

# BCWMC

## Bee County Wildlife Management Association

### January 2005 Newsletter

#### Did you know...

...California banned mountain lion hunting in 1990?

...there are 6,000 lions in California today compared to 2,000 in the 1970's?

...3 people have been killed and 7 injured by lions in California since the ban?

...89 people were attacked by coyotes in Washington state between the late 1970's and December, 2003?

...79% of the coyote attacks have occurred in the last 10 years, showing the trend is increasing?

#### Tidbits

The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.

I almost had a psychic girlfriend but she left before we met.

Support bacteria - they're the only culture some people have.

Eagles may soar but weasels don't get sucked into jet engines.

It was all so different before everything changed.

#### JANUARY GENERAL MEETING REPORT

Joe Herrera, Biologist and TP&W South Texas Wildlife District Leader, Wildlife Division, was our speaker. Joe's love of turkeys and his years of field experience were obvious during this very interesting presentation. Joe collects turkey calls and he covered a table with a large number of them in all conceivable styles. Hunting stories, demonstrations of the various calls, and information relating to their management made for a very good meeting.

A few of the interesting things Joe shared about turkeys included:

- Turkeys have over 30 vocalizations (noises). Some birds, like buzzards and pelicans, can't vocalize at all.
- The increase in daylight hours in the spring stimulates the breeding instinct and vocalization in turkeys (and other birds like cardinals)
- Baby turkeys are called poults and young males are called jakes
- One gobbler in each sibling group is dominant and does most of the breeding
- Up to 15% of hens can have beards
- Turkeys must have permanent standing water
- In the winter they stay in river bottoms and near waterways
- In summer they may move up to 10 or 12 miles
- Poults in the egg "peep" and the mother talks to them in the egg and imprints them to her - they can later differentiate her vocalizations from those of other turkeys
- Turkeys hear 8 times better than man
- They assimilate 10 times better (awareness of things around them)
- Hens will nest up to 3 or 4 times a year if their nest is destroyed
- Hens prefer to nest in knee high grass and the eggs need high humidity
- A 3 to 4 year old turkey is an "old" bird

Incidentally, we picked up 4 new members at this meeting. We now have 60 members who collectively own well over 50,000 acres in Bee County, or a little over 5% of the roughly 880,000 total acres in the County.

#### FEBRUARY 4<sup>th</sup> 2005 ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER

We have a great meeting planned that you won't want to miss! You will meet your neighbors, visit with other members, eat a good buffet dinner, and participate in a very short business meeting during which we will elect three new board members.

The program itself will consist of two parts. Sally Crofutt, General Manager of the 4000 acre Fennessey Ranch, will go first. She will present a slide program highlighting the extensive wildlife and habitat management, hunting and eco-tourism program on the very diverse Fennessey ranch. This is undoubtedly one of the premier operations of its type in Texas and not to be missed.

Part two will be an opportunity to hear from and meet the State and Federal Game Law enforcement officers for our area. Gary Young, Special Agent in Charge, US Fish & Wildlife Service from San Antonio, Captain Bruce Biederman, TP&W Enforcement Supervisor in Corpus Christi, and Game Warden Chris McDonald of Beeville will share the program. Getting to know

Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.

I finally got my head together, now my body is falling apart.

Borrow money from pessimists...they don't expect it back.

The gene pool could use a little more chlorine.

I may be schizophrenic, but at least I'll always have each other.

#### **Officers**

President:

Tom Keller  
361-375-2924

Vice President

Ellis McKinney  
361-358-3137

Secretary-Treasurer

Bill Frank  
361-877-4831

#### **Directors**

Adam Coronado  
361-542-6485

R. W. Dirks  
361-375-2194

Bill Frank  
361-749-7763

Larry Jones  
361-362-0430

Tom Keller  
361-375-2924

Ellis McKinney  
361-358-3137

Charles Smith  
361-449-2510

Pat True  
361-548-5059

W. T. Young  
361-354-5618

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

#### **Newsletter**

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

these guys and building a good working relationship will make effective management of your property easier and more rewarding. In addition to educating us about various laws and operational procedures they can also help us with problems such as trespassers, problem hunters/lessees and poachers.

Every one attending will receive a BCWMA/ "Making Tracts for Texas Wildlife" logo coffee mug. Door prizes include a hand turned, natural edged, mesquite platter/shallow bowl, some mesquite bottle openers and stoppers, and various gun or hunting related items like pistol rugs, scope rings and more.

