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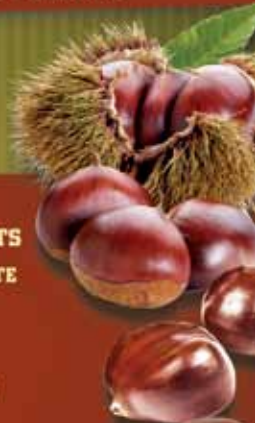
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## A Letter from the Editor – Mark Peretore

As outdoor enthusiasts and hunters, we believe strongly in the way of the land. The mechanism that compels us to the great outdoors and the game that thrives on it is in our hearts and souls. It cannot be described and can never be replaced. We live and breathe to do what we do, to carry on the heritage and traditions of those in the past and pass on our insights to the next generation, to pay homage to what the Lord has given us. Nature has a way of teaching us all. It cannot be tamed and it cannot be controlled, we can only live within it. Wildlife management is a passion of ours and yours, and we hope to continue to bring you to that peaceful place with each edition of *Wildlife Management News*.

Jim Holbert founded *Wildlife Management News* in 2008. As an avid outdoorsman and a regular backwoods Pennsylvanian, Jim has practiced wildlife management since he was a child. Though he humbly says he's not qualified, Jim studied biology in college and retains a wealth of detailed knowledge for everything outdoors. He has made an impressive list of friendships inside the wildlife community including Dr. James Kroll (Dr. Deer) and so many more. *Wildlife Management News* started as a small newsletter for Montrose, Pennsylvania, and has developed into a full scale subscriber-based magazine that brings you the wildlife management news for your region. Articles written by local people as well as expert biologists allow you to see how you should be interacting with your habitat and help you get involved in the process of wildlife management.

I joined Jim in 2014 and have begun to take on the role as chief editor. I've been an outdoor enthusiast my entire life and began hunting at a young age, never looking back. Hunting all game, I've gained a depth of field knowledge that is only learned from hands-on experience. Because I am an accountant by trade, with a business background, teaming up with Jim to become the CEO and Editor of *Wildlife Management News* seemed a logical step. Under my management, *Wildlife Management News* is growing steadily and will be bringing much more than just a magazine to people who subscribe. Lately, the introduction of the website [www.wildlifemanagementnews.com](http://www.wildlifemanagementnews.com) and electronic publications through e-book readers and cell phones will diversify the way you can interact with the *Wildlife Management News* magazine.

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# A Story to be Told

Story by Darryl Harvey

In December 2014, my children and I were asked by Glenn Wolfe at Cooperative Feed Dealers to write an article about our deer hunting experiences. My name is Darryl Harvey, my daughter's name is Brooke and my son's name is Brett.

In 1998, I purchased a farm in Tioga County, Pennsylvania that was adjacent to ground owned by my father, Larry, totaling about 230 acres. The layout of the ground purchased was mostly field and pasture land between two rolling hills.

In the spring of 1999, a single row tree planter was used to plant what has become a pine forest. For twelve straight years, we purchased various species of pine trees from Pine Grove Nursery in Clearfield, Pennsylvania. Pines were planted with the intention of creating a safe haven for all Pennsylvania wildlife, specifically deer. We started planting the hillsides of my property and then the road frontage on my father's property. In the following years, we planted the road boundaries on my property to create a visual screen so that motorists could not view the property.

With the maturing of the trees, deer would come to the property to bed down, but the only food source was a few wild apple trees and grass land. In the center of the property, food plots were created to give the deer a reason to stay. We started planting clover mix, a turnip/radish blend and field seed corn purchased from Judson's, Inc. The results of those food plot plantings were astounding! As deer seasons passed, we noticed the numbers of deer on our property were growing. Our dream was to someday have trophy bucks roaming our property.

I attended a lecture given by Dr. Gary Alt at Mansfield High School, which focused on genetics, age and nutrition. The two components I really focus on now are age and nutrition. Pennsylvania then adopted a point restriction program which gave the young bucks a chance to survive

another year. In my opinion, if a buck does not make it to four and a half years old, you will never see his full potential of antler growth. Five and a half would be great, but most Pennsylvania hunters cannot be patient that long.

