



PHOENIX VARMINT CALLERS, INC.

SEPTEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER



Ray Evridge / George Knox Memorial Predator Boot Camp - 2026

Boot Camp: A Strong Weekend for Arizona's Hunting Community

Thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, taught, cooked, organized, donated, and helped make the 2026 Ray Evridge / George Knox Memorial Predator Boot Camp a success. The annual three-day camp brings new and experienced hunters together to learn calling, fieldcraft, safety and responsible predator hunting.

The turnout above shows what makes the event special: Arizona outdoorsmen and women sharing practical knowledge and helping the next generation become safer, more capable hunters.

THANK YOU, BOOT CAMP VOLUNTEERS & PARTICIPANTS!

Arizona Dove Season 2026

Opener is around the corner. Scout now, verify the 2026-27 regulations, and be ready for changing monsoon conditions.

License & stamp	Hunters 18 and older need a valid Arizona hunting license (or combination license) plus the Arizona migratory bird stamp. Youth ages 10-17 need only the youth combination hunt/fish license; the stamp privilege is included.
Bag & possession	AZGFD's current dove guidance lists a daily aggregate limit of 15 mourning and white-winged doves and a possession limit of 45. Invasive Eurasian collared-doves have no daily bag or possession limit.
Identification	Keep one fully feathered wing attached until reaching your permanent residence or the place where the birds will be consumed. Keep each hunter's birds separate in the field, cooler and during transport.
Safe & ethical field conduct	Do not shoot within 1/4 mile (440 yards) of an occupied structure without permission; never shoot from, across or into roads or railways; retrieve downed birds and pack out hulls and litter.

What to Expect in the Field

Arizona's dove picture can change quickly in late August and early September. Mourning doves occur statewide and are especially abundant around desert country and agricultural fields. White-wings are strongly associated with desert uplands and scrub, often within flying distance of saguaros. Water, nearby roost trees, grain or seed-producing fields, and established flight corridors remain the basic ingredients to scout.

Weather may be especially important this opener. Tucson's 2026 monsoon was off to a slow start through July, with 1.75 inches at Tucson International Airport, and rainfall has been highly uneven across the region. That patchiness can concentrate birds around reliable water and food in some places while storms elsewhere can redistribute birds almost overnight. Scout as close to opening day as possible rather than relying only on last year's locations.

SCOUTING CHECKLIST	OPENING-MORNING CHECKLIST
• Reliable water • Roost trees • Feed fields / seed sources • Morning and evening flight lines • Recent bird numbers, not last year's	• License and migratory bird stamp • Plenty of water for hunters/dogs • Eye and ear protection • Cooler and separate limits • Pick up every empty hull

How We Cook Doves

Written by Mike F.

Some dove hunters don't enjoy eating the birds they have taken from their hunt. I haven't had anyone dislike how we cook our doves.

The first step after cleaning your birds is to cook the breasts in a pressure cooker if you happen to have one. We like to put a shot or two of wine in the water. After the weight on the lid starts shaking around, remove from heat after 5 minutes. If you don't have a pressure cooker, use a tray for steaming vegetables in a large pot to give them some steam for 10 to 15 minutes. The meat should come off the bone pretty easily.

Now that you have the meat off the bone, put the two sides of the meat together and wrap with a strip of canned green chile pepper and bacon. A toothpick skewered through holds everything together. Cook on a grill until the bacon is cooked and you're done. As always when eating doves, beware of pellets that may be in the meat.



Photos supplied with Mike F.'s dove recipe.

September Predator Conditions

A changing landscape can make early-fall calling challenging - and rewarding.

Coyotes remain abundant and widely distributed across Arizona, from desert and agricultural country to mountain and suburban edges. Arizona Game and Fish classifies coyotes as predators and notes that they have a year-round hunting season with a valid hunting license. Bobcats are also broadly distributed and common in rugged, brushy Sonoran desert scrub and interior chaparral; hunters should consult the current regulations for applicable seasons and requirements.

For September callers, the bigger story is habitat and weather. The 2026 monsoon has been uneven. Tucson's official station recorded a slow start through July, while summer thunderstorms produced sharply different totals from place to place. In northern Arizona, monsoon rainfall commonly arrives as scattered afternoon and evening thunderstorms and can account for a large share of annual precipitation. That means conditions can vary dramatically between drainages only a few miles apart.

Water is a key clue

In dry country, scout dependable tanks, stock ponds, seeps, riparian corridors and other reliable water. Fresh tracks and scat around water can help confirm predator activity before you ever make a stand.

Follow the groceries

Predators respond to prey availability. AZGFD's small-game information has documented drought pressure on rabbits and quail in recent seasons, with rabbit recovery uneven. Spend more scouting time where you actually see rabbits, rodents, birds and other prey rather than where habitat only looks good from the road.

Fresh green-up can move animals

Where monsoon storms have produced grass, insects and new growth, prey may spread away from permanent water. Those pockets can become productive calling country, especially along edges where fresh vegetation meets thicker cover.

Heat changes stand selection

September can still be hot. Early mornings generally offer cooler temperatures for hunters and dogs. Favor shaded approaches, carry extra water, and keep an eye on changing monsoon weather.

Wind still rules

Use the wind to your advantage and expect coyotes to try to get downwind. Choose a stand with visibility into the downwind side and avoid walking through the area you expect an animal to use.

Young-of-year opportunity

By late summer and early fall, younger coyotes are increasingly mobile. This can create opportunities for callers, but success still depends on quiet access, good stand discipline and adapting sounds to the response you are seeing.

FIELD CONDITION TAKEAWAY: Don't hunt Arizona as though the entire state received the same monsoon. September 2026 is a scout-first season. Find the pockets with water, prey, tracks and fresh sign, then build your calling plan around what is actually on the ground.

Regulation reminder: Always consult the current 2026-27 Arizona Hunting Regulations before hunting. Seasons, legal methods, open areas and species-specific requirements can differ.

Around PPCI

Keep the Momentum Going

Predator Boot Camp may be behind us, but the fall season is just getting started. September is a great time to reconnect with fellow members, spend time in the field, introduce someone new to hunting, and support the club's upcoming activities and fundraising efforts.

Bingo - Have Fun & Support the Mission

PPCI continues to promote its Bingo fundraiser as a chance to have fun, win prizes, and support the club's goals and mission. Watch PPCI's website for the latest event information.

Holiday Banquet & Fundraiser

PPCI's holiday banquet is one of the club's major annual fundraising events. Watch for banquet details, raffle information, volunteer opportunities, and ticket sales.

Volunteer - The Club Runs on Members

More volunteers mean more events, more mentoring, and more opportunities for PPCI members and Arizona families. Whether you can help with setup, registration, food service, raffles, cleanup, youth activities, or event logistics, a little time can make a big difference.



Stay Connected

Visit PPCI.org for club information, events, membership, and updates.

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Sources: Arizona Game & Fish Department current hunting regulations, dove-hunting guidance, coyote and bobcat information; National Weather Service 2026 Arizona monsoon/climate information; Phoenix Varmint Callers, Inc. Always verify current regulations before hunting.