

- Turkeys were introduced to East Marin by the California Department of Fish & Game to provide hunting opportunities. Strangely, the DFG allows hunting of turkeys only during two brief open seasons totaling less than 8 weeks a year. Hunting by turkeys, however, is year-round. They are voracious omnivores and compete with native species when resources become scarce. They love acorns, and their predation probably reduces oak reproduction. In addition to acorns, they eat almost any small animal that crosses their path, including insects, toads, salamanders, and even the endangered red legged frog. Turkeys are a threat to our state bird, the California quail, our state bird: they attack them, compete with them for food, and eat quail eggs. According to the DFG, turkeys increase their home range increases by 4 or 5 miles a year. Ffrom East Marin, they have now invaded Point Reyes National Seashore, GGNRA, and Tomales Bay State Park, not to mention residential neighborhoods throughout West Marin. In 2003, a public outcry forced the DFG to put on hold a plan to release several new subspecies of turkey into the wild.