In 2013, I switched my nutrition program to forage oats and a forage soybean. With the help of Glenn Wolfe at Cooperative Feed Dealers (CFD), Buck Forage Oats and Real World Wildlife Round-up Ready Forage Soybeans were purchased from CFD by Judson's, Inc. in 2014. The results of planting these two products can be seen in the picture taken from the end of the 2014 Pennsylvania rifle season.

## Our philosophy on deer hunting:

Step 1, put in good food plots;

Step 2, give them a place where they feel safe that includes cover with no pressure;

Step 3, hunt all day (go in in the dark and go out in the dark), don't pressure the deer, and try not to be winded. It is a good idea to have a stand or blind established months ahead of season so that the deer don't recognize it as being unnatural;

Step 4, don't drive your property; hunt near your food plots and let the deer come to you. Drives add pressure and you run the risk of driving them off of your property;

Step 5, be patient; learn how to score a buck, look for girth, tine length and spread.


Step 6, have a good target, in range, so that you make a good kill shot.

Our motto is, "If you shoot it, it needs to be a 'wall-hanger,' and if you can't kill it, don't shoot."

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## Here are two stories from my children about their deer hunting experiences:

*As told by Brooke Harvey, age 13:*

I first started hunting in 2012 when I got a 243 rifle. My first time hunting was fun and I was hoping to get a deer that was decent sized. We walked out to the stand at about 6 a.m. We waited and waited. At 8 a.m., we heard a shot. My dad and I figured it was the neighbors, but it was actually my little brother. He shot his first buck, an 8 point. I was happy, but I wanted a buck, too. Eight hours later of sitting and waiting, an 8 point walked out. My dad handed me the gun. I shot and dropped it. One shot, one kill. My dad always said, "If you can't kill it, don't shoot it." We waited to make sure the deer died and packed up our stuff and were waiting for dark. Then a "monster" buck came out into the field, and my dad said, "Brooke, give me a shell." I hesitated, wondering how big the buck was, but got the shell. My dad shot once and killed it. We picked up both deer and skinned them and took them to the taxidermist to get mounted. Ever since my dad shot that deer, I wanted a bigger one.

2013 was a year of rebuilding. I sat out in the stand with my stepmom, Amy. We sat all day long. I had a chance to shoot a big 6 point, but I wanted a bigger one. None of us got anything that year.

Now, 2014, is where our deer started to get bigger. Again, my little brother, Brett, got a 9 point the first morning at 8 a.m. I sat all day, but didn't see any that I wanted to shoot. I went out the next day with my dad. It was snowing, so the deer were coming out earlier than usual. There had been this "monster" 10 point wandering around in the area and that was the one I wanted to kill. At 3 p.m., he walked out into the field. My dad said, "Holy crap, Brooke, here he comes," and handed me the gun. One shot, one kill. He roughly scored about 140. I am hoping it makes the Boone and Crocket record book.

*Brooke's antlers scored 143.3" gross and 140.4" net. This is the official score for the Pennsylvania state record book.*

When we first got into hunting, we only knew how to shoot .22 caliber rifles, and we wanted to shoot the deer with



the .22 because we didn't know how to shoot the 6 mm rifle or the 243. We were scared to shoot the big guns also. Then one day my dad, Darryl, said, "That's it, I am going to take you and your sister (Brooke) to target practice." Next we went to a field down in front of the house that was about 300 yards long, and we brought all of the big guns with us. The first gun we shot was my 6mm, and when I shot it, it wasn't so bad. I really wanted to shoot it again. Then it was my sister Brooke's turn to shoot. And she was even more scared than I was, so she made me shoot it before she shot it. I told her it wasn't so bad, and finally convinced her to shoot it. And the first time she shot it, she closed her eyes because she was still scared. Then out of the blue, she said she liked it! Then shot it a few more times. Then it was my dad's turn to shoot his 7mm. Brooke and I ran and sat in the truck before he had it out of the truck. His gun is loud like a cannon. Still in the truck and covering our ears double times, he put his shell in the chamber and fired. Our target was a pizza box and that gun destroyed it. He shot a few more times and went back to the house.

