

# Bee County Wildlife Management Association



*Enhancing Quality and Quantity of Wildlife Habitat and Populations in Bee County, Texas*

## April 2005 Newsletter

### Did you know that spotlight surveys...

...are not designed to observe the total deer population, but just to sample a portion of the habitat and the number of deer found there?

...need multiple counts (three minimum) on the same routes for reliable information?

...should be conducted on all weather roads that go through a wide variety of habitat types?

...should avoid roads by feeders or food plots where deer may be concentrated?

... should have survey routes that are about 15 miles long?

...are started by determining visibility distances on each side of the survey vehicle every 1/10 of a mile for the entire length of the route?

...only need visibility readings taken one time on any given route

### APRIL MEETING REPORT

Charles Smith, past BCWMA board member and landowner in Bee and Live Oak Counties, conducted this program on Predator and Varmint Control. Charles is an active member of the Texas Fur Trappers Association and has held numerous positions in the organization over the last 7 years.

He began with a very interesting video tape on live foot hold traps. It showed numerous actual trapping sequences where a variety of animals were trapped and released unharmed. Game departments and others use the method to catch and relocate animals, and the point of the tape was that it is a humane way to capture them. All in all it was very interesting and, at least for me, eye opening.

The current abundance of varmints is probably as high or higher than ever before and is due to several factors, including the following changes that have caused a reduction in hunting pressure:

- Coon hunting clubs, (and coon hunting itself) once very popular are now mostly gone
- The fur market is depressed and fur values are very low compared to the past
- Russia and China were once among the largest buyers of North American fur and they buy very little now
- Texas fur quality is generally poor due to the warm weather

The bottom line is that the increased number of varmints and predators has a negative impact on the survival of certain "preferred" species like deer, quail, turkeys, song birds and so on. Coons, skunks, coyotes, hogs and possums eat a lot of eggs, and coyotes and hogs kill a lot of fawns, especially in the first few months of life. Add in the impact of snakes and fire ants and varmint control should be of interest to most of us.

Trapping is more complicated than it may seem. Traps have to be selected from several types available and then sized properly for specific animals, set and baited according to specific preferences of the target animal, and "tuned" for proper performance. Locating productive spots for sets is an art of its own.

In addition to live foot hold traps, there are numerous others including conventional leaf spring and coil spring traps, live "cage" type traps, from small varmint sizes up to hog traps, snares, and cyanide guns (spring loaded guns are still legal, but you must have training and a license; the old M44 type guns that used a .38 cartridge are now illegal). Snares and cyanide guns are designed to kill, and since they don't discriminate they may be a hazard to dogs and other desirable animals. Live traps are selective and let you decide if the animal should be killed, relocated, or released. Cyanide guns are extremely dangerous and should be left to professionals if you use them at all.

Predator calling/shooting is another form of control, and one that can be used to generate income. Calling has become very popular and many people are willing to lease the rights to varmint call on a property.

Two suggestions were made from the audience regarding baiting hog traps; one was to add

unless there are major changes in visibility in the future?

...should be conducted during the months of August, September, and early October?

...should not be conducted during rain, high wind, or following significant disturbance along the route the day of the count?

...should be started one hour after official sunset?

...should be conducted at about 5 to 8 mph in thicker areas and 10 to 15 mph in more open areas.

...require you to stop only if you need to record the kind of deer seen, such as buck, doe, fawn, or just "deer" if you can't tell?

...should not include deer seen at ranges in excess of 250 yards?

...are best conducted from pickup trucks with two low to medium power spotlights, a driver, a recorder, and two observers standing in the bed of the truck?

...provide raw data that is later compiled by computer to determine total acreage observed (visibility readings per 1/10 mile times length of route), total number of deer per acre, buck to doe ratios, and fawn

strawberry Jello to the bait, and the second was to put diesel fuel on bait corn - it seems that it won't stop the hogs but will discourage coons.

### **SATURDAY, MAY 7<sup>TH</sup> POND FIELD DAY- 10:00 AM TO 1:00 PM**

Bring the kids and the entire family, this promises to be a fascinating demonstration and a fun day. Jon Herrmann of Herrmann Fish Farms, and Tom Kocurek, Pond Builder Extraordinaire, will be putting on an in-depth program (pun intended) covering everything you ever wanted to know about ponds, pond construction, fish, and the management of both. Whether you have a small watering hole or a huge lake, or no pond at all, it should be worth the trip.

Following an orientation and introduction, Jon will use his Electro fishing boat to stun fish and take samples from the 10 acre demo lake, and then will analyze what he finds and make recommendations on how the lake could be improved. Considerations include fish types and quantity, forage fish evaluation, vegetation status and so on. There have been two bass in excess of 9 pounds caught in this lake (and one released) in the last year or two, so it should be very interesting.

