



LEE COUNTY WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION



July 2006

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Association to Purchase 5 Game Cameras

The idea of the Association buying a motion-activated game/trail camera for members to borrow has been brought up in the past, but never been acted on until now. South Lee member Louis Doebbler, who has donated hunts on his hill county property for the past three years as an auction item at the spring meeting, asked if the Association could use some of the money raised from his donation for this purpose. Well, thanks at least in part to Mr. Doebbler's generosity and desires, the directors decided to purchase one of these cameras for each of the co-ops. The directors will keep track of and loan out the cameras for members use. The users will simply have to provide their own batteries. Contact your directors if you are interested in checking out one of the cameras. Using these cameras is fun to see what is on your property when you're not there but also a great tool to survey your wildlife. Many times I have had people tell me that they only have does on their property and no bucks. The truth is, if you don't have one of these cameras out taking pictures night and day, you never really know what you have.

Website Coming Soon

The Lee County Wildlife Association, in the not to distant future, will have it's very own website. A website will be a great resource of information and an easy way for potential new members to find out about the association is and how to become a member. The site will have information like calendars of events, upcoming meetings and workshops, newsletters, and articles on many subjects and have links to related websites and resources and much more. The address will be leecountywildlife.org. Mary Ann Schubert has volunteered to build and maintain the site for the Association. We will owe her a huge thank you for sharing her talents and time for our benefit.

A Program on Snakes

A suggestion of having a program on snakes has grown into a monster. The suggestion was made to have Clint Pustejovsky of Texas Snakes and More out of Houston come and do a program. Clint has a very interesting and educational presentation that will change the way you think about snakes. OK-- maybe that's a stretch for some people, but you will learn that a lot of things you think you know about snakes is just wrong. Well, that idea grew into sponsoring Clint to do programs in the local schools during the day and having a program open to the public in the evening. There are still many details to work out but Clint is willing and we are trying to make it happen. The date will be worked around the school's schedule so look for this program this fall on our new website. (You can read more about Texas Snakes and More at www.texasnakes.net)

Prescribed Burn Field Days

Currently in the works: TPWD in this district (7) is seeking funding to build up to three prescribed burn trailers for landowner's use. So far, the National Turkey Federation has pledged \$15,000 for the cause and more matching funds are being sought from other agencies. The idea is to have equipment available for properly trained landowners to use, including drip torches, back pack sprayers, flappers, weather kits, radios and three sizes of water spray units. If funding permits, even a 4-wheeler may be added. TOWMA will be responsible for maintaining, storing, and renting out the trailers to qualified members of wildlife coops. TPWD's goal is to provide prescribed burning training field days starting this fall and spring so when the equipment is available, landowners interested in using it will be able to. A prescribed burning field day has been tentatively scheduled for Saturday December 2nd in Lee County.

Aging Deer on the Hoof

According to the survey forms filled out at the February meeting, members are interested in programs about learning how to age deer on the hoof. In addition to filling that request, the idea of putting that information in the hands of every hunter in the county is being pursued. A number of pamphlets on aging deer on the hoof have been donated by Moultrie Feeders and will be made available to members and everyone who purchases a hunting license in the county.

Second Annual Youth Shooting Event Planned

The LCWA and TPWD will be hosting the second annual youth shooting and firearms safety event this October 24th at Nails Creek Park on Lake Somerville. Local high school students involved in wildlife and agriculture classes are invited to come out for a fun, safe, hands-on educational opportunity.

The objective of the event is to educate students about hunter ethics and safety and give them the opportunity to shoot different types of firearms and bows. Students are placed in small groups and rotated through eight stations where they receive one-on-one instruction. The stations include: hunter and boater safety, a hunter ethics and safety trail, archery, shotgun, 22 pistol, 22 rifle, black powder rifle, and center-fire rifle. Students will also enjoy a picnic lunch provided by LCWA. The event was a lot of fun last year and will only be better this year.

It takes a lot of people to put on this event and any interested volunteers will be welcome. Donations last year from the Sportsman's Warehouse in Round Rock, and financial support from the Texas Wildlife Association and the Texas Game Wardens Association, made the event possible.

Food Plots Seed Cost Sharing

The LCWA wants to encourage members to keep planting wildlife food plots. So the food plot cost sharing program will be ongoing.

Each member can receive up to \$25 in matching funds per season (you spend a dollar, we spend a dollar) for the purchase of seed to plant wildlife food plots in Lee County. To take advantage of this offer please bring a copy of your receipt to The Lee County Extension Office.

Purchase any wildlife food plot seed and LCWA will reimburse you for half of the cost up to \$25.00. (You must spend at least \$50.00 on seed to receive the full \$25.00 reimbursement.) This offer is only good for current seed purchases to be planted in Lee County for current paid members. The deadline for bringing in receipts are December 1st for fall plantings and April 1st for spring plantings. Reimbursement checks will be mailed out after deadline dates. Seed that is eligible include oats, wheat, peas, clovers, food plot mixes, and soybeans and peanuts if they are planted.

Getting a soil test is always money well spent. Most food plot failures can be avoided by having the correct pH and adding fertilizer if needed.

Dry Conditions Could Impact Fawn Survival and Antler Growth

The dry conditions will impact food availability during late pregnancy and lactation for does which impacts the survival of fawns being born. I have seen and have been hearing about several fawns around the county but it will be August before we will really be able to tell what the fawn survival is going to be. **The collection of herd composition data is very important.** Antler development is tied directly to nutrition and a hot dry spring and summer definitely limits food availability during antler development. However: despite the drought, I have seen some bucks with very nice antlers already and they will continue to grow into September. Supplemental feeding of a high protein feed during times when natural food sources are limited can be a big help.

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, 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.

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.

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 the total numbers of
deer by region are made public**

Don't forget to be taking pictures for the photo contest!

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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.

Dianna Noack
Senior Vice-President - Branch Manager



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