Now it was hunting season and we head out. Everybody wants to hunt with me because all of the deer I shot was around 8 a.m. So my sister was hunting over soybeans and corn. I was hunting over thick brush and pine trees. I was hunting with my dad. Brooke was right over the hill from my dad and me. I am sitting, about to fall asleep, and my dad said, "There is a nice 9 point coming out of the brush." Then he said it was a "shooter," so I hurried and got my gun up and ready to shoot it. My dad said to take the shot. He stopped... perfect shot! He was over the brush and I didn't want to shoot into the brush, so I aimed a little

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bit high and fired. I was so excited because it was a direct kill shot! That is the story of shooting and getting our guns ready and the hunt.

In conclusion, to back up our philosophy, we currently have harvested one Boone & Crocket record book Pennsylvania buck, scoring 155 1/4" gross, and 149 5/8" net, taken in 2012, and possibly another one waiting to be scored, shot by my thirteen year old daughter, Brooke, on December 2, 2014.

In 2012, I shot the "monster buck" my daughter referred to in her story, which is listed in the 2013 Boone and Crocket Record Book.

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## Diversification in Tough Times!

by Ray Reeves



How did your herd weather the winter? For those of us here in the northeast, we have endured a seemingly long and relentless winter with snow cover that just wouldn't go away. These kinds of winters especially make us thank the Lord and appreciate the warmth of our homes and the nourishment that we have that sustains us. Now can you imagine eating only bread or oatmeal, or only eggs or just pizza all winter long? That wouldn't be healthy or even desirable! But if that's all we had we would eat it and survive. I use this extreme analogy to make a point to the deer hunting and food plotting world. A lot of times our food plots are designed to kill deer, but what about the deer that are left?

Oftentimes the plots that are put in are a single item (clover, brassica, oats, rye, etc.) and when they have been browsed or the hard winter comes, they die and the feed in that spot is gone; there is nothing left to come back to. There are other products out there that can be put in with these items that will enhance the food plot, broaden its diversity, give longevity, give more nutrition, and even greater energy that the deer need to carry them through the winter months. Do we need to do this? Will the deer still survive if we don't? The deer for the most part will survive, but it's not just about survival, it's about strong healthy deer with good strong genetics! This is not another big expensive upgrade that will cost more than it's worth, it's about thinking it through a little more or even getting some more info on diversification in food plots before planting the next time!

Here are a few pics of standing beans (protein), standing corn (energy) and brassica/turnips (energy, high sugar content) in the deep snow that helps sus-



tain deer above their normal "woody-fiber" browse. If you have enough room to plant separately, fine – but if not, plant them together in the same plot!

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# Pennsylvania's River Otters

by Tom Hardisky, Furbearer Biologist, PA Game Commission

Your chances of seeing a river otter in the wild have always been slim to none due to their elusive behavior. However, today, viewing opportunities are at their greatest in many parts of Pennsylvania.

Once widely distributed and relatively abundant, otter populations entered a period of very low numbers. The combined effects of habitat destruction, water pollution, and unregulated harvest ultimately caused the extirpation of river otters from most of Pennsylvania and much of the entire country by the early to mid-1900s. Toxic stream conditions were produced by drainage from tanneries, mines, oil wells, chemical works, factories, and foundries.

Deteriorating water quality quickly eliminated fish and other aquatic life from Pennsylvania's waterways. The last recorded otter in the Allegheny River was in 1899; the last in Pymatuning Swamp was in 1908. In 1952, the Pennsylvania Game Commission closed otter trapping season. River otters were never completely extirpated from Pennsylvania, but their numbers were vastly reduced. The Pocono region always supported otters, especially the counties of Wayne, Pike, and Monroe.

