

THE CONSERVATION QUARTERLY

Summer 2015 edition Nature notes & news from the Lavaca County Wildlife Management Association

Fall Membership Meeting

All members are encouraged to attend the general membership meeting of the Lavaca County Wildlife Management Association (LCWMA) on Sunday, September 20, 2015. Doors will open at 10:00 a.m. and the general meeting will get underway around 11:00 with a presentation by guest speakers, Adrian and Laura Berg of Crossbone Corns entitled “Snakes of Texas”. The presentation will feature **LIVE** snakes, native to Lavaca County, and will discuss snake identification as well as their importance to the local ecosystem. They will also demonstrate how to safely capture and relocate a live snake. In addition, they will share techniques that will enable you to safely cohabit your land, with these interesting and often vilified animals.

Following the snake presentation a catered meal will be served. Members are asked to bring their favorite dessert to share with everyone. After lunch, Doug Jobes, Texas Parks and Wildlife biologist for Lavaca County, will review the herd composition data, and discuss harvest recommendations for the upcoming season. After Doug, Joel Wagner, LCWMA chairman, will give an update on the LCWMA. Raffle drawings will follow and the meeting will adjourn.

In addition to the bucket raffles held at the meeting, a special raffle is being conducted to offset the cost of the meeting. Only 1000 tickets will be sold. Tickets can be purchased at the meeting, however, if you are unable to attend and wish to purchase tickets, please complete the form on page 5. Send the completed form along with your payment to the LCWMA and tickets will be made out for you. In addition, you will receive a numbered ticket stub verifying your entry. The drawing will occur at the meeting on September 20, 2015.

The Board of Directors has put together an impressive suite of prizes for the bucket raffles. There will be something for everyone hunters, wildlife enthusiasts, and fishermen alike.

So, make plans now to join your fellow LCWMA members on Sunday, September 20, 2015 at the Knights of Columbus Hall (321 US HWY 77 S) in Hallettsville for the Fall 2015 membership meeting of the LCWMA. We hope to see all of you there.

Please help us reduce waste!

If you are receiving both a printed and an email copy of this newsletter, or multiple printed copies, please send us a message and let us know to stop sending both forms. If you are currently receiving the printed form of the newsletter, and would like to receive the newsletter via email, please send us a note at lavacacountywma@gmail.com, and we will convert you over to email only.

Corresponding via email allows the LCWMA to get information to the members faster, and saves funds that could be used to further our conservation goals.

Gate sign exchange program

Current LCWMA members who trade in an old-style WMA gate sign will receive \$3 off the purchase of a new-style LCWMA gate sign. Signs will be available for purchase at the fall membership meeting. Signs may also be purchased at the Texas Parks and Wildlife office (361-798-2625) at 412 N. Texana in Hallettsville.

Membership dues

If you haven't already done so, please send in your annual membership dues for 2015. Dues are \$20, and checks and money orders should be made payable to LCWMA. Questions pertaining to membership dues status should be directed to LCWMA Treasurer, Sam Bordovsky at 361-798-1813 or sbordovsky@gmail.com. Please mail your dues to:

LCWMA
P.O. Box 524
Hallettsville, TX 77964

As of the time of printing, less than 50% of LCWMA members have paid their 2015 membership dues. Remain eligible to receive doe permits by paying your membership dues on time.

The doe permit process

Every year about this time I get a ton of phone calls, from new and old members alike, about the process for receiving doe permits. So, in an effort to avoid this onslaught I will go through the permit process beginning with paying your membership dues. As stated previously, any LCWMA member looking to receive antlerless (doe) permits for the 2015-2016 hunting season must have their membership dues paid up by August 15, 2015. Interested members must also submit their herd composition report to Texas Parks and Wildlife by the date printed on the herd composition sheet (i.e., September 1, 2015). Failure to submit herd composition by the due date will render a member ineligible to receive permits for the 2015-2016 hunting season.