Tickets are on sale now for \$10 per person. **Advance purchase is required so we know how many meals to arrange for. We will not be selling tickets at the door.** Ticket sale cut-off date is **January 31**, so do it now. Buy extras for any guests you may invite. It is BYOB and casual dress.

Tickets can be purchased at Mineral Mercantile, Bee County Extension Service office, or by mail, sending your check to BCWMA, P. O. Box 1967, Beeville, TX 78104. All area hunters and landowners are welcome.

The evening will start at 7:00 PM and the location is the Country Kitchen Restaurant meeting room in Capehart subdivision in Beeville. Detailed directions are on the tickets.

#### **CORMORANT CONTROL PERMITS NOW AVAILABLE**

Pond owners besieged by the federally-protected double-crested cormorant, also called the water turkey, can now obtain control permits from TP&W. Permits cost \$12 and allow holders or their designated agents to kill cormorants on specific tracts of land. Permit holders are required to report the number of cormorants killed each year. The permit does not apply to several similar birds, including gulf-coast natives such as the neotropic cormorant, the anhinga and other fish-eating birds such as kingfishers, cranes and herons.

Federal biologists estimate there are 2 million double-crested cormorants in the U.S. Cormorant numbers have increased by about 7.5 percent per year since 1975. The birds eat mainly fish, up to one pound per day, usually smaller (less than 6-inch) bottom-dwelling school or "forage" fish.

For information about the cormorant permit, including applications, contact TPWD Wildlife Permitting, 4200 Smith School Rd., Austin, TX 78744 or call (512) 389-4491.

#### **STATE & FEDERAL GAME WARDENS NOW CROSS TRAINED**

All 475 Texas Game Wardens now carry Federal Commissions, and the 12 Federal Wardens in Texas are now Deputy Texas Wardens. Unlike in the past, both wardens can now enforce State and Federal law resulting in more effective game law enforcement. Federal Wardens can arrest on State violations like trespass or deer cases, and Texas Wardens can enforce migratory bird laws and Federal violations. Cases will still be prosecuted in the appropriate State or Federal Court, or, where dual jurisdiction applies, they can prosecute where the penalties will be the harshest. A good change for all but the bad guys, a result in part of 9/11 and the new national security measures.

#### **NOTICE OF PROPOSED BY-LAWS CHANGE**

A bylaws change has been submitted and will be voted on at the February annual meeting. The proposal: Change the official name of the association from Bee County Wildlife Management Co-op to Bee County Wildlife Management Association. This is an administrative change to make the name more consistent with the other wildlife associations in Texas.

#### **TOP 3 WILDLIFE ENFORCEMENT VIOLATIONS, 2003-2004**

2,521 Hunter safety violations (no hunter education certification)  
1,719 White-tailed deer harvest logs not completed

**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 \*

858 White-tailed deer improperly tagged

In addition, 45 citations were issued for killing of a white-tailed deer without landowner consent (A TP&W state jail felony which carries a penalty of not more than two years or less than 180 days in prison and a fine of not less than \$1,500 and not more than \$10,000.)

**MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS**

22% of the membership responded to the recent member survey with the following results:

- 73% like monthly meetings
- 53% prefer Tuesdays
- 93% prefer evenings
- 60% like 7:00 PM
- 73% like 1 ½ or 2 hour meetings
- 86% like a combination of meeting room sessions and field days
- 87% rate deer as their main interest
- Quail have the second highest amount of interest
- Turkeys are third
- Doves are forth

Under the category “Reasons for joining the Association”:

- 66% rate personal educational opportunities as #1
- 53% rate social aspects (know neighbors and develop relationships) #2
- 40% rate social aspects #3
- Access to professional resources dominated #4

Thanks to everybody who took the time to respond.

**HWY 202 - HWY 59 HARVEST UPDATE**

As you know from previous newsletters, landowners in the Hwy 202 area did pre-season spotlight surveys over a 22 mile route. The data was compiled and analyzed and a harvest recommendation was made by TP&W Biologist Macy Ledbetter. Area landowners and hunters met and adopted Macy’s plan.

A brief summary of the harvest plan/agreement follows:

- 1) Harvest three old does per 300 acres owned
- 2) If desired, harvest a maximum of 1 mature buck (5 ½ years or older) per 300 acres. Harvest no other fork antlered bucks.
- 3) If a spike buck is harvested it counts against the mature buck allocation in item #2.
- 4) Reduce the number of predators, especially feral hogs, coyotes, and feral dogs.

