

BCWMMC

Bee County Wildlife Management Co-op

September 2004 Newsletter

Did you know...

...Texas has an estimated population of 1 ½ to 2 million feral hogs?

...feral hogs in Texas are genetically the same as domestic swine?

...there are no pure European hogs or Russian boars running free in Texas today?

...a "sounder" is what you call a group of wild or feral hogs?

...mature feral hogs have no predators other than man?

...a sow can breed at 6 to 9 months of age?

...a sow has a gestation period of 115 days?

...a sow will produce a litter of 4 to 12 young?

...about a third of the sows have a second litter the same year?

Tidbits

"Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal."

-[Henry Ford](#)

SEPTEMBER 7TH MEETING REPORT

Al Brothers lived up to his reputation as "the whitetail guru" in his presentation "Whitetail Deer Management and Harvest Records." As we have heard before, the three basics to effective management are HABITAT, HERD DYNAMICS (age, density and buck-doe ratios), and GENETICS. Lack of control is the #1 problem for small landowners with low fences. Trigger happy, game-hog neighbors that blast everything that moves will defeat any management plan. Protection is a key element and, along with education, one of the main purposes of a management co-op like the BCWMA. Other than building a high fence, the only way to effectively manage a deer herd on small ranches is by neighbors working together to develop common goals, complementary management plans, and ultimately building/earning trust.



Al stressed the importance of detailed harvest records to track and measure progress, or the lack thereof, in managing your deer herd. Every deer harvested should be 1) weighed, 2) aged by removing a jaw bone and retaining it with a data card for review by an expert, and 3) by scoring all bucks using the Boone & Crockett system. Every hunter should be required to fill out a stand survey card to record data on all animals seen. Specific forms are available for this purpose.

Indicator plants should be used to help determine density. Never clear more than 30% of your brush and confine that to small areas, not large blocks. Creating lots of "edge" is the goal. Locations of food plots are important and one consideration is location relative to deer bedding areas. Several smaller plots are better than one large one, although they all need to be large enough to not be picked clean in a few days or weeks. Palatability of the plants chosen is a way of controlling this and should be considered in choosing them. If the goal of your plots is supplemental nutrition they should never be hunted so the deer have a "free feed" area. Small properties should be kept quiet and there should be sanctuary areas where animals are not hunted or disturbed.

Al will be back in the future to teach us how to age deer on the hoof. In the mean time I HIGHLY recommend you order a copy of his book, "Observing & Evaluating Whitetails." It is available from the Texas Wildlife Association by calling 1-800-839-9453. Price is \$29.99 softbound and \$39.99 hardbound. The book features 435 stunning photographs with year to year documentation of more than a dozen outstanding bucks. To properly manage your deer herd you have to know how to age them on the hoof. **If you want to learn to age live deer this book is a good place to start.** Order today.



"The indispensable first step to getting the things you want out of life is this: decide what you want."

-[Ben Stein](#)

"This one step -- choosing a goal and sticking to it -- changes everything."

-[Scott Reed](#)

"Bad habits are like a comfortable bed, easy to get into, but hard to get out of."

-[Anon.](#)

"Habit and routine have an unbelievable power to waste and destroy."

-[Henri de Lubac](#),

"The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function."

-[F. Scott Fitzgerald](#)

"There is nobody so irritating as somebody with less intelligence and more sense than we have."

[Don Herold](#)

"The brighter you are, the more you have to learn."

-[Don Herold](#)

"Effective leadership is putting first things first. Effective management is discipline, carrying it out."

-[Stephen Covey](#)

"The very essence of leadership is that you have to have a vision."

-[Theodore Hesburgh](#)

GETTING STARTED ON YOUR WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The starting point for effective management of your property is developing a management plan. Professional assistance is available free of charge. Texas P&W provides the services of a biologist to meet at your property for an on-site assessment. Two of my neighboring ranchers/BCWMA members and I met with biologist Macy Ledbetter this month and toured our three ranches. We will each receive individual, customized, 14 page management plans. When implemented the three plans will complement each other and make the sum of our properties much more effective as game habitat than the individual parts. We have scheduled a spot light deer census for the Hwy 202 area (between the Medio and the prison, and across to Hwy 59) for the night of September 22. Macy and several landowner/BCWMA members will participate. With the information obtained we will have the first part of the base line data we need to set future harvest standards and baselines for measuring plan effectiveness.