Once Texas Parks and Wildlife receives the herd composition surveys they are sorted by management unit (MU) then combined with spotlight survey data from each respective MU to create a harvest recommendation for each. This harvest recommendation is then loaded into the Texas Wildlife Information Management Services (TWIMS) site, into accounts that have been established for each individual landowner/land agent. If you have an email address on file with Texas Parks and Wildlife you will receive an email from TWIMS when your permits have been loaded into the system. You must then log into your personal TWIMS account using your *whole email address* as the login name, as well as the password you created when you first accessed TWIMS. If at any time you forget your TWIMS password simply click on the "Forgot Password" link and you will be emailed a temporary access code to enable you to log in to reset your password. Once inside your TWIMS account click on the "Harvest Recommendations" tab at the top of the page. There you should see a list of your ranch/ranches in a spreadsheet. Under the "Site Name" tab click on the ranch name. The ranch name(s) will be listed with the MU in which each belongs first. When the next page opens you can scroll down and see how many permits are recommended for the property. Then scroll all the way to the bottom of the page and click on the button labeled "Accept Harvest Recommendations." That's it. You're done. Finished. It's Over. Your permits will be mailed to you from Texas Parks and Wildlife headquarters in Austin and should normally arrive in 5-7 business days.

If you do not have an email address on file with Texas Parks and Wildlife your permits will be claimed by Texas Parks and Wildlife, and mailed to you before the start of the hunting season.

One thing to note, that always generates a lot of phone calls, is the buck harvest recommendation. For Level 1 MLDP cooperators, this box will always contain a zero. That does not mean you are not allowed to harvest any bucks during the upcoming season. The zero simply means that you will not be issued any special permits to shoot bucks on your property. For Level 1 cooperators buck tags are taken from the hunting license, not issued by Texas Parks and Wildlife. Members are encouraged to take only mature bucks (i.e., >4.5 years) as well as all spikes and legal bucks displaying inferior antler characteristics.

Questions pertaining to permit issuance, receipt, or lack thereof should be directed to TPWD biologist, Doug Jobes, at 361-798-2625 or doug.jobes@tpwd.texas.gov

Instructions for collecting incidental observations

Incidental Observations (often called Herd Composition) may be the most valuable data collected on a deer herd. When properly collected, herd composition data can reflect the overall health of a herd and help guide the manager in making proper harvest recommendations.

Herd composition data should be collected between August 1st and September 1st. The fawns have become a part of the herd by this time, yet they are small enough to be easily distinguished from adult deer. Observations outside this period may result in inaccurate data. Observations may be collected any time during the day. However, the first and last hours of daylight are often the most productive for deer seen per hour of effort. Observations **should not** be collected at night because it is too difficult to correctly identify sex and size.

Deer recorded should be viewed through binoculars or a spotting scope. Small antlers are easily overlooked without optical aids. Fawns whose spots have started to fade are also hard to distinguish when they are observed alone. Be sure to look at the hips of deer that you think could possibly be fawns because the hips are the last place to lose spots.

When observing deer in herds it is important that each deer be identified. If a herd of six deer is seen but only four are positively identified, do not record any of the deer. If there are two bucks, three does, and one fawn in a herd, you may easily identify the bucks but may not be sure of the other four unless they are **all individually identified**. When a herd is seen, quickly get a total head count, then go back and positively identify bucks first because they are easiest, then identify fawns, and finally, identify the does making sure not to miss small antlered bucks.

Collect as many samples as you can. If possible, a larger sample size is desirable to strengthen the data and increase the confidence in the harvest recommendations. Observations can be made during routine ranch operations or as a special effort. Observing the same deer recorded on a previous survey is a concern if surveys are conducted too close together (less than 2-3 hours apart). If a conscientious effort is made to record accurate data, a small amount of duplicate recording should not affect the ratio. All deer should be recorded as a buck, doe, or fawn.

Send herd composition, spotlight, and daylight and evening mobile data to your Texas Parks and Wildlife biologist by **September 1, 2015**.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Biologist
Doug Jobes
412 N. Texana
Hallettsville, TX 77964

Please be sure to total your sightings to the right and down before sending in your forms. Also be sure to fill in the name of the WMA the data is being collected for, and a distinguishing ranch name. It is essential that everyone collect herd composition data. The more data that is collected, the more applicable the harvest recommendations made for your co-op will be to your individual ranch. Please follow the instructions precisely. DO NOT RECORD RANCHES IN DIFFERENT CO-OPS ON THE SAME FORM, it causes too much confusion when entering the data.

