

# BCWMMC

## Bee County Wildlife Management Co-op

November - December 2004 Newsletter

### Did you know...

...trigger restraint is the #1 deer management tool?

...habitat management is equally important?

...you should delay harvest of bucks until they are 6 ½ to 7 ½ years old?

...nutrition can be improved by:

- 1)reducing deer density
- 2)improving native habitat
- 3)planting food plots
- 4)supplemental feeding?

...in a recent King Ranch study 44 % of the bucks ranged an average of 5.1 miles from their birth place?

...One buck ranged over 14 miles?

...buck migration makes effective genetic culling very difficult on small, low fence ranches?

...only by working together can small landowners control enough acres to improve genetics?

...10 to 30% of bucks die of natural causes each year?

...bucks 2.5 to 5.5 years of age have a very low natural death rate?

### NEWSLETTERS

This newsletter is produced monthly with the exception of a combined issue for November and December.

### MEMBER SURVEY

Accompanying this newsletter is a brief member survey. This information is very important to the future direction of your association. Please complete the survey and mail it by December 15, 2004.

### NOVEMBER 2nd. GENERAL MEETING REPORT

About 40 people attended this meeting, including many visitors, and it was a huge success. Biologist Macy Ledbetter used deer antlers and his years of experience to educate us on live aging deer. The meeting also included an excellent video on aging and estimating B & C scores on the hoof. Members got a chance to actually test their abilities with the many bucks pictured.

Accurate live aging of deer is an essential skill for hunters and landowners interested in effectively managing their deer herds. Most bucks harvested in Texas (perhaps 50 to 80 %+ ) are 1 ½ to 2 ½ years old, which is why many people never see a decent buck. These “baby” deer must be allowed to mature and breed in order to break the cycle of “to many does and to few good bucks” so common in Bee County.

Those of us still not confident in our ability to age on the hoof might want to try the method used by Mickey Hellickson, Chief Wildlife Biologist of the King Ranch. Mickey’s criteria for a mature, shooter buck is that it must have “a huge rack and a belly that hangs down lower than the brisket” (the area between the front legs). Mickey does a presentation with buck photos where the audience decides if the buck is a “shoot”, “don’t shoot”, or “wait” deer. The “wait” deer are usually the ones where you can’t see the belly clearly and are unable to tell if it meets the criteria. In the field that is often the case, and if so the deer walks.

This was our last meeting for 2004, I hope you didn’t miss it.

### HWY 202 - HWY 59 HARVEST RECOMMENDATIONS

Landowners in the Hwy 202 area recently completed three pre-season spotlight surveys over a 22 mile route, and kept “incidental observation” records of deer by age and sex. The survey area extended from the Medio Creek to the prison and connected across to Hwy 59. The data was compiled and analyzed by TP&W Technical Guidance Biologist Macy Ledbetter. A formal harvest recommendation was then submitted by Mr. Ledbetter for the area landowner’s consideration.

The data indicated a population density of one deer to 20.74 acres, an adult sex ratio of 4.1 does per buck, and a 57% fawn survival rate. The short term goal of the harvest plan is to 1) allow more bucks to reach an older age class, 2) slightly decrease the overall population, 3) tighten up the adult sex ratio, 4) synchronize fawning dates and improve future fawn production.

On October 29, 2004, Hwy 202/Hwy 59 landowners and hunters met to discuss Macy’s recommendations. Following an active discussion and question and answer session the group unanimously agreed to adopt the plan as

... natural death is most common in bucks 1 ½ years or younger and those between 5 ½ and 9 ½?

### Tidbits

*"The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing."*

Socrates

*"If wishes were horses, beggars would ride."*

James Halliwell

*"The pure and simple truth is rarely pure and never simple."*

Oscar Wilde

*"To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing."*

Elbert Hubbard

*"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."*

Margaret Mead

*"Don't dwell on reality; it will only keep you from greatness."*

Rev. Randall R. McBride

*"Laughter is the shortest distance between two people."*

Victor Borge

### Officers

President:

Tom Keller  
361-375-2924

Vice President

Ellis McKinney  
361-358-3137

Secretary-Treasurer

Bill Frank  
361-877-4831

submitted.

The 2004 Hwy 202/59 deer harvest plan/agreement is as follows:

- 1) Harvest three mature (old) does per 300 acres owned (being certain it is not a male fawn). Take them as early in the season as possible to maximize the benefits this year.
- 2) If desired, harvest a maximum of 1 mature buck (5 ½ years or older) per 300 acres. If there is a choice, select a lesser quality mature buck and leave the better bucks to breed another year. Do not harvest any other fork horned bucks. If you elect to harvest no fork antlered deer this year, so much the better.
- 3) If a spike buck is harvested it is to count against the mature buck allocation in item #2.
- 4) Reduce the number of predators, especially feral hogs, coyotes, and feral dogs.

Data collection is also a key part of the plan. We will keep individual animal harvest records, including sex, weight, age, antler data, jaw bones for later age verification, and stand and incidental observation data.