The results of our efforts will be seen in the next several years in the form of having almost as many bucks as does, in balanced age classes, and in having a healthier deer herd. We shouldn’t expect to see anything this year, this early in the program. However, one thing I’ve already noticed is a lot more 4 and 6 point yearlings walking around than in past years at this time. And we are still seeing a few very nice 10 and 12 point middle aged bucks. In past years most of them were dead by now. Surly a good sign and evidence of the good intentions and actions of the landowners and hunters involved. There seems to be a lot of pride and excitement on the part of the participants in this effort. The Association expects the members in the Mineral area, as well as other parts of the county, to have similar programs in place for next season.

**HUNTING LEASE PERMITS REQUIRED**

Remember that if you accept *anything of value* in return for letting someone hunt on your land you must buy and display a Texas Hunting Lease Permit. Details at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/news/news/041101c.phtml>. Limited



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information is also in the TP&W Hunting and Fishing Regulations booklet.

**BOARD MEMBER NOMINATIONS**

We have a nine member Board. Board member terms are three years, staggered. Three new board members are elected yearly to replace three outgoing members.

If you are interested in serving on the board, or want to nominate someone who is, please contact a current board member or President Tom Keller. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

At the next board meeting the new Board of Directors will elect a President, Vice-President, and Secretary from members of the new board.

Current director nominees include:

Van Bruns: Owner of Arrowhead 7 Whitetails, a high fence deer breeding and hunting operation in the Hwy 202 area. Van played a significant role in getting the 202 spotlight surveys completed this year. Past Director of the Dewitt County Wildlife Management Association and past Vice President of the Texas Deer Association.

Joe Dorek: A 200 head cattle rancher in the Mineral area for the last 20 years. Simultaneously ran his own dump truck-backhoe company until he sold out in 1999 and began ranching full time.

Charles L Smith: Current board member ending a one year term, owns land in Bee and Live Oak County. Has been and still is very active in various wildlife and agricultural organizations in the area.

Randy Walls: General Manager of the Juajalote Ranch Southeast of Skidmore for 12 years. A several thousand acre Beefmaster cattle and hunting operation that has, at his direction, been feeding deer protein and planting food plots since he took charge. The ranch now has B&C class deer including a 178 hanging on Randy's wall.

**PROTEIN NEEDS SURVEY**

We need to know how many members feed protein to their deer. If we commitment to enough volume one of our sponsors, Bee Ag, will work up a member discount. They sell Purina Antler Max. In addition to quantity they need to know if members prefer 14% or 20% feed. If you are interested in this program contact board member Pat True at 361-548-5059 in the next few days.

**FIRE ANT BIOLOGICAL CONTROL WITH THE PHORID FLY**

President Tom Keller has been communicating with Dr. Lawrence Gilbert of the University of Texas regarding fire ant problems and ways to control them. He has presented his research to the BCWMA board and they are interested in bringing this program to Bee County. More information will follow later but here is what we know at this time, courtesy of Mr. Keller:

Dr. L.E. Gilbert, Research Professor and Section Director at the University of Texas, Austin, has been experimenting with the microscopic size phorid fly to control Brazilian fire ants.

Dr. Gilbert has volunteered to work with the BCWMA to establish the phorid fly in Bee County. His work to date has been predominately in Central and North Texas. The only experiment in South Texas was done on private property in Kleberg, Webb and LaSalle Counties starting in early 1999. The subsequent multi-year drought made establishment of a naturalized population difficult, but some sites were struggling along. When the drought broke the fly population, which had tracked fire ants to the edges of drying cattle tanks, were submerged in 10-30 feet of water virtually over night. All was lost. Since that time all the subsequent work has been done North of Austin.

He is now looking at South Texas-like spots in Northern Argentina for

other strains of the flies presently being released, as well as different species which may be better adapted to the variable and harsh conditions of South Texas.

The Brazilian species of phorid flies that have been released have reproduced and spread well in the SE USA, and in release spots from East Texas to Austin. In Central Texas it has spread up to 15 miles from original release sites and on a sunny day this past November flies came to almost every mound disturbed over a huge area.

The phorid fly works by laying an egg on the body of a fire ant. The maggot hatches and migrates to and invades the head of the ant. Shortly after the head of the ant falls off.

The fly only infects about 2 percent of the ant population. But when a fly passes over a colony of ants, the entire colony stops working and begins to search the sky for flies. Just the presence of the fly causes work to be interrupted and the colony loses the ability to search for food, and the colonies gradually break down and decline.

Dr. Gilbert doesn't have the funding to extend his research to South Texas, but if we're willing to do the work he will help us try to establish the phorid fly into Bee County.

