

Bee County Wildlife Management Association



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

March 2005 Newsletter

Did you know...

...the longest beard recorded by the NWTF on a male turkey was 18 2/6 inches?

...the longest beard on a hen was 9 3/4 inches?

...the most beards on a male turkey was 9?

...almost 100% of male turkeys have beards?

...about 15% of hens have beards?

...a wild turkey can attain speeds of 30 to 35 miles per hour when first taking flight?

Tidbits...

from Ronald Reagan:

"The most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government and I'm here to help."

MARCH MEETING REPORT

Robert Perez, Quail Project Leader for TP&W, was our speaker and his program was "Managing for Quail." Forty two people attended.

Some of the many facts shared by Robert include:

- Quail require no free water to survive.
- They feed two times a day and "loaf" mid day.
- They use various calls to communicate.
- Timeliness and amount of rainfall greatly influences populations.
- A cool and wet breeding season from March to June is best for brood success.
- Rain will offset the negative affects of high temperatures.
- We are on the "edge" of good quail habitat and this influences the severe "boom and bust" periods we have with quail (if we were in the middle of more suitable habitat the climatic changes would have less impact).
- In the 1940's East Texas had the highest populations of quail in Texas, they have none now.
- In recent decades the abundance of quail has reduced dramatically through out much of its native range.
- The lack of wild fires and the resultant loss of open country has had a severe negative impact on quail.
- Fire is the best "quick fix" available for quail habitat.
- Fallow disking, 2 to 4 inches deep, helps but it should be done in long and narrow strips and the areas should be alternated from year to year. You should wait 3 to 4 years before going back over the same strip again.
- Shredding helps but should be avoided during nesting season.
- Controlled rotational grazing is beneficial in native grass pastures.
- Coastal fields are worthless to quail and other wildlife. Robert refers to them as Biological Deserts.

During the Q & A session after the presentation Robert was asked why Texas has such long hunting seasons, and if this was detrimental to quail populations. I have heard this question asked many times by landowners, and some people have strong feelings on the issue. Robert said it was all about "Hunter Opportunity" from the TP&W view point. Their goal was to create as much opportunity as possible without having a negative impact on wildlife, including quail.

On a state wide basis there are just not enough hunters covering enough land to have a negative impact on quail populations. Of the 25,000 quail hunters in Texas, the average hunter only spends 3 days hunting quail and takes only 2 1/2 birds. This is considered a miniscule impact considering the huge amount of land available.

"The trouble with our liberal friends is not that they're ignorant: It's just that they know so much that isn't so."

"I have wondered at times about what the Ten Commandment's would have looked like if Moses had run them through the U.S. Congress."

"The taxpayer: That's someone who works for the federal government but doesn't have to take the civil service examination."

"Government is like a baby: An alimentary canal with a big appetite at one end and no sense of responsibility at the other."

"The nearest thing to eternal life we will ever see on this earth is a government program."

"I've laid down the law that from now on, when anything important happens, no matter what time it is, they are to wake me, even if it's in the middle of a Cabinet meeting."

"It has been said that politics is the second oldest profession. I have learned that it bears a striking resemblance to the first."

"Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving,

On the other hand, on individual ranches, or on certain tracts of land like state Wildlife Management Areas, hunter pressure can be very high and the impact on quail negative. Many land managers and ranchers in high pressure areas place their own limits on quail hunting. Examples include not allowing hunting in February, limiting hunters to shooting only on the initial covey rise (never hunting singles), taking only one bird per covey, and other similar actions. Seasons may be long and bag limits high but that does not prevent land owners/managers from limiting seasons or bag limits on their property when it fits their specific situation.

SPECIAL FIRE ANT CONTROL MEETING, MARCH 17, 2005

"Controlling Brazilian Fire Ants with the Phorid Fly", Thursday, March 17, 7:00 PM, Bee County Coliseum.

This workshop will be conducted by 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.

Dr. Gilbert is working on ways to control fire ants and has presented his research to the BCWMA board. They have decided to bring the program to Bee County.

He lacks the funding to extend the project to South Texas, but if we do the work he will help us try to establish the Phorid fly in this area.

In this workshop we will learn about the program, how to conduct fire ant surveys and how to select places to establish the flies. Later we will send a team to UT to be trained to set up and monitor fly populations, effectiveness and growth.

We have invited people from several surrounding counties. More information on the program appeared in the January 2005 newsletter.

APRIL REGULAR MEETING

Charles Smith, a past BCWMA Director, will present a program on predator control on Tuesday, April 5, 7:00 pm, at the Bee County Coliseum. This will be a good opportunity to learn how to better catch those critters that are eating your game and non game animals. Remember, this is not about eliminating coyotes, hogs and the like, because we will not ever be able to do that, it is simply about controlling them at manageable levels.

We will also be polling members to gauge interest in establishing new spotlight survey areas in Bee County for 2005. One target area already identified is around Mineral, and a committee has been set up to spear head that initiative. It is headed by Alvin Rubottom and members are Pat True and Joe Dorek. Since a normal survey route is limited to about 15 miles area members may want to establish several routes around Mineral to adequately cover the area. If you would like to start monitoring deer populations and herd composition near your ranch, anywhere in Bee County, you need to attend this meeting.

COASTAL BEND CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL WILD TRUKEY FEDERATION ANNUAL BANQUET

The National Wild Turkey Federation's Coastal Bend Chapter was formed last year and is based in Victoria, Texas. The chapter's primary goal is to leverage NWTFF Super Fund monies for habitat management education, demonstration, equipment, and application on private lands in the Coastal Bend of Texas.