Prior to 1900, degradation of water quality and habitat, human encroachment, and unregulated harvest led to a 75 percent decline in North American otter populations. As a result of dedicated efforts of concerned biologists and state wildlife agencies, reintroduction efforts, legal protection, improved habitat quality and regulated harvest, otter populations rebounded during the mid- to late 1900s.

## Population Recovery

Nationwide, 21 states implemented river otter restoration projects during 1976-1998, releasing 4,018 river otters. Based on various forms of direct and circumstantial evidence, most of these projects were considered successful in restoring extirpated otter populations.

During 1982-2004, the Pennsylvania River Otter Reintroduction Project established stable, self-sustaining river otter populations in Pennsylvania. The program released 153 river otters successfully to eight water systems in central and western Pennsylvania. A successful, ecologically-based, and publicly-supported reintroduction project resulted from the carefully planned effort.

States conducting reintroduction projects obtained otters from a variety of sources. Most states (64%) released at



least some otters originating from coastal Louisiana as part of their reintroduction programs. Pennsylvania-released otters originated from Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and New York as well as relocated otters from the Pocono northeast.

Otter restoration efforts in Pennsylvania and similar efforts in neighboring states resulted in significant range expansion. Pennsylvania's otter population has been protected and growing for over 30 years since otter restoration was initiated. Restoration efforts, range expansion of native population, and influx from Ohio, New York, and Maryland restoration efforts led to successful population recovery.

Of the 49 states that otters inhabit, 37 manage a regulated otter harvest season. Twelve states currently have closed otter seasons with three states listing otters as state threatened. Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Indiana are the only eastern states with a closed harvest season for river otters. Indiana is in the process of starting a regulated otter harvest. Where regulated harvest is permitted, regulations consist of restrictions on harvest season length, harvest methods, and bag limits. Harvest quotas are used in some states as well as mandatory reporting requirements.



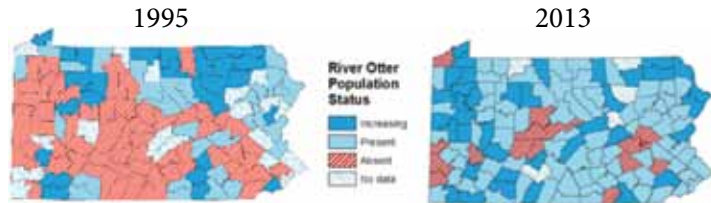
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently recommended that the export of otters taken in states with open harvest seasons will not be detrimental to the survival of the species. This advice also applies to states opening otter harvest seasons for the first time.

River otters are included in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) due to the similarity of this species to other endangered otter species listed in the CITES Appendices. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regulates and monitors the export of otter pelts from the U.S. State agencies generally use a combination of monitoring methods best suited for their conditions to gain information on otter population status within their jurisdiction.

## Current Status

Today, otter populations in Pennsylvania are increasing or stable across their range.

As part of our annual furbearer surveys, we asked Wildlife Conservation Officers (WCOs) to report the status of otter populations within their local districts. In 1995, otters occupied 49% of WCO districts. In 2013, otters occupancy increased by 40%. Today, 89% of WCO districts support river otter populations. The most dense otter populations occur in the northwestern and northeastern counties.



All data suggests that otter populations are currently increasing in density and expanding geographically throughout Pennsylvania. Otter populations occupy all major river systems.

The Delaware, Susquehanna, Allegheny, and Youghiogheny Rivers support sustained otter populations and act as travel corridors from which new populations disperse and expand geographically. The Potomac and Lake Erie watersheds maintain less dense populations, but continue to increase in otter numbers annually.

Currently, river otters are protected in Pennsylvania with no hunting or trapping allowed. In all surrounding states, river otters are harvested annually. As Pennsylvania otter populations continued to increase and expand, monitoring efforts determined that a regulated harvest was feasible.

## Proposed Otter Trapping Season

On January 27, 2015, the Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners gave preliminary approval to a limited otter trapping season. The proposed season would allow a very conservative otter harvest for the first time in 64 years. A harvest of about 85 individuals would be targeted.

