

# DOVE SEASON 2018

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #232 —

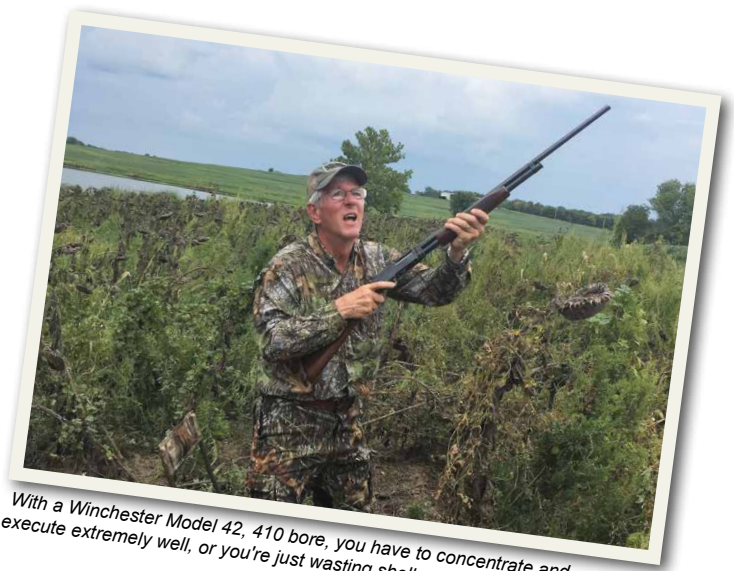
Dove season in Missouri begins on September 1; every seven years it falls on a Saturday, the beginning of the three-day Labor Day weekend. This was the year! In early September, we sometimes enjoy a streak of warm, dry weather — as the harvest season begins for the farmers; this was it! And finally, most years I'm home. Anyway, the 2018 season was a "perfect storm", and I hunted seven times from the first through the eighteenth of September — sometimes in the morning and other times in the afternoon.

Now, I like nice old guns as much as I like hunting, but this was the first time I went to the field with a different nice old gun each day; I was able to shoot four different types of actions — pump, over/under, side by side, and muzzleloader. More exciting, though, was seven different gauges. That's right, seven different

gauges - 410 bore, 28 gauge, 20 gauge, 14 gauge, 12 gauge, 11 gauge and 10 gauge.

A Winchester Model 42 in 410 bore and a Browning Superposed

20 gauge are my "go-to" dove guns, and I shot limits with both. The Winchester Model 12 in 28 gauge was a great gun, but my shooting was hampered by a less than ideal setup. All three of these guns feel good, balance well and are a comfortable fit. My 10 gauge hammer Purdey and 12 gauge hammer Parker were made in the 1870's. They are both a bit heavy, with less than ideal balance and fit — but they're both in great condition and fun to shoot.



*With a Winchester Model 42, 410 bore, you have to concentrate and execute extremely well, or you're just wasting shells. (Photo by Jason Gatz)*

The most interesting of the group of guns was a Parker back action 11 gauge hammer gun (made about 1870), in which I fired special, low-pressure 12 gauge shells; also, a pair of Westley Richards 14 gauge muzzleloaders (made in 1851), that I didn't shoot very well. Hunting with these three guns was later in the season, when there are fewer birds that are a bit more wary than the early season birds.

"...the 2018 season was a "perfect storm"..."

Didn't keep track of the shots fired in the muzzleloaders (it wasn't pretty), but I fired 151 times in the six cartridge guns, and got 59 doves. Don't know if there will ever be another dove season like this one, but this "perfect storm" provided a chance to shoot a great many guns that were mostly made before I was born — what a wonderful experience.

Larry Potterfield

40-J and Midway Farms  
Boone and Howard County,  
Missouri  
September 2018



*My best shooting was the first day (almost always is), when I got 15 birds with 25 shots from my old Browning Superposed 20 gauge, made in 1949.*



*One of the more interesting guns was this Parker 11 gauge, made about 1870, in which I fired low-pressure 12 gauge shells.*