Overall this has been a very rewarding effort. In addition to the obvious benefits to the deer herd, the opportunity to meet and work with our neighbors was fantastic. Everyone has been very cooperative and supportive and we all seem to have common goals, and everyone is committed to working toward them. Based on a number of incoming phone calls and reports of what is now actually happening in the hunting stand and field I think everyone is very serious about sticking to the plan. By working together we will make a difference!

### QDM SHORT COURSE REPORT

There was a QDM Deer Management program October 26 at the King Ranch Museum in Kingsville. It was sponsored by the Quality Deer Management Association, Texas Wildlife Association, and the King Ranch. Perhaps 200 people attended (my guess) including Tom Keller, Pat True and Larry and Sandy Jones from BCWMA. Al Brothers and Dave Richards signed copies of their book "Observing & Evaluating Whitetails" and Dave spoke on Aging Whitetails on the hoof.

Dr. Randy DeYoung, Research Scientist, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, gave a presentation called Genetic Insights. He discussed heritability traits, breeding success by age group and a number of other topics. Research indicates: 1) 1 ½ and 2 ½ year old bucks sire 30% of the herd 2) herd genetics are hard to change due to transient buck impact 3) almost NO does are barren, but a lot of fawns don't survive 4) Nutrition and age class management are the most effective management tools.

Micky Hellickson, Chief Wildlife Biologist for the King Ranch gave a detailed talk on effective rattling. His research is very comprehensive and enlightening and way to much to be presented here. You should have been there!

Bob Carrol, Wildlife Biologist with TP&W, gave an update on the Special Six County Antler Restriction Program. His report echoed what we have heard from many co-op members in the target area, the program is a huge success. Expect to see versions of this program extended to other areas in Texas.

### ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER TICKETS AVAILABLE

Tickets are on sale now for our February Annual Meeting Dinner for \$10 per person. For details see the calendar below. Advance purchase is required so we know how many meals to arrange for. We will not be selling tickets at the door. Buy extras for any guests you may invite. It is BYOB. Tickets can be purchased at Mineral Mercantile, Bee County Extension Service office, or

**Directors**

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**Newsletter**

Larry Jones  
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**OPERATION GAME  
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*“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 \*

by mail, sending your check to BCWMA, P. O. Box 1967, Beeville, TX 78104.

**BOARD MEMBER NOMINATIONS**

Our Board of Directors consists of nine members. The term of a board member is three years with three new board members being elected every year to replace three outgoing members.

A nominating committee is now at work and will have a list for your consideration at our February Annual Meeting. If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact any current board member or President Tom Keller. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

The New Board of Directors will then elect a new President, Vice-President, and Secretary from the board.

**NEW BROCHURE AVAILABILITY**

Brochures are available at all meetings. If someone you know wants co-op information advise Larry Jones at 361-362-0430 and he will mail them a copy.

**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)

- **December, 2004** - No Meeting
- **January 4, 2005 - 7:00 pm - 8:30pm** “Managing for the Rio Grande Turkey” and “Turkey Calling” - Joe Herrera, TP&W Biologist. First National Bank meeting room on Hwy 59.
- **February 4, 2005 - (FRIDAY) 7:00pm - 9:30 pm** - BCWMA Annual Meeting, Election of Officers and Dinner - Guest Speaker will be Sally Crofutt of the Fennessey Ranch. The program is Eco-tourism on the Fennessey Ranch. It is a great presentation.
- **March 1, 2005** - “Managing For Quail”
- **April 5, 2005** - “Predator Control, How Does It Fit In Your Management Plan?”
- **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” - featuring Bill Armstrong, Manager of the Kerr WMA, and other noted speakers.
- **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



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“Deer Harvest and Herd Culling Recommendations”

- **December, 2005 - No Meeting**

#### **Board of Directors Meeting Schedule:**

The board meets Thursday of the week following every General Monthly Meeting. All members are invited. The next board meeting will be:

- **January 13, 2005 - 3:00 - 4:30pm**

#### **CALENDAR OF EVENTS - State Wide**

**January 14-16, 2005:** Texas Trapper Training Seminar, Parrie Haynes Ranch, near Killeen. For more information, contact Dan Hepker, (512) 308-1995.

**February 12, 2005:** “Managing for Wildlife” Seminar, sponsored by Texas Parks & Wildlife Department. For more information, contact TPWD at (210) 348-6350.

**June 24-25, 2005:** Wildlife 2005, Texas Wildlife Association’s 20th Annual Convention, Hyatt Regency Hill Country Resort and Spa, San Antonio. For more information, contact Sharron Jay at (800) 839-9453

#### **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 to send newsletters by email due to the substantial reduction in expense and labor.

#### **OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WE RECOMMEND**

##### **Quality Deer Management Association**

P. O. Box 227, Watkinsville, GA 30677 - 800-209-3337 <http://www.qdma.com>  
Magazine: Quality Whitetails, 5 issues per year, excellent resource!

##### **Texas Wildlife Association**

401 Isom Road, Suite 237, San Antonio, Texas 78216 - 800-839-9453

<http://www.texas-wildlife.org/>

Magazine: Texas Wildlife, excellent!

##### **Texas Deer Association**

5414 Bandera Rd., Suite 408. San Antonio, Texas 78238 - 210-767-8401

<http://www.texasdeerassociation.com/>

Newsletter: TDA Tracks

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