

# WILDLIFE TRENDS

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## Relocating Northern Bobwhite Quail Prior to Breeding Season:

By Theron M. Terhune

### Why relocate?

Relocation of wild northern bobwhite quail has gained much interest in recent years as quail populations have succumbed to severe declines throughout most of the southeast. These region wide population declines have been a result of the cumulative effects of large-scale loss of early successional plant communities, intensive agricultural and silvicultural practices, and an increasingly fragmented landscape. It is old news to quail enthusiasts, landowners, and hunters that three to four decades ago quail were ever so abundant. In fact, I have been in many discussions with long-time quail hunters that it was no problem to find land or quail for that matter to hunt. My how times have changed!



A release of northern bobwhite quail into "good habitat".

In retrospect, we have learned the ecological reasons for such prosperous times of the bobwhite and it can be summed up with two words; "favorable habitat". Unintentionally, farmers and landowners managed their land in ways that favored the bobwhite quail. Farms usually consisted of small fields with terraces and hedgerows that were frequently burned. It was

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