**HERD COMPOSITION DATA DUE: SEPTEMBER 1, 2015
(i.e. must be received by TPWD by this date)**

TAKE NOTE!!! LEASE LICENSE CHANGES

Recent changes in Texas Parks and Wildlife's policy require all lease licenses purchased for a wildlife management association must be done simultaneously. We will no longer be able to purchase lease licenses a few at a time. If you need a lease license, and want to get it at the drastically reduced price offered to wildlife management associations, then you must purchase your lease license from the LCWMA by September 21, 2015. Lease license applications will be available at the fall meeting for those who attend. If you are unable to attend the fall meeting the form is available on the LCWMA website (www.lcwma.org) under the FORMS tab. Please print out the form, fill it out, and return it to the LCWMA, along with your payment by September 21, 2015. Make checks payable to LCWMA.

LCWMA Policy Reminders

If you know someone who is interested in joining the LCWMA, and would like to be eligible to receive permits for the upcoming hunting season, please make sure they enroll before August 15, 2015. This is the date established by Texas Parks and Wildlife for inclusion in the Managed Lands Deer (MLD) program at all levels. For current members, this means your 2015 dues must be paid before August 15, 2015, or you may not receive your permits before the upcoming season. You are highly encouraged to pay your 2015 dues as soon as possible, but August 15 is the absolute last day to pay, to ensure your permits arrive on time.

Remember, any member who wishes to receive MLD permits for the 2015-2016 hunting season **MUST** submit herd composition data by the date set forth by Texas Parks and Wildlife in this newsletter (September 1, 2015). Herd composition must be received by the deadline or the applicant will be rendered ineligible to receive MLD permits for that season. These requirements are necessary to streamline the permit issuance process, and allow sufficient time before the hunting season to correct complications that arise, as well as hold new and current members to the same data reporting standards.

2015 Fall Meeting Raffle \$10/ticket OR 6/\$50 ONLY 1000 tickets will be sold

1. Remington Model 700 BDL, .270 cal., 24" barrel, walnut high gloss stock (Value = \$830)
2. Remington Model 700 SPS, .308 cal., 24" barrel, matte blue barrel with synthetic stock (Value = \$680)
3. Tri Star Hunter EX 12 gauge over and under shotgun, 28" barrel (Value = \$520)
4. DPMS Panther, .223 cal (Value = \$463)
5. Savage Arms Axis II XP with Weaver Kaspas 3-9x40 scope, 22-250 cal., (Value = \$430)
6. \$500 Brush to Bay Outfitters gift certificate, 1526 U.S. Hwy 77 South, Hallettsville
7. \$250 Brush to Bay Outfitters gift certificate, 1526 U.S. Hwy 77 South, Hallettsville
8. \$150 Brush to Bay Outfitters gift certificate, 1526 U.S. Hwy 77 South, Hallettsville
9. \$100 Cabela's gift certificate
10. \$100 Bass Pro Shops gift certificate

All winners of firearms must pass a N.I.C.S. Background Check or prize will be forfeited. Prizes #1-5 must be picked up from Howard's in Shiner, TX (361-594-4200) by November 1, 2015 or prize will be forfeited.

Name:

Phone:

of tickets:

LCWMA
P.O. Box 524
Hallettsville, TX 77964

LCWMA Board of Directors

Chairman: Joel Wagner (Western Lavaca County)

Vice-chairman: Jason Johnson (West Sandy Creek)

Secretary: Tom Grahmann (At-large)

Treasurer: Sam Bordovsky (South Central Lavaca County)

Member: Jason Kubeczka (At-large)

Member: Wayne Rother (Vienna)

Member: William "Rusty" Wallace (Honey Creek)

Member: Mike Hoelscher (At-large)

Member: David Pohl (At-large)

Membership questions?

Call the Chairman at

361-798-6506 or

Email

lavacacountywma@gmail.com