



LEE COUNTY WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION



July 2004

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Texas Parks and Wildlife
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Game Warden
Texas Parks and Wildlife
979-542-2800

\$1,500 In Scholarships Awarded



Aaron Markert



John Hempel



Lydia Ward

The Directors of the Lee County Wildlife Association are proud to announce this year's scholarship recipients.

Applications were received from thirty-nine graduating seniors of Lee County high schools, with many deserving and qualified applicants. One senior from each of the local high schools was selected to receive a \$500 scholarship to help in their pursuits to

further their educations.

Congratulations to Aaron Markert of Dime Box who will pursue a degree in Architecture at Texas A&M University, John Hempel of Giddings who will attend Sam Houston University seeking a degree in Agricultural Mechanics, and Lydia Ward of Lexington who will pursue a degree in Veterinary Medicine at West Texas College .

Wildlife Photo Contest Announced

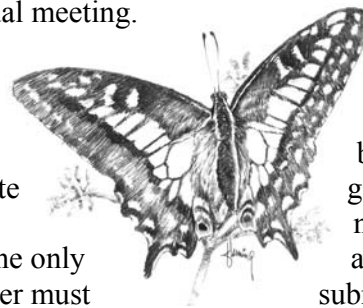
How about a contest that doesn't require killing something? The Association would like to encourage you to share your best wildlife photos with other members. Photos will be displayed during the February annual meeting. There will be a general category and a game camera category. So get your cameras out and try to get a picture of that cute squirrel, hummingbird, butterfly or whatever! The only restriction is that the critter must be alive in the photo. You may enter as many photos as you like, but photos must be received by January 1st to be eligible. Photos can be given to any of the directors, taken to the Lee County

Extension office, or dropped by Greg Pleasant's office in the Lee County courthouse (suite 203).

The directors will judge the photos and awards will be given during the annual meeting.

Unframed 8x10 photos are preferred, but 4x6 photos will be accepted. On the back of each photo please give your name, phone number, the entry category, and the number of photos submitted (example: 1 of 3).

The Association will not be responsible for returning the photos, but if you would like yours back they may be picked up at the end of the annual meeting.



Oldest Buck Contest

The Directors of the Lee County Wildlife Association have decided to sponsor a buck contest this year for Association members. This contest will be a little different from most, in that the OLDEST buck harvested in the county will be the winner.

The purpose of the current antler restriction is to allow more bucks to make it into older age classes by taking pressure off of the younger bucks. We would like to encourage hunters to start learning to estimate the age of bucks by their physical characteristics and behavior before harvesting them.

There will also be a spike buck contest (at least one un-branched antler) with a youth and adult category. Winners of the spike contest will be chosen

by random drawing. To be eligible, all bucks must be registered by a TPWD biologist.

Registering a harvested buck will also enter the hunter in the six county drawing for one of 14 valuable prizes, including a lifetime hunting and fishing license. Deer heads cannot be frozen at time of registration and the jaw must still be attached. In the event of a tie for the oldest buck, the tie breaker will be the highest gross Boone and Crockett score.

One member stepped up and offered a one hundred dollar gift card for the youth spike category, if anyone is interested in sponsoring any portion of the buck contest or any other contest (photo), please contact one of your directors.

Learn to Age Bucks on the Hoof

The Lee County Wildlife Association will be hosting a deer aging and rifle caliber selection workshop at the Lincoln community center at 6:30 on September 18th.

A chili supper will be provided.

Wouldn't you like to learn how to tell how old a buck is just by looking at it, what's the best rifle to shoot it with, and have a good meal all at the same time? Whether you are interested in all or part of this please come join us.

Studies have shown that older bucks do more breeding than young bucks. For herd management purposes, allowing enough young bucks to reach maturity is important for a healthy breeding herd. If you are interested in producing trophy bucks you should not harvest quality bucks until they reach maturity, as whitetail bucks don't reach their maximum antler potential until they are 6½ or 7½ years of age. Thus it should be important to you to *not* shoot a young buck before he has had a chance to even get close to expressing his full potential.

