

# Best DOVE SEASON Ever

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #290 —

Don't remember dad ever hunting doves, or even talking about it. My first dove hunting experience was in a corn silage field with a couple of high school buddies, during my Senior year. My only shotgun was a single shot Stevens 16 gauge, with full choke. During my college years, for \$112.50, I bought a new Remington Model 870 in 12 gauge, with an improved cylinder, and ventilated rib barrel. The Remington 870 is a great overall shotgun and I hunted many doves with it when I was stationed in Arkansas – during my Air Force years.

Back home in Missouri, since 1977, dove season has almost always been the kickoff of the fall hunting season.

Mostly the hunting has been around feed lots, farm ponds, and harvested

corn fields – places that seem to naturally attract doves, early morning and late afternoon.

My first trip to Argentina was back in the early 1990's; but high-volume dove

shooting for a few days, didn't dull my interest in shooting a daily limit of 10-15 birds in central Missouri.

This year's season began on September 1, as usual, and ended for me on October 1. Things had been hot and dry all summer, which was good for the dove hatch. Our sunflower fields turned out pretty good and the weather pattern was consistently nice during the whole season. My schedule allowed for six hunts – three in the morning and three afternoons. I hunted two distinctly different hunting



My Purdey 28 gauge is a wonderful, lightweight dove gun – 5-1/2 pounds.

areas and used five different shotguns, from 410 bore to 10 gauge, which provided a great and entertaining variety.

The season always starts off with a “bang,” lots of doves and lots of hunters, to keep the birds moving around. But there is a limited number of birds using each field and most hunter's interest fades pretty quickly, after the first few days – so, it becomes

“The season always starts off with a ‘bang,’ ...”

more challenging to shoot a limit each trip. Normally I start the season with a 410, but this year

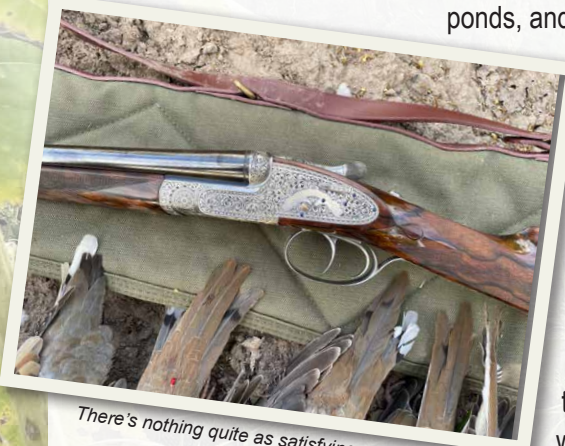
it was a 28 gauge. As always I'm going to shoot several different guns; this year was no exception.

But now there are other hunting activities on the calendar. Still, if our sunflowers and the weather hold up, perhaps I'll be able to go another time or two – before the weather sends the rest of them south. Either way, it has been a spectacular year for doves; best I ever remember.



Larry Potterfield

Boone County Missouri  
September/October 2022



There's nothing quite as satisfying as shooting a limit of doves with a 410. This is gun #1 of my Holland & Holland side by side pair.



Shot two this season, that had been banded locally – a month earlier.