The otter season would be three days long (February 21-23, 2016) with an option for the Game Commission to extend the season for up to five additional days. Licensed furtakers who also obtain a separate otter permit (\$6.70) would be permitted to trap one otter during the season. Only Wildlife Management Units (WMU) 3C and 3D – consisting of parts of Bradford, Susquehanna, Wayne, Pike, Luzerne, Lackawanna, Wyoming, Monroe, Lehigh, and Northampton counties – would be open for otter trapping.

Tagging requirements for those harvesting otters would be identical to the requirements for tagging bobcats and fishers. Before removing an otter from the location where it was caught, the trapper must fully complete and attach to

the animal a tag furnished with the permit. The tag would need to remain attached until a plastic Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) tag is attached, if applicable, or the animal is mounted, tanned, made into a commercial fur or prepared for consumption.

Those harvesting otters would be required to report harvests within 24 hours, which is less time compared to the 48 hours allotted to those harvesting fishers and bobcats.

Otter trapping regulations would largely follow those for beavers. However, within any WMU with an open otter trapping season, beaver trappers would be able to use no more than five traps or snares, and no more than two traps could be body-gripping traps. This limitation would be applicable during periods when the open beaver trapping season overlaps by calendar date with the open otter trapping season. Ordinarily, beaver trappers are limited to 10 traps, two of which may be body-gripping.

The Board of Game Commissioners will consider the proposed river otter season for final approval at their April 9-10, 2015 meeting.

In Pennsylvania, river otters continue to thrive and are among the many great success stories in wildlife conservation. With a cleaner environment and restored otter populations through reintroduction programs and natural dispersal, otter populations are increasing across their range in Pennsylvania.

Today, river otters are present in almost every county and, in many areas, are becoming as common as beavers. Sound management will safeguard Pennsylvania's healthy otter population for future generations to enjoy.





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Matthew Sellers, Enhanced Habitat

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Dave Sienko

I really like the Browning cam!! Battery life is still over 80% and I put it out a few days after you dropped it off. The camera takes some really nice pix. This Browning Dark Ops is the best camera we run right now. We have a bunch of different Moultries, which have been my favorite. We use one Cuddieback and absolutely hate it. Nothing but problems – I'll never buy another. We have one WildGame Innovations and it's OK at best. Good daytime pix but very grainy IR pix. We had one Stealth Cam and got rid of it. Batteries would last three days at best and when it took pix they were not very clear.

Michael Koneski



**CFD Featured Product**

I have recently transitioned my focus on trail cameras towards the product line that Browning offers. With being an avid bow hunter, I rely on my trail cameras to help with my overall success from season to season. Whether I am hanging them on a food plots, travel routes or other food sources, my Browning trail cameras provide me with the highest quality trigger speed, recovery time, detection width and overall range. With the combination of quick trigger speed (.7 seconds) and 2.3 second recovery time, Browning trail cameras ensure that your game will be detected. The thing that impressed me most with the Browning cameras was the detection range. Compared to other brands I have used in the past, the Browning trail cameras trigger pictures of animals as soon as they cross the detection zone, which helps prevent blank pictures. The overall quality of photos is outstanding, both daytime and especially the night pictures taking into consideration the no-glow infrared technology. The overall clarity, focus and brightness of the photos are top notch. In my opinion, Browning has surpassed many of its competitors with the Dark Ops model!

Chris Jeffers, Woodsfield, Ohio

## Memorial Chestnut Trees Planted

A memorial tree planting of Dunstan chestnut trees was completed as part of the Susquehanna Branch of the Quality Deer Management Association's commitment to Donna Salko. The planting is in memory of her late husband, Dr. Salko. Dr. and Mrs. Salko supported the Susquehanna Branch for many years at fund raising banquets and other activities.

Members of the Susquehanna Branch of QDMA planted the chestnut trees on the Salko property which is near Whites Crossing. Associate Director Kevin Urian from Waymart, current Branch Directors, Matt Sellers from South Montrose, Jake Bliss from Keystone College and Bob Wagner from Fairdale, joined current Associate Director Donna Salko for the planting.