Additional discussions will be held on vegetation control, pond building and pond renovation/improvement. The Q & A session should cover just about any topic you may be interested in.

Herrmann Fish Farm is a family owned business. In addition to pond surveys and consulting, they also sell fish. They have 22 ponds dedicated to the production of game fish. Species available include largemouth bass, channel and blue catfish, bluegill, tilapia, grass carp and minnows. It may be possible for Jon to bring fish to you if place an order in advance. You can contact Jon or his mother (she runs the office) at 361-767-0200 or visit their web site: <http://www.herrmannfishfarm.com>.

The demo will be held at John Crumpler's ranch which is 7.7 miles East of Beeville (from the Hwy 181 Bypass) on Hwy 202. The gate is on the North side of Hwy 202, 4.2 miles East of the flashing light at the prison, and it is the last gate before you get to the Medio Creek bridge. We will have a BCWMA banner on the gate and a gate man from 9:45 until 10:15, after that please close the gate behind you, there are cattle on the ranch. Follow the signs and the main road back to the demo.

We recommend you bring lawn chairs, drinks (no alcohol please) and a snack or lunch, there are currently no facilities at the demo site. We will furnish a Porta-Potty. There are plenty of big trees for shade so you will be able to get out of the sun.

Guests and all interested parties are invited.

### **FIRE ANT CONTROL PROJECT STATUS AND UPDATE**

For the benefit of new members and anyone not aware of our fire ant control initiative here is a quick review and update:

We are working with Dr. Lawrence E. Gilbert, Research Professor and Section Director at the University of Texas, Austin on use of the microscopic Phorid fly to control Brazilian fire ants in Bee County. The fly is microscopic, attacks only the Brazilian fly, and has been established in areas closer to Austin but not successfully in South Texas.

Dr. Gilbert conducted a local workshop for us where we learned about the program and how to conduct fire ant surveys and how to select places to establish the flies. On the same visit Dr. Gilbert toured several local ranches looking for prospective sites.

We are now in the process of finalizing the group of people that will go to UT for detailed training in the next few weeks. We are trying to firm up the date with Dr. Gilbert at this time. Following the training we will harvest ants on two ranches in Bee County, one in the Mineral area and one off Hwy 202, and take them to Austin to be infected with the flies, and then return them back to their original mounds.

In an interesting side note, National Geographic plans to do a documentary on fire ants in Texas and on Dr. Gilbert's work. BCWMA directors and officers hosted one of their program directors late last month as he toured Tom Keller's and my ranch for potential video/film

survival rates?

...provide the data needed for deer harvest recommendations and good deer management plans?

### **Tidbits...**

Why isn't there a mouse flavored cat food?

Why did kamikaze pilots wear helmets?

Would a fly without wings be called a walk?

Why do they have interstate highways in Hawaii?

For a lethal injection, why do they sterilize the needle?

### **BCWMA Officers**

President:

Tom Keller  
361-375-2924

Vice President

Ellis McKinney  
361-358-3137

Secretary-Treasurer

Bill Frank  
361-877-4831

### **BCWMA Directors**

Adam Coronado  
361-542-6485

Van Bruns  
361-358-2007

Joe Doreck  
361-456-1125

Bill Frank  
361-749-7763

Larry Jones  
361-362-0430

Tom Keller  
361-375-2924

Ellis McKinney  
361-358-3137

Pat True  
361-548-5059

Randy Walls

shooting sites. They may want to expand their shooting locations to other area properties, and if so we may be contacting you for permission. We should learn more in May.

### **TEXAS QUAIL INDEX COOPERATORS TRAINING**

*I apologize for the late notice, I didn't have it in time for the last newsletter. It's from County Agent Donnie Montemayor and Dale Rollins, Texas A&M:*

The Texas Quail Index was initiated in 2002 as a means to train landowners & County Extension Agents in how to monitor quail abundance and factors that may be impacting quail populations.

There will be a workshop to train new cooperators in San Angelo on April 25-26. The workshop starts at 1:15 on Monday, April 25, and concludes at noon on Tuesday, April 26. Monday afternoon's agenda is an introduction to the TQI, and the various protocols used. On Tuesday morning, we go to the field and walk participants through protocols for conducting quail counts, habitat evaluation, predator surveys, and reporting.

The TQI takes a lot of commitment, and time. It takes about 60 hours on-site annually to collect the various data, and much of that's early morning (daylight) hours. New for this year, they are introducing a "TQI Lite" version that will be adaptable to smaller properties (as small as 600 acres) and will require about half as much time as the "full-blown TQI".

