Thank you for your assistance by providing samples for West Nile virus testing from your harvested ruffed grouse. Your participation in this project is instrumental and appreciated!

For information about this project please visit the DNR website dnr.wi.gov, keyword “small game” and click on the link for “ruffed grouse”.

Please read and follow all the provided instructions to obtain the best quality samples for analysis. If you provide your name and email (clearly written) on the provided datasheet we will email the results of your grouse to you. Testing of samples will not begin until after the grouse hunting season has closed. Final results may not be available for several months after the close of the season.

West Nile virus (WNV) is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. There is no evidence that WNV is spread by handling dead birds, however it is recommended that you wear gloves when handling any dead animal, even those that appear healthy. Nitrile gloves have been provided for your convenience.

For more information on WNV please visit the Wisconsin Department of Health website: https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/arboviral/westnilevirus.htm

Please check that your WNV sampling kit contains the items below.

Place the cold pack in a freezer right away so it will be frozen when you are ready to ship your samples.

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**Kit contents**

1. Sampling instructions
2. Two cold packs—**put in freezer until ready to ship**
3. Two Nobuto strips in plastic zip bag
4. Plastic jar with green lid inside plastic zip bag
5. Silver insulated bubble envelope
6. Disposable nitrile gloves
7. Datasheet in Ziplock bag—**fill out and return with samples**
8. Index card with sampling kit number—**keep this card for your records**
9. White UPS prelabeled/prepaid return shipping envelope

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HOW TO SAMPLE YOUR GROUSE
PLEASE COLLECT BOTH BLOOD AND THE HEART

To collect a blood sample: within 30 minutes of harvest, if possible
Please collect blood onto both of the two provided Nobuto strips.
1. Dip the narrow “wick” end of the Nobuto strips into any fresh liquid blood in the grouse.
2. Allow the entire narrow portion of the strip to become saturated with blood on both sides.
3. Do not cover the wide end of the strip with blood.
4. If blood gets onto the wide end of the strip, it will still be OK for testing, so still send it.
5. Allow the blood on the strip to dry completely and then place it into the small plastic zip bag. Moist strips may grow bacteria making them unusable for testing.

To collect the heart:
1. Gently remove the heart from the chest cavity. Try to minimize handling and damage to the heart.
2. Gently place the heart into the small plastic jar with the green lid.
3. Place this jar back into the plastic zip bag that it came in.

The heart is about the size of a penny and is located in the very upper part of the chest cavity toward the neck.

Keep both the blood on the Nobuto strips and the heart sample cool/refrigerated and ship the samples the same or next day after harvested. **DO NOT FREEZE THE SAMPLES.**

Sample only one grouse per sampling kit. If you want to sample additional birds, please pick up additional sampling kits.
Collect Feathers and Complete the Datasheet

Please fill out the short datasheet entirely and put it in the provided Ziplock bag to keep it dry and readable. To get accurate age and sex data, please collect feathers as shown and place them in the provided Ziplock bag with the datasheet. We need all of the requested information to properly analyze the meaning of the results from the sample testing.

For aging, collect primary wing feathers #9 and #10. For sexing, collect 3-4 rump feathers.

If you would like to receive an email with the results of the testing for your sample you will need to include your name and email address, clearly printed, on the datasheet. Sample results will be reported by the kit number that is attached to the 3x5 index card. Keep this card for your records. Testing of samples will not begin until after the grouse hunting season has closed. Final results may not be available for several months after the close of the season.

Packaging Your Sample

1. Place one of the frozen cold packs into the bottom of the silver insulated bubble envelope.
2. Place the plastic jar containing the heart into the silver bubble envelope.
3. Place the second frozen cold pack into the silver bubble envelope on top of the plastic jar containing the heart.
4. Place the plastic zip bag containing the Nobuto strip into the silver bubble envelope.
5. Seal the silver bubble envelope.
6. Place the silver bubble envelope into the white UPS pre-labeled/pre-paid shipping envelope.
7. Place the completed datasheet and feathers in the provided Ziplock bag and then into the white shipping envelope.
8. Seal the white shipping envelope. Now you are ready to ship!
9. To assure the best possible quality samples for testing, please ship your samples the same or next day after harvested. However, do not ship samples on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday.

Ship your samples the same or next day after harvested. However, do not ship your samples Friday through Sunday. If you harvest a grouse on any of these days, please keep the samples refrigerated and ship them on Monday.
Shipping to DNR

Ship your samples the same or next day after harvested. *See exception below.

To ship your sample, you can do one of the following:

1. Drop off your envelope at a UPS location (United Parcel Service NOT the post office)
   Go to UPS.com.
   • Select the “locations” button at the very top.
   • Enter your zip code or city into the “near” box on the left.
   • Check the box for “find a drop off location” to narrow your search heading.
   Or call UPS at 1-800-742-5877.
   • Ask for drop off locations near you.

2. Schedule a pick-up from your home by phone.
   Call UPS at 1-800-742-5877.

*Please note:* Generally, a fee is assessed for home pick-up. You must tell the UPS customer service representative that this pick up cost is to be billed to the receiver (DNR). If they need the account number, it will be the first 6 digits after the ‘1Z’ of the tracking number on your return label. If they need the zip code for the account it is 53716. Do not give them a credit card number. You will not have to pay a fee for this service.

*Do not ship your samples Friday through Sunday.* If you harvest a grouse on any of these days, please keep the samples refrigerated and ship them on Monday.

If you have questions or problems with the sampling kits, sampling procedures or shipping, please contact:
Nancy Businga: Nancy.Businga@wisconsin.gov or 608-221-5375
Lindsey Long: Lindsey.Long@wisconsin.gov or 608-219-5038

Collect Sick or Dead Ruffed Grouse

We are also interested in testing carcasses of sick or freshly dead ruffed grouse that you observe.
If you see any ruffed grouse that look or are acting sick and are able to harvest the bird, please keep the entire carcass intact, place it into a plastic bag and refrigerate it as soon as possible.
If you find any freshly dead ruffed grouse (no openings into the body cavity, no obvious odor to the carcass and no maggots on the carcass), collect the carcass, place it into a plastic bag and refrigerate it as soon as possible.

Carcasses in poor condition (scavenged with openings into the body cavity, having an odor, maggots present) will not be usable for testing. Please report these to the DNR so we can track numbers and locations where they are found.

If you collect a sick or freshly dead ruffed grouse please promptly call either:
Nancy Businga: Nancy.Businga@wisconsin.gov or 608-221-5375
Mark Witecha: Mark.Witecha@wisconsin.gov or 608-267-7861
Lindsey Long: Lindsey.Long@wisconsin.gov or 608-219-5038
We will send you a shipping container with a pre-paid return label for shipping the carcass to us.

Thank you for participating in the research project!

For information about this project please visit the DNR website [dnr.wi.gov](http://dnr.wi.gov), keyword “small game” and click on the link for “ruffed grouse”.