Macy works with well over 100 ranches under management plans and provides the technical assistance the land owners need. Participation is voluntary, you can do as little or as much as you want. Aside from the technical competence Macy brings to the table that most of us do not have, perhaps the greatest benefit is that he has seen just about everything done on many ranches over many years. He can tell us from experience what is likely to work and not work for us.

One goal of the BCWMA is to see the majority of ranches in Bee County benefit from implementing professional management plans. Have you signed up yet? Why not contact Macy now at 361-786-4510 or email him (preferred) at habitat@awesomenet.net and make an appointment for him to visit your ranch. If you can arrange for your neighbors to meet with him at the same time so much the better. I recommend that approach based on personal experience.

UVALDE DOVE SYMPOSIUM REPORT

President Tom Keller and wife Mary attended the Dove Symposium in Uvalde August 26 and 27. Excerpts from their meeting notes are attached.

CONDUCTING DEER SPOTLIGHT SURVEYS

Right now is when we should be conducting spotlight surveys. This information is important in determining deer herd size vs. habitat carrying capacity. Deer density and herd composition are important factors in regulating your annual deer harvest, including total deer to harvest and the percentage of bucks and does to take.

Accompanying this newsletter is a paper explaining how to conduct spotlight surveys. Also, Macy Ledbetter, state biologist in Three Rivers, is available to assist in conducting and analyzing your initial survey.

Our October 5th meeting will feature TP&W Technical Guidance Biologist Gary Homerstad from Victoria. He will discuss specific deer census techniques and how to use the data. This meeting should be a must for anyone who is serious about deer management.

As mentioned elsewhere, a Highway 202 survey is underway and Tom Keller is organizing a Mineral area survey, contact Tom to participate.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD) UPDATE

CWD tests have been conducted on 6000 wild and captive whitetails in Texas since 2002. There were no positive tests, and no case of CWD has ever been found in Texas. There are just eight states that still have CWD and no new states had positive tests in the last year. CWD is a brain disease that strikes only members of the deer family, and humans are not affected by it.

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Newsletter

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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 *

TEXAS WILDLIFE ASSOCIATION (TWA)

The Texas Wildlife Association (TWA) is dedicated to educating all persons, especially Texas youth, about conservation, management, and enhancement of wildlife and habitat, especially on private land. They produce a quality magazine and serve as an advocate for wildlife and small landowners on many fronts. They sponsor the Youth Hunting Program mentioned in the last newsletter. Click <http://www.texas-wildlife.org> or call 1-800-839-9453.

QUALITY DEER MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION (QDMA)

The QDMA is a national level non-profit organization focused on whitetail deer management. They provide educational resources and sell many tools needed to effectively manage your deer herd. Jaw extractors, scales, harvest record books and other items are available. They produce "Quality Whitetails" magazine five times a year and sponsor short courses and seminars (see the last item in the Calendar for one in Kingsville). If deer management is your thing you should join. Al Brothers was a founder of QDM. Click <http://www.qdmq.com> or get their catalog and membership information by calling 1-800-209-3337.

BOARD VOTES TO SEEK SPONSORS AND ADVERTISING

The Board of Directors voted September 16th to solicit sponsors and accept paid advertisements in this newsletter. The income will help cover expenses associated with our programs. If you know of a business or group interested in this program have them contact Larry Jones or any Director.

ASSOCIATION BROCHURE TO BE DEVELOPED

We are developing a small brochure to promote the goals and purpose of our association. It will be a single 8 ½ x 11 inch sheet, tri-folded to a finished size of 3 ½ x 8 ½ inches, with 6 panels/pages. Initially it will be produced in-house to minimize the costs. We need several high quality, 4 color photos of Bee County game to include in it. If you have suitable pictures of a trophy buck, turkeys, quail, dove or other wildlife contact Larry Jones ASAP. We hope to have the brochure available for West Fest on October 16th.

BCWMA LOGO CAPS

Ball caps with the BCWMA logo are available for sale at all board and regular meetings. Both standard and larger sizes are available. The price is \$10. CAMO caps should be available by the October meeting.

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).

GATE SIGNS

If you have not received your gate sign pick it up at the Bee County Extension office or at our next meeting.

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. All members receive a gate sign.

MANAGED LANDS DEER PERMITS PROGRAM (MLDP)

Attached to the email version of this newsletter is a file with information explaining the MLDP Program. A month longer deer hunting season and



Click to visit our web sites:

<http://www.fish-game-feeders.com>

<http://www.wildlife-blinds.com>

Or call: 1-888-631-6789
In Beeville: 361-362-0430

We beat factory prices and ship anywhere. We are the world's largest distributor of Texas Hunter products!