Cost for the workshop is \$15 if rec'd by April 22, or \$25 at the door. More information about TQI is found at <http://teamquail.tamu.edu>. If you are interested in this program please contact Donnie Montemayor, he may want to go with you.

### **PRESIDENT TAKES A DIVE - BREAKS HIP**

On Tuesday, March 22, BCWMA president Tom Keller was loading a 6 foot high tractor tire and wheel when he fell and landed on his right hip. The hip was broken and he was taken to San Antonio to a specialist. He waited 5 hours for a hospital room and then had to wait until Thursday night to get an operating room. Morphine didn't touch the pain, Tom said he couldn't tell any difference between morphine and no morphine.

After the operation things started getting better. Thanks to board member Van Bruns' brother-in-law, who's in charge of rehab, Tom got a beautiful private room and into rehab immediately.

Tom went back for x-rays last Tuesday (4-19) and unfortunately there is some question about adequate blood flow to the rebuilt hip; he goes back in two weeks for another check up.

We wish Tom well and hope he is up and around soon. As active as Tom usually is I'm sure he wishes it even more! FYI, he did come to the 4-15-04 board meeting in his wheel chair. I wonder if his doctor knows about that?

### **POTENTIAL TP&W ANTLER RESTRICTION UPDATE**

I highly recommend you read the comprehensive article about the planned expansion of the highly successful TP&W 7 county experimental antler restriction program located at:

[http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/conservation/wildlife\\_management/deer/antler\\_restrictions/index.phtml](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/conservation/wildlife_management/deer/antler_restrictions/index.phtml)

### **HERBICIDE & PESTICIDE APPLICATORS TRAINING AND TESTING SET**

If you want to get your herbicide/pesticide applicators license you can do so on May 12. The training will start at 8:30am and end at noon. The test will be given from 1:00 to 2:00. It will be conducted at the Texas Cooperative Extension Service office located at 210 E. Corpus Christi Street in Beeville. Pre-registration is required, call the Extension office at 361-362-3280.

### **2005 BEE COUNTY SPOT LIGHT SURVEYS UPDATE**

In 2004 BCWMA conducted spot light deer surveys in the Hwy 202 area from the Medio Creek to the prison, and all the way across to near the Cobweb Ranch on Hwy 59. This information resulted in a formal deer management and harvest plan that was implemented for

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D. Montemayor\*  
\*(ex-officio, non voting)  
361-362-3280

#### Newsletter

Larry Jones  
361-362-0430  
[ljones@hrbizmall.com](mailto:ljones@hrbizmall.com)

#### OPERATION GAME THIEF 1-800-792-GAME

*"There is no stronger deterrent to a poacher than the knowledge that his peers find his philosophy and actions unacceptable to the point that they will report him to the game warden."*

\* Buddy Turner -  
OGT Program  
Director \*



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#### Bee Agricultural Co.

An advertisement for Bee Agricultural Co. featuring a large image of a wooden grain bin. Text on the ad includes "COMPLETE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE &amp; SUPPLIES", "BEE AGRICULTURAL CO.", "FEED • SEED • FERTILIZER • GRAIN STORAGE", "Veterinarian Supplies", "Lawn &amp; Garden Supplies", "Liquid Fertilizer • Dry Fertilizer", "Pet Supplies", "Liquid Feed • Public Scales", "PURINA CHOWS", "Open Daily 8:00 - 5:30", "Saturday 8:00 - Noon", "358-3470", and "1004 S. Washington • Beeville, TX".

the 2004 deer season by most of the landowners in the survey area. Cooperation among landowners and hunters was fantastic and we already see benefits in the deer herd.

We are expanding our survey areas for 2005. A committee has been established to set up and manage surveys in the Mineral area and they have established three new survey routes. Typical routes are about 15 miles long and are run a minimum of three times before each season. To be sure your property/area is included in one of the routes, or to help with the actual surveys, you can contact one of the following committee members: Alvin Rubottom (361-375-2108), Pat True (361-548-5059) or Joe Dorek (361-456-1125). Dates for the surveys have already been established, and they will be holding an informational meeting for all area residents at Mineral Mercantile on August 16, a week before the first survey is scheduled to be run.

If you have property near Hwy 59 in the general vicinity of the Cobweb ranch, and want to be included in that survey route, contact Bill Frank (361-877-4831). Other Hwy 59 landowners who are not close to the Cobweb but want to set up surveys can also contact Bill Frank, Larry Jones (361-362-0430) or TP&W Biologist Macy Ledbetter (361-786-4510) for assistance in getting started.