With little practice it is not hard to tell a young buck from an older buck, and for some that may be good enough. With a little more effort and time it's possible to tell if a buck is young (1½-3½ years old), mature (4½ -6½) or post mature (7½ +). Serious trophy managers and hunters who spend many hours observing bucks can identify a buck's age to the year with reasonable certainty. Physical characteristics like

the thickness of the buck's neck, the sag of his stomach, and the deepness of his chest can all give clues to a buck's age. In addition, a buck's behavior towards other bucks can also be used to help tell what age a buck is.

This program will teach you what traits and characteristics a buck's body should have at each age. By studying photos pointing out these features and giving you an opportunity to practice you will be surprised at how quickly you will be able to identify a deer as being in one of three age classes.

There will also be a discussion and presentation on selecting an appropriate rifle caliber and bullet to best fit your hunting situation.



Collecting Herd Composition Data

Please help with this effort, even if you only record a few deer. With nearly 500 members it all adds up!

Herd composition data may be the most valuable data collected on a deer herd. When properly collected, herd composition data can reflect the overall health of a herd and help guide the manager in making proper harvest recommendations.

Herd composition data should be collected during August. The fawns have become a part of the herd by this time, yet they are small enough to be easily distinguished from adult deer.

Observations outside this period may result in inaccurate data.

Observations may be collected any time during the day. However, the first and last hours of daylight are often the most productive for deer seen per hour of effort. Observations should not be collected at night because it is too difficult to correctly identify sex and size.

Herd composition data should be collected during August, during the day and using binoculars.

All deer recorded must be viewed through binoculars or a spotting scope. Small antlers are easily overlooked without optical aids. Fawns whose spots have started to fade are also hard to distinguish when they are observed alone. Be sure to look at the hips of deer that you think could possibly be fawns because the hips are the last place to lose spots.

When observing deer in herds, it is important that each deer be identified. If a herd of six deer is seen but only four are positively identified, do not record any of the deer. If there are two bucks, three does, and one fawn in a herd, you may easily identify the bucks but may not be sure of the other four unless they are all individually identified. When a herd is seen, quickly get a total head count, then go back and positively identify bucks first because they are easiest, then identify fawns, and finally

identify the does making sure not to miss small-antlered bucks.

Observations can be made during routine ranch operations or as a special effort. Observing the same deer recorded on a previous count is not a concern. If a conscientious effort is made to record accurate data, a small amount of duplicate recording should not affect the ratio. All deer should be recorded as a buck, doe or fawn. Recording bucks according to number of antler points is also beneficial. The occurrence of spikes versus multi-point animals is a good indication of the nutrition available.

Please return the completed form, included in this newsletter, by September 12th to Greg Pleasant, TPWD biologist.

*NO ONE WILL KNOW WHAT'S ON YOUR PROPERTY
Only total numbers of deer by region are made public*

New Directors and Price Changes

Several new directors were elected at the Association's annual meeting last February, replacing directors whose three-year terms had expired and did not re-up. Four of the five co-ops received one new director each. The new director for South Lee is Wayne Galipp, who replaced Mike Lee. Ronnie Schubert replaced Bruce Opperman for West Yegua. Elaine Peters replaced Inez McFall for East Yegua and Donnie Herklotz replaced Ron Jones for Blue Branch.

We would like to thank all of the outgoing directors for their great services and to welcome the new directors as we look forward to their leadership over the next three years.


The cost of business has gone up and some tough decisions had to be made. A vote was taken during the annual meeting to decide whether to increase Association membership dues or start charging for the meal at the annual meeting. The majority present voted to begin charging

\$5.00 per plate for the meal at the 2005 annual meeting.

It was also determined that until the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department could resume providing the co-op signs, new members would be required to pay \$18.00 for each sign they wanted. Charging for signs began in February.

The new member and annual dues have not changed. They remain \$15.00 for new members and \$10.00 for an annual renewal.

The postage for this letter has been made possible by the sponsors listed on the back of this page. Please let them know you appreciate their sponsorship. Anyone wishing to place a business card ad for one year may contact Mickey Wachsmann at 512-253-6368 or the Lee County Wildlife Association, c/o Texas Cooperative Extension, P.O. Box 150, Giddings TX 78942-0150.



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