



LEE COUNTY WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION



January 2007

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It's Time For The Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will once again be held at the Sons of Herman Hall south of Giddings (off Hwy 77 and CR 223) on Friday, February 2nd. Social hour will get started at 5:00 and the meal around 6:30 p.m.

Come on out for some good barbecue and good fellowship. There will be plenty of door prizes and raffle items, so bring lots of money. Door prizes will be given throughout the evening so come early. In an effort to expedite giving out **so many prizes** we will ask that each family member sign in at their co-op table to be eligible for door prizes.

Meal, tickets are only \$5.00 for adults and kids up through high school still eat free, so bring the whole family. Tickets can be purchased at time of registration.

A slide show of the big bucks shot in the six-county area, and the photos entered in the wildlife photo contest will be shown during the meal and in lieu of a main speaker.

Mark it on your calendar and be sure to attend. If you have some deer antlers or a mount you would like to share with the crowd, please bring it to be displayed.

Report on the 2nd Annual Youth Shooting and Hunter Safety Event

The Lee County Wildlife Association and Texas Parks and Wildlife hosted the second annual youth shooting and firearms safety event on Tuesday October 24th at Nails Creek Park on Lake Somerville. Local high school and middle school students involved in wildlife and agriculture classes were invited to come out for a fun, safe, hands-on educational opportunity.

The objective of the event was to educate students about hunter ethics and safety and give them the opportunity to shoot different types of firearms and bows. The students were placed in small groups and rotated through eight stations where they received one-on-one instruction. The stations included: hunter ethics and

safety trail, archery, shotgun, 22 pistol, 22 rifle, black powder rifle, and center-fire rifle and trapping. The students enjoyed a picnic lunch and many won door prizes donated by the Sportsman's Warehouse. The event was a lot of fun and we are planning to continue the event every year.

Thanks to the help of the directors of the Lee County Wildlife Association, local Hunter Education Instructor David Hempel, professional trapper David Pilgram, area Wildlife Biologists and Game Wardens and Park Staff. Tremendous support was received from The Texas Wildlife Association, the Sportsman's Warehouse in Round Rock, and the Texas Game Wardens Association.

Wildlife Photo Contest

I haven't received many entries so far for this year's contest. Please get your photos in. Everyone enjoys looking at wildlife photos so please share yours with the rest of us. We will be displaying the photos using a projection system again this year, so you can submit your digital photos electronically, saving printing cost and simplifying delivery....you can just e-mail them to me at tpwbiologist@bluebon.net. You can enter as many photos as you like. We prefer jpeg format for digital, or unframed 8x10's, but 4x6's will be accepted. Printed photos will be scanned for the presentation. I hope the co-op members are taking advantage of the loaner digital game cameras that are available from the directors and will be submitting photos from them.

Rules: the photos must be of a live animal taken in Lee County during 2006. There are two categories, general (hand held camera) and trail camera.

Deadline: You must have your photos into Greg Pleasant's office by January 12th.

The directors will be judging the photos and awards will be given at the annual meeting on February 2nd. Please have your name, which category (general or trail), and phone number with or on the back of each photo. The association will not be responsible for returning photos, but you can make arrangements to pick them-up after they are digitized for the presentation.

Oldest Buck & Spike Contest

If you shot an old buck or a spike in Lee County this season, and you are a current member of one of the co-ops and you registered your buck with Texas Parks and Wildlife, you are eligible for participation.

If you have a buck you harvested in Lee County this year and I haven't checked it, it's not too late. Give me a call. I need to be able to see the deer's teeth to age it so it cannot be frozen. Hunters who harvested a spike will have their names put into a drawing, so size or age doesn't matter.

The purpose of the current antler regulation is to allow more bucks to make it into older age classes by taking pressure off of the younger bucks. Hunters are encouraged to start learning to estimate the age of a buck by their physical characteristics and behavior before shooting them.

Please bring your antlers and mounts to the annual meeting be displayed for all to see. We will have the display walls on hand.

Cost Sharing for Food Plots

There wasn't much rain this fall for winter food plots, but hopefully this spring will be better for planting. So don't forget to take advantage of the food plot seed reimbursement program.

Members purchasing seed for wildlife food plots can receive up to \$25 dollars in reimbursement from the Wildlife Association in an effort to reward members for helping wildlife in Lee County and to possibly encourage others to do the same.