We intend to eventually have the majority of Bee County represented in annual spot light deer surveys. If you have property anywhere in the county and want to learn more or set up a survey in your area you can also contact the three guys in the paragraph above.

We have the equipment and will be happy to work with you to get you started. The surveys are fairly time intensive so we will assist on a first come, first served basis as time allows. Please contact us as early as possible. It also requires several weeks after the survey to get the computer runs finished and the harvest recommendations prepared by Macy Ledbetter. He is very busy all fall running TP&W and private surveys and can get backlogged. After the recommendations are in we still need time to get all the area landowners together to hash out a harvest plan everybody can live with.

#### GATE SIGNS

We should have a new supply of metal gate signs in time for the May Field Day. Every member is entitled to a free sign, if you have not gotten yours yet please do so. We encourage all members to display the sign on their gate, it provides much needed visibility/advertising for the Association and may encourage your neighbors to join. Signs are also available at the County Extension office.

#### WILD HOG AND COYOTE CONTESTS REMINDER

Don't forget to enter BCWMA's Wild Hog and Coyote Contests. Prizes (as yet undefined, but they should be good) will be awarded to the winners at our 2006 annual meeting. The contest rules are:

- Both contests are open to any adult or child.
- Any hog or coyote legally taken is eligible for entry. This includes gun, snare and hog trap, among others.
- Professional trappers are not eligible.
- An entry consists of the hog's tail or the last 6" of a coyote's tail presented at any monthly meeting of the BCWMA. All entries are to be individually sealed in a Zip Loc-type clear plastic bag. A ticket will be exchanged for every tail presented. A drawing will be held for each contest at our annual meeting and a prize awarded to the two people whose number is drawn. There is no limit to the number of times a person may enter, and the more you enter the better your chance to win.

#### CEU CREDITS BEING AWARDED FOR MANY MEETINGS

You can obtain continuing education credits to maintain your Pesticide Applicators License by attending certain BCWMA meetings. Forms are available at meetings that qualify for the credit (most of them).

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## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Property ownership is not required. Anyone interested in improving the quantity and quality of wildlife in Bee County is WELCOME. Annual dues are \$20 and Life Memberships are \$100. Sponsorships include a one year membership and are \$250 per year.

**BCWMA Regular Meeting Schedule** (General meetings are the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 pm except for December unless otherwise noted below)

- **May 7, 2005, SATURDAY, 10:00am - 1:00pm, "Pond Management Field Day and Electro Shocking Demo" See separate topic above for details and directions**
- **June 7, 2005** - "Government Programs to Assist Game management" and "Wildlife Tax Appraisal" and "Legislative Update"
- **July 5, 2005** - "Supplemental Feeding" and "Food Plots"
- **August 6, 2005- SATURDAY, 9:00am - 4:30pm**, "Whitetail Deer Management Workshop"
- **August 16, 2005** - Mineral Area Spot Light Survey Informational meeting - Mineral Mercantile Store
- **September 6, 2005** - "Wildlife Management Overview"
- **October 4, 2005** - "Revisiting Deer Surveys" and "Deer Aging"
- **November 1, 2005** - "2005 Bee County Deer Census Results" and "Deer Harvest and Herd Culling Recommendations"
- **December, 2005 - No Meeting**

## Board of Directors Meeting Schedule CHANGE:

The board now meets Friday of the week following every General Monthly Meeting. All members are invited. The next board meeting will be held at the Bee County Extension Service office, **May 13, 2005 - 3:00 - 4:30pm**

## NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL

If you receive this newsletter by USPS mail and have an email address please forward it to [ljones@hrbizmall.com](mailto:ljones@hrbizmall.com). We prefer sending newsletters by email due to the reduction in expense and labor. We can't email to AOL addresses because of file size limits.

## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS

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**BCWMA Member Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Member's Cooperative Agreement

I own / manage (circle one) land on county/state road \_\_\_\_\_ containing \_\_\_\_\_ acres

(Note: This information is confidential. It is simply used to determine total acreage enrolled in the co-op)

I agree to cooperate with the goals and bylaws of the Bee County Wildlife Management Association.

This agreement does not give any unauthorized person the right to trespass on the above property.

I am in no way obligated to the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department of BCWMA. I may or may not agree with the management practices recommended. The only thing I have agreed to is that I recognize the need for wildlife management in order to improve the wildlife on my property.

This agreement is valid as long as I am a dues paying member of the BCWMA.

Enclosed is (circle one) \$20 Member \$100 Life Member \$250 Sponsor

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to BCWMA and mail to P. O. Box 1967, Beeville, TX 78104 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**BCWMA**  
**Bee County Wildlife Management Association**  
**P. O. Box 447**  
**Beeville, TX 78104**