Dr. Gilbert says that he is willing to come to Bee County and explain the program to us. He will teach us how to survey the areas for the fire ants and to find the best places to establish the flies. In return we are to send a team to the University of Texas to be trained to set up and monitor fly populations, effectiveness and growth.

The flies are transferred by taking a scoop of our local ants in special containers to Austin. The Bee County ants will be infected by the flies at UT and will then be returned to their original mound in Bee County. The ants can't be imported from elsewhere because the ants kill any intruders not from their own colony. The process may have to be repeated several times to finally get the ants established.

Phorid flies attack only the Brazilian fire ant. They do not cause any damage to local ants, including our native Texas fire ant, which is controlled by a Texas fly that does not attack the Brazilian fire ant.

It won't be necessary to set up colonies on every ranch. If we're able to establish them on just two, three, or four ranches, they will expand over the entire county. The flies that have been well established have been known to expand 15 miles in one year.

#### **CEU CREDITS BEING AWARDED FOR SOME 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).

#### **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. All members receive a gate sign.

#### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

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

- **February 4, 2005 - (FRIDAY) 7:00pm - 9:30 pm - BCWMA Annual Meeting, Election of Officers and Dinner - See separate item**

<p><b>In closing, does anybody know...</b></p> <p>...how they get deer to cross at the yellow "Deer Crossing" signs?</p> <p>...why if its tourist season we can't shoot them?</p> <p>...what the best thing was before sliced bread?</p> <p>...what's another word for Thesaurus?</p> <p>...what do you do when you see an endangered animal eating an endangered plant?</p>	<p>for full details.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>March 1, 2005</b> - "Managing For Quail"</li> <li>• <b>April 5, 2005</b> - "Predator Control, How Does It Fit In Your Management Plan?"</li> <li>• <b>May 7, 2005, SATURDAY, 10:00am - 1:00pm</b>, "Pond Management <u>Field Day</u> and Electro Shocking Demo"</li> <li>• <b>June 7, 2005</b> - "Government Programs to Assist Game management" and "Wildlife Tax Appraisal" and "Legislative Update"</li> <li>• <b>July 5, 2005</b> - "Supplemental Feeding" and "Food Plots"</li> <li>• <b>August 6, 2005- SATURDAY, 9:00am - 4:30pm</b>, "Whitetail Deer Management Workshop" - featuring Bill Armstrong, Manager of the Kerr WMA, and other noted speakers.</li> <li>• <b>September 6, 2005</b> - "Wildlife Management Overview"</li> <li>• <b>October 4, 2005</b> - "Revisiting Deer Surveys" and "Deer Aging"</li> <li>• <b>November 1, 2005</b> - "2005 Bee County Deer Census Results" and "Deer Harvest and Herd Culling Recommendations"</li> <li>• <b>December, 2005 - No Meeting</b></li> </ul> <p><b><u>Board of Directors Meeting Schedule:</u></b>  The board meets Thursday 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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>February 10, 2005</b> - 3:00 - 4:30pm (Election of 2005 officers)</li> </ul> <p><b><u>CALENDAR OF EVENTS - State Wide</u></b>  <b>February 12, 2005:</b> "Managing for Wildlife" Seminar, sponsored by Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife Department. For more information, contact TPWD at (210) 348-6350.</p> <p><b><u>NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL</u></b>  If you receive this newsletter by USPS mail and have an email address please forward it to <a href="mailto:ljones@hrbizmall.com">ljones@hrbizmall.com</a>. We prefer to send newsletters by email due to the substantial reduction in expense and labor. If you use AOL your newsletter will still come by regular mail since AOL file size restrictions are very limited and they usually can't handle the newsletter file size.</p> <p><b><u>PLEASE SUPPORT OUR SPONSORS</u></b></p> <p><b>Bee Agricultural Company</b>  <b>Feed-Seed-Fertilizer-Grain Storage</b>  1004 S. Washington, Beeville, TX 78102  358-3470  Open daily 8:00 - 5:30 and 8:00 - Noon on Saturday</p> <p><b>Fish-Game-Feeders.com / Wildlife-Blinds.com</b>  <b>Texas Hunter Products - Feeders and Hunting blinds</b>  Locally owned, internet only distributor. Next day delivery right to your door. Visit us on line or call 361-362-0430 or 1-888-631-6789. Catalog available.</p> <p><b>Fuller Tractor Company</b>  <b>New Holland-Rhino-Bush Hog</b>  George West Highway, Beeville, TX 78102  358-4084</p>
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