You can purchase the seed from any retailer but the seed must be planted in Lee County to qualify. The deadline to have receipts to the Extension office for spring food plot seed will be May 1st.

We hope to continue this or similar programs in the future. **If you have any suggestions for other program ideas please share them with one of your directors.**

Time to Check Your Bird Boxes

February is the time to clean and repair your bluebird boxes for the new nesting season. Using predator guards and deterring fire ants are important steps in helping nesting success.

Starting in March, you can check boxes once a week and continue to do so through July. Just remember that when you see nest construction almost completed, do not disturb the box during the first three days of egg laying. After that you can check the box in the afternoon without bothering the female. The other critical period not to disturb the nest is just prior to the young leaving the box (when they are about 10 days old).

For more information on blue bird and purple martin nest box care and maintenance please read past articles posted on the Lee County Wildlife Association website.

Recent Workshops

The most recent workshop was on conducting prescribed burns on your property to improve habitat for wildlife. The class was held on Saturday, December 2nd, and - despite a cold early morning - was well attended. Attendees learned how the condition of the plants (i.e. growth stage, drought stress) in the area to be burned determine the fires impact, and under what weather conditions fire can be used most safely to accomplish a desired effect. Other important information covered installing effective fire lines, different lighting techniques regarding wind direction, obtaining useful fire weather forecasts, fire safety tools and where they can be purchased or sometimes borrowed, obtaining technical guidance for free and much more. If you are interested in learning more about conducting prescribed burns safely there is information on other classes in the Oak-Prairie District portion of this newsletter.

The other recent class was on trapping and snaring predators with nearly 60 people attending was held at the Lincoln Community Center and was taught by professional trapper David Pilgrim. David shared lots of meticulous details that make the difference in being successful or not.

Excellent photos of both of these workshops can be viewed on the website leecountywildlife.org.



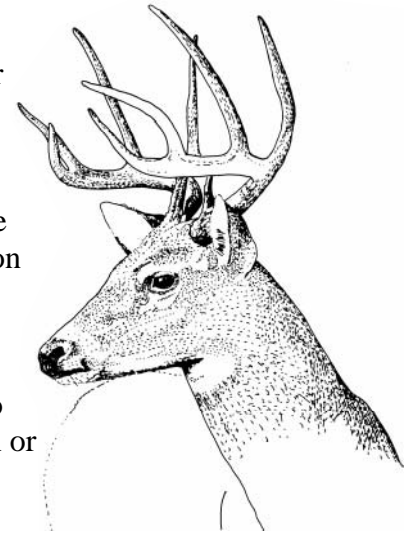
Our new website has been up and running for about 6 months now. Have you checked it out? We would like your feedback. Is there anything that you would like to see added that you feel would benefit our members? Is there anything that we could improve? Please go to leecountywildlife.org and look around, then contact your directors or Greg Pleasant with your ideas.

Lee County Bucks

By Greg Pleasant

Again this season, Lee County has produced some exceptional white-tailed deer. The number of trophy quality bucks harvested in the county continues to get better. At the time of writing I have data on 13 bucks that score in the 120's, 6 in the 130's and 5 in the 140's and one in the 150's. The highest scoring Lee County buck shot this year was a 3.5 year old 13 point buck that scored an impressive 169 1/8. An impressive eight point scored 142 5/8. These bucks are good examples of what our local deer can do with good nutrition if they are allowed to get a little older.

Make management agreements with your neighbors to work together to grow mature trophy bucks that you will really be proud of. Set limits on how many bucks can be shot on your combined land. My recommendation is to only take one 13 inch or wider deer per 300 acres per year and all the unbranched antler



bucks you see. The biggest source of frustration I hear about from landowners trying to manage for mature bucks is "the neighbors are shooting the bucks I'm letting walk." In most cases they have not spoken to the neighbors about what they are trying to accomplish and asking if they would be willing to help for everyone's combined benefit. It all starts with a conversation.


Free Tree Seedlings

LCRA will once again be providing 500 free tree seedlings. You can be planning on where you want to plant them and have the sites prepared before you bring the trees home. Take this opportunity to plant native tree species on your property to provide additional food and cover for wildlife.

The postage for this newsletter has been made possible by the sponsors listed on 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.

Dianna Noack
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