Jim Holbert, Editor of *Wildlife Management News* and a Branch Associate Director, conveyed this message: "Donna is a personal friend and this was a great effort by you guys for a living testimony of planting trees in celebrating the memory of a loved one."



## How to Get Your Trees Ready For Summer

by Robert Fearnley

A wise gardener knows that action taken in early spring reaps dividends all summer long. Pruning, raking, mulching and routine maintenance on gardening equipment in March, April and early May will lead to greener lawns, bigger blooms and healthier plants all summer long. Likewise, a little work in your tree plantings now will result in increased growth this year. Following this sage advice will do the wildlife manager well with his tree plantings.

It has been a long, hard winter full of low temperatures, high winds and deep snow. All three of these conditions have good and bad effects on your trees. Consistent low temperatures keep buds tightly wrapped in their protective bud scales and reduce the effects of frigid weather; however, too much of a good thing sometimes can just be too much. The sub-zero weather may have damaged some buds, especially fruit buds of sensitive trees such as species that are stretching their territory northward. Examples of these are some of the southern apple varieties, peaches and plums. True northern native species of fruit and mast trees should have little cold damage. High winds may have damaged a few branches but most of the broken limbs had weak spots before the winds blew. There is a theory that wind helps strengthen branches by the constant twisting and waving of limbs. Deep snow protects roots by limiting frost in the ground but also protects meadow voles from predators and also allows rabbits to reach higher limbs to cut and/or griddle.

Now that spring is finally here... what should we do to compensate for the past winter and also get ready for the growth of summer? Many of you have trees in protective tubes. These tubes protect from animals and provide a greenhouse environment for young seedlings. However,

without some simple care, these tubes can be death chambers for young trees. The high humidity and warm temperatures that promote seedling growth also can spur growth of fungus and other bark diseases. As a tree grows in diameter, the less air circulates inside the tube, the more the bark can be damaged by bark problems. Once a tree gets to be two inches in diameter, it is time to consider what to do about the tube. In most cases, the tube should be split vertically its entire length and cut in half horizontally. Remove the bottom part and move the top part down to the ground. The top half has a flair on the top edge which prevents the bark from chaffing. Leaving the lower trunk covered by the tube helps protect the tree from bucks rubbing their antlers on the tree.

On smaller trees, check the tube to make sure debris is removed from the tube as it will retain moisture and lead to disease problems. Dead leaves, grass, weed stalks, and wasp nests can all clog the tubes. Chestnut and oak leaves are especially tough and will not break down in one summer, so be sure to get them out of the tree shelter. If any tubes are leaning, now is the time to straighten and restake if necessary. Take along a supply of zip-ties and a knife to put new holes in the tube if the old ones are ripped out. A pair of pruning shears in your pocket is a must when you head to your plantings. Nip off the hanging branch, remove any cold-damaged branch tips and get rid of any forked leaders.

Weed control is important in young trees; grass and weeds take nutrients and water from the seedlings when they are most vulnerable. Herbicides – such as glyphosate – give a quick knock down to give the seedling a clear area for most of the summer. Most trees do not need fertilizer, but if you want to push young trees to grow at their optimum

rate, a small handful of 10-10-10 spread around theseedling in early spring won't hurt. However, don't think if a little is good, more is better. Fertilizer applied past the 4th of July may cause growth that will not be hardened in time for winter.

A few minutes of care with each seedling will give them a great start for strong growth this year and for years to come.

## The Alternative Tree Tube Approach - Part 1

by John Buck

As land managers and hunters who produce quality habitat for our wildlife, we learn of new techniques each day to improve the lands for their benefit. By planting trees that will produce abundant mast, whether fruit or nuts, to offer the needed nutritional value and health benefits, we sometimes overlook our very own methods in obtaining these results.

