



In the field Paul Grammon knelt down to give his dog, Scout, a job well done ear scratch. Mr. Grammon trained the German short hair to hunt. — Courtesy photo

to hunt properly and patience

so they will stay in one place. With his dog standing next to him, he gives the release command "all right," and the dog will run to sniff out the quail.

When the dog finds a quail, he will point his nose at it, holding completely still, until the hunter walks up. The quail will try to fly off as the hunter gets closer, and that's when the hunter takes a shot. The dog will then bring the downed bird back to the hunter.

"If the dog doesn't point, we don't shoot," said Grammon.

A well trained dog, he said, will hold point until the bird is flushed and the dog is released to retrieve the shot bird, or to continue to hunt.

Grammon said he lets the dogs develop their own search patterns.

"After a couple of years, the dogs know better than we do where to look for the birds," he said.

If a dog is getting too far away, he said, he can change the dog's search direction by getting

the dog's attention — either yelling the dog's name or blowing a whistle — and pointing to the direction he wants the dog to go.

Hot, dry conditions are the worst for dogs to find the birds. Cool, damp weather with a slight breeze is ideal.

"I don't expect perfection out of my dogs, and we don't do competitions," said Grammon. "The best hunting dog will only find about half the quail in a field."

Grammon said he usually goes out hunting with a group of other hunters and their dogs.

"Most dogs will 'honor' another dog's point," he said. "That is a beautiful sight to see."

Though they are trained to find quail, he said, in the past his dogs have pointed to mice nests, raccoons, coyotes, and even badgers and rattlesnakes, all with no injuries to the dogs.

Grammon has trained brittanys, English pointers and German shorthair pointers.

"I just get a thrill out of watching them point," he said.

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