The Chapter's second annual banquet will be held in Victoria on Saturday, March 19th at Jaycee Hall, 2905 East North Street, next to the Civic Center. Tickets are \$40 single or \$50 for a couple. The price includes a membership, a subscription to their magazine and the banquet meal. The banquet is family oriented and people are encouraged to bring their kids. Children under 17 can join/eat for \$5.

Tickets are available from Gary Homerstad, 2805 N. Navarro, Suite 600 B, Victoria, Texas 77901. You can reach him by phone at 361/576-0023 or by email

regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it."

"Politics is not a bad profession. If you succeed there are many rewards, if you disgrace yourself you can always write a book."

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

Newsletter

Larry Jones
361-362-0430
ljones@hrbizmall.com

at Gary.Homerstad@tpwd.state.tx.us

The chapters' first seminar/field day is planned for sometime in May or early June. We will provide details in a future newsletter.

The Chapter is also looking for a committee member to represent Bee County, if you are interested let Gary know.

MEETING LOCATION CHANGE

Our regular monthly meeting location has changed. We are now meeting in the Bee County Coliseum.

BCWMA BOARD ANNOUNCES ANNUAL "BIG BUCK CONTEST"

The Board anticipates the following benefits from this contest:

1. Educational (awareness of the benefits of the "let it go so it can grow" philosophy and on-the-hoof aging)
2. Publicity - increase awareness of the Association among area residents/visitors
3. Membership - sign up additional hunters and property owners.

The initial contest rules follow (fine tuning may occur prior to the beginning of deer season):

- The BCWMA Big Buck Contest for whitetail deer is open to all adults and children and it applies to both bow and gun hunters.
- There will be two divisions, one for high fence properties and one for low fence properties.
- There will be first and second place prizes in both categories. All prizes will be presented at the annual meeting following the deer season.
- To be eligible game must come from land enrolled in the BCWMA or be taken by a BCWMA member/hunter.
- A \$10 entry fee per person is required to participate and must be paid prior to October 1 for bow hunters and before November 1 for gun hunters.
- Winners will be determined based on the Boone & Crockett gross antler score after adjusting for "under harvest age" penalties, if any, to be applied as follows:
 - Age 5 ½ years and older, no penalty, it is a harvest-aged deer
 - Age 4 ½ years, deduct 5 points from gross score
 - Age 3 ½ years, deduct 15 points from gross score
 - Age 2 ½ years, deduct 25 points from gross score
- Deer age will be determined using the jaw bone tooth aging process.
- All aging and scoring will be done by a TP&W wildlife biologist and/or a B & C scoring official approved by the BCWMA board.
- Deer must be presented for scoring with head and jaw bone attached to the field dressed carcass. Both hunter and scorer must sign an official animal entry card attesting to the validity of the entry and scoring.
- The hunter is responsible for submitting the completed entry form and a color photograph of the animal to one of the BCWMA board members.
- There will be a second, "Spike" category. A single prize will be awarded for the spike with the longest individual antler. Both high and low fence properties will compete in this category. A spike is defined as a whitetail deer with one or two spikes and no branch or fork on either antler.

WILD HOG CONTEST

The BCWMA Board has also decided to hold a year long "Wild Hog Contest" with the benefits expected to include:

1. Educate area residents on the impact of hogs on fawn, quail, turkey and

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* Buddy Turner - OGT
Program Director *



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Bee Agricultural Co.

An advertisement for Bee Agricultural Co. The top part features a horse in a field. Below the horse, the text reads "COMPLETE AGRICULTURAL SERVICE & SUPPLIES" and "BEE AGRICULTURAL CO.". A list of products includes: FEED • SEED • FERTILIZER, GRAIN STORAGE, Veterinarian Supplies, Lawn & Garden Supplies, Liquid Fertilizer • Dry Fertilizer, Pet Supplies, and Liquid Feed • Public Scales. The Purina Chows logo is also present. At the bottom, it says "Open Daily 8:00 - 5:30, Saturday 8:00 - Noon, 1004 S. Washington • Beeville, TX" and provides the phone number "358-3470".

other wildlife survival rates.

2. Publicity - increase awareness of the Association among area residents/visitors
3. Predator Control - Encourage hunter and landowner participation in controlling the wild hog population in Bee County.

The contest rules are:

- The BCWMA Wild Hog Contest is open to any adult or child.
- Any hog legally taken is eligible for entry. This includes by gun and hog trap, among others.
- Professional trappers are not eligible.
- An entry consists of the hog'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 at each annual meeting and a prize awarded to the person whose number is drawn. There is no limit to the number of times a person may enter.

COYOTE CONTEST

The BCWMA Board has also decided to hold a year long “Coyote Contest” with the benefits expected to include:

1. Educate area residents on the impact of coyotes on fawn, quail, turkey and other wildlife survival rates.
2. Publicity - increase awareness of the Association among area residents/visitors
3. Predator Control - Increase interest in reducing the coyote population in Bee County

The contest rules are:

- The BCWMA Coyote Contest is open to any adult or child.
- Any coyote legally taken is eligible for entry. This includes by gun, snare, trap or poison, among others.
- Professional trappers are not eligible.
- An entry consists of at least the last 6 inches 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 at each annual meeting and a prize awarded to the person whose number is drawn. There is no limit to the number of times a person may enter.

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)

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- **March 17, 2005 - 7:00 p.m. - SPECIAL MEETING, "BIOLOGICAL FIRE ANT CONTROL"** See separate item, "SPECIAL FIRE ANT CONTROL MEETING," for details.
- **April 5, 2005 - 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.** - "Predator Control, How Does It Fit In Your Management Plan?" Bee County Coliseum.
- **May 7, 2005, SATURDAY, 10:00am - 1:00pm**, "Pond Management Field Day and Electro Shocking Demo"
- **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"
- **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:

- **April 15, 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. 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.

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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