With a variety of trees in the market that have the ability to produce abundant mast, in record time, we tend to push the envelope and sacrifice plant health to reach these results. Some tree species are meant to grow fast and some are not, and when they are pressed, a misfortune could be the result. As a grower of a variety of trees (apple, pear, sawtooth and chestnut) on my hunting lands, I have always utilized 4' high tree tubes as a way to help protect the seedling from browsing deer, create a "mini-greenhouse" effect for increased health/growth and promote a straight trunk. For years it seemed that this approach was working. In life, there are no guarantees, just as in raising a newly planted forest, I did expect some failure as not all trees would survive what Mother Nature has intended. We plant more trees with this in mind to help compensate for our losses. Over time, whether it was the type of tube that was utilized or due to atmospheric conditions, I noticed that several of my newly planted trees were failing and couldn't figure out why. As a sleuth, I question everything, any possibility as to why I was experiencing plant failure. Upon my research, I happened to

come across a You Tube video (Tree Tube Tips by Jim Walizer of Pennsylvania) that unlocked several key components that persuaded me to think otherwise. Within this video, questions were raised as to what side of the mountain does a hardwood tree grow best; root warmth; the cooling of tree tops; excessive tube heat; the environment in and around the tube; "Heat Rings"; tube height variations comparison. In one segment, Tom Mills, the president of Tree Pro Tree Tubes was quoted in saying, "The green-house effect can be good for your trees, but too much of it can be harmful, even lethal. The theory is that the protector creates a 'mini-greenhouse' for the tree and this helps the tree. Good in theory but in practice it seldom works that well. In summer, some tree protectors actually cause the temperature inside to rise so high that the trees wilt...sometimes even die." To make a tree tube work, a point that Jim made convincingly clear is to: A) create a mini-climate near the tree, and B) it's not the environment in the tube, but the environment around the tube that is important.

"Heat Rings": When the sun shines in winter and is absorbed by an assortment of objects protruding from the ground (such as trees, telephone poles, fence pots or even shortened tree tubes – all varying in diameter and height), the same identical "heat ring" can be noticed by melting the snow, signifying how much heat is truly generated. Until this past season, I truly didn't notice this phenomenon. The question is: If this amount of heat is being generated in winter, how much heat is generated during the most extreme days of July and August? In one of Jim's tests that lasted four growing seasons, he compared the growth by planting the same variety of tree, in the same plot, in close proximity to one another. The trees planted were tested for: total height, min./max. height growth variance and most importantly, survival percentage.



Tree 1 – no tube; TH – 4.6' / Survival – 87%

Tree 2 – 16" tube; TH – 5.38' / Survival – 93%

Tree 3 – 18" tube; TH – 5.29' / Survival – 93%

Tree 4 – 24" tube; TH – 5.94' / Survival – 93%

Tree 5 – 48" tube; TH – 4.64' / Survival – 67%

The sunlight reflects off the solid bottom of the tube and heats the soil outside it, warming the ground earlier in the spring and keeps it warm longer in the fall, thus increasing the length of the growing season in the mini-ecosystem around the seedling.

**T.I.P.S.  
(Tree Incubation & Protection System)**

**FACTS:** When seedlings are planted and tubes are applied, whether 2-4' in length, they still need to be protected from browsing deer by erecting wire cages around the tree.

Ironically, Jim & I both noted that solid (Tree Pro) tree tubes, 4' high not only attracted wasps to create their nests inside the tubes, but black bears as well. Bears tear at the tubes to get at the wasps. In retrospect, my "Tube-X" tree tubes, that consist of a ventilation system built into the wall of the tube, allow for airflow and heat dissipation to the tree, never attracting wasps.

Within the coming months, I intend to follow Jim Walizer's information as an alternative to the growth habits of my existing and newly-planted trees and report these findings to our readers. The old adage, "You won't know if it works until you have tried it," holds true; look for Part 2 in the coming months.



Pictured above: Dr. Deer Pear Trees

Developed by Dr. James Kroll specifically for whitetail deer, it regards shape, fruit size, and ability to hold fruit into winter before dropping.