“ranch tags” instead of license tags are two possible benefits of the program.

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)

- **October 5, 2004 - 7:00pm - 8:30pm** - “Deer Census Techniques, Analyzing The Data, Developing Harvest Recommendations” - Gary Homerstad, TP&W Technical Guidance Biologist - First National Bank Meeting Room, 1400 Houston St. (Hwy 59), Beeville
- **November 2, 2004** - Workshop - “Deer Aging Using Tooth Wear and On the Hoof Evaluation” - Macy Ledbetter, TP&W Biologist
- **December, 2004** - No Meeting
- **January 4, 2005** - “The Rio Grande Turkey” and “Turkey Calling” - Joe Herrera, TP&W Biologist
- **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 topic is Eco-tourism and the Fennessey Ranch program.
- **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 “Deer Harvest and Herd Culling Recommendations”
- **December, 2005** - No Meeting

Board of Directors Meeting Schedule:

The board meets the first Thursday following every General Monthly Meeting. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Your input is valued.

- **October 14, 2004** - 3:00pm - 4:30pm -
- **November 11, 2004** - 3:00 - 4:30pm
- **January 13, 2005** - 3:00 - 4:30pm

SPECIAL EVENTS

October 16, 2004 - 10:00am - 8:00pm - Bee County West Fest

October 17, 2004 - 11:00am - 7:00pm - Bee County West Fest

We will have a booth at West Fest, manned by members, during the hours shown. We will be meeting and greeting the public, especially landowners and hunters. Our goal is to spread the fragmentation, habitat and wildlife management message, explain why we exist, and solicit new members. If you are willing to help please call Tom Keller or Larry Jones to get your name on the schedule. We are also looking for attention getting items (large mounted photos, deer heads, displays, etc.) for use in the booth.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - State Wide

September 18, 2004: Region 7 - Coastal Prairies Texas Big Game Awards Banquet, Victoria Community Center, Victoria. For more information, contact David Brimager at (800) 839-9453.

October 1, 2004: Kerr Wildlife Management Area - A free seminar on all facets of white tailed deer management. Includes nutrition, genetics, population control, burning and grazing. Call 830-238-4483 or email eb30gray@krc.com for more information.

October 2-3, 2004: Texas Wildlife EXPO - TPWD Headquarters, Austin. For more information, contact Ernie Gamage at (800) 792-1112.

October 6-8, 2004: First Annual Texas Quail Study Group Meeting, Aspermont. For agenda information and pre-registration details, log on at <http://teamquail.tamu.edu> or call Dale Rollins at (325) 653-4576.

October 12-13, 2004: Wildlife Management Workshop for Absentee Landowners hosted by Texas Cooperative Extension, Hornsby Bend Wastewater Facility, Austin. For more information contact Dr. Dale Rollins at (325) 653-4576 or d-rollins@tamu.edu or pre-register at www.peopleware.net/1542

October 26, 2004 - 3:00 - 8:00 - Quality Deer Management Short Course - King Ranch Museum, Kingsville, Texas. Put on by the QDMA, TWA, and the King Ranch. \$15 per person, dinner included. Brothers and Richards will sign copies of their book "Observing & Evaluating Whitetails." Topics include "Observing & Evaluating Whitetails" "Genetic Insights into Buck Breeding Success and Implications for Management Harvest" "Scientific Horn Rattling" "Update on the Six County Antler Restriction Program" and "A Proactive Approach Toward Poaching." Call 1-800-209-3337 or click <http://www.QDMA.com> for more details and registration. We can car pool, if interested call Larry Jones.

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 to send newsletters by email due to the substantial reduction in expense and labor. Newsletters are sent every month except December, if you don't get yours notify Larry Jones at 361-363-0430 or by email at the address above.

NEWSLETTER CONTENT SOLICITATED

Please submit information on coming events and topics of interest. Email Larry Jones at ljones@hrbizmall.com, FAX to 361-162-1309, or call 361-362-0430.

WEB LINKS OF INTEREST

Wildlife Fact Sheets: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/wild/>

Guides, Programs, Publications on Private Lands and Habitat:

http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/conserves/private_lands/

Texas Big Game Awards: <http://207.235.25.248/>

Texas Youth Hunting Program: <http://www.texas-wildlife.org/tyhp.htm>

Boone & Crockett Club: <http://www.boone-crockett.org/>

National Wild Turkey Federation: <http://www.nwtf.org/>