one leg dangling. We did an about face and this time Brenda spotted him on the ground and shot him before he took to the air. Sometimes you have to 'guide the guides'.

USA
Midway

Larry Potterfield
Campechi, Mexico
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This was Brenda's first gobbler. These ruins are modern, not Mayan.



Mostly it was trails through the jungle, not roads, and travel was by four-wheeler, and then on foot.