



## **Chenango County Youth Turkey Hunt – Spring 2018**

by George Franke

Well, it started out as good idea...then turned GREAT! The Chenango Youth Turkey Hunt of 2018 was the most successful hunt we've had in the 5 years we've been doing it. It started out at the Oxford Rod and Gun Club with our Safety Day on April 14th. Kids were taught about the biology and management of the wild turkey, along with the calls both by turkeys and hunters. They were told of the various species and their distribution and gunning for them. After lunch of pizza and pop, one student at a time was taken to the range as the others availed themselves to making pot calls, mouth calls and box calls. By the time everyone was done shooting and putting their calls together they thought "gift time" was over...Nah. Everyone went home with the calls they made, headnets and gloves, and boxes of shells were given to the parents and/or mentors. Final preparations were made for the following weeks meet by the mentors and the student.

On April 21st our class of 10 students met with the 18 mentors and headed to the fields and woodlands of Chenango County after their first gobbler.

- Evan Meek and Kaleb Alari with Ron Meek
- Andrew Vinal with Aaron Haynes and Chad Stein
- Brandon Kneale with Ethan Paul and Jaret Paul

On April 22nd now down 3, our class of 7 managed to harvest two birds.

- Domenic Saladis with Peter Saladis and Dennis Evans
- Morgan Williams with Brett Armstrong and Steve Bohnert

and unsuccessful hunters for both days included:

- Samuel Gracin with George Franke and Todd Phillips
- Megan Lindridge with Scott Lindridge
- Gavin Tefft with Jon Dockray and Gary Wade
- Brielle Armstrong with Eric Davis, Brody Warner and Sean Langevin

After meeting back at the Oxford Rod and Gun Club after each hunt, donuts and beverages were served until the hot dogs and hamburgers were ready, around lunchtime. Chenango Taxidermy was on hand both days to mount the tails of the successful hunters and not to leave anyone out, if the unsuccessful youth shot a bird during the regular season, the Smiths mounted the tails for them too.

We would like to thank all the participants in the group, as well as the Oxford Rod and Gun Club for hosting the three-day event. Sponsors donating cash or merchandise include Roma Pizzeria (Oxford), Southern Tier SCOPE (Oxford), Chenango Taxidermy (Preston), Adirondack-Catskill SCI (Otego), Jared Paul Game Calls (Greene), Environmental Conservation Officers Assn. (Oxford), National Wild Turkey Federation, Genegansalet Gobblers Chapter (Genegansalet) and the Federated Sportsman of Chenango County (Norwich) and Rockdale Rod and Gun Club (Mt Upton).