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**EVENTS 2015**

**10th Annual Coyote Hunt**

**Coyote/Fox**  
1/23, 1/24, 4/25/15  
UKC Event 3/7/15  
Night Hunt Only 7:00PM  
UKC EVENT 5/30/15  
WB- 3:00PM  
TT- 4:30PM  
ES- 8:00PM  
NS- 8:00PM

**Jackal Day 5/31/15**  
Ivan Temple Country Club  
UKC Event 2/18/15  
WB- 3:00PM  
TT- 4:30PM  
ES- 8:00PM  
NS- 8:00PM

**Poor Boy**  
05- 7:00PM  
NS- 8:00PM  
UKC Event 9/12/15  
WB- 3:00PM  
TT- 4:30PM  
ES- 8:00PM  
NS- 8:00PM

**UKC Event 10/3/15**  
WB- 3:00PM  
TT- 4:30PM  
ES- 8:00PM  
NS- 8:00PM



by way of calling. Fox was added to the contest this year and also had a great turnout. The winner of this year's Coyote contest was James Plevyak of Wayne County (pictured below.) James called his coyote in for his harvest, and the large male coyote weighed in at 44.80 lbs! The winner of the heaviest female coyote was awarded to Ellis Arthur of Susquehanna County; he harvested his 39.70 lb female coyote using hunting dogs. The winner of the heaviest grey fox was Marvin Goodwin Jr. Marvin called in an 11.85 lb female. Corey Luther was the winner for taking the largest red fox. He and his dogs harvested a 13.20 lb male red fox.

Thanks to all the participants and support – this year's grand prize was \$2,250 and a payout of \$50 was awarded for each coyote turned in.

## 10th Annual Springville Coyote & Fox Hunt Held by the Endless Mountain Coonhunters Springville, PA

Nestled in the beautiful Endless Mountains of Springville, PA, the Endless Mountain Coonclub is always open to new members and all coon hunts are UKC sanctioned. Besides holding several UKC events each year, we also have a Coyote Hunt each year. As a club, members volunteer their time taking "Wounded Warriors" coon hunting through "Hunts for Healing" at Ringneck Ridge. We also participate in several events every year teaching children about coon-hunting. If you are holding an event to teach children about the outdoors, please go to our web page:

[www.endlessmountaincoonhunters.com](http://www.endlessmountaincoonhunters.com)  
or visit Endless Mountain Coonhunters on Facebook

Endless Mountain Coonhunters thank all the participants in this year's coyote hunt, and big congratulations to the winners! One hundred thirty-nine hunters entered the contest and turned in 26 coyotes – 12 males and 14 females. Nineteen were taken by the use of dogs and seven







Pictured above: Shayne Bennett, 13, with her bobcat that she trapped, December 2014.



Pictured right: Sandra Lezinsky holding a 74lb beaver trapped by Walter Lezinsky, her husband, for the DEP. The beaver was estimated to be 12 yrs old.

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30" x 12" x 12"



## Salt Springs Park

Salt Springs Park is an 842-acre treasure hidden in the Endless Mountains. Four hundred and five acres are owned by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and comprise Salt Springs State Park. It is the only state park operated by a nonprofit volunteer organization, the Friends of Salt Springs. The Friends own an adjoining 437 acres and manage them seamlessly with the state lands.

Salt Springs was already a destination when the Wheatons purchased it in the 1830s. An artesian spring had been mined for salt; it was popular with hunters, and the waterfalls and surrounding forests attracted those seeking the beauty of nature. The Wheatons encouraged visitors during their stewardship and ensured public access continued when they sold their farm in 1971 for the purpose of becoming a state park.

Salt Springs is a resource for everyone. It is open 365 days a year from sun up to sun down, with no entrance or parking fee. The park offers two pavilions for family and community gatherings, rustic campsites and cottages, picnic areas, 15 miles of hiking trails through forests and meadows, and recreational and educational programs.

Two streams flow through the park – Fall Brook and Silver Creek. Silver Creek is designated of Exceptional Value because of its high-quality water and aquatic life. Both streams are designated Class A trout streams, and they are stocked several times each spring by the Fish and Boat Commission. The first day of trout season also heralds the beginning of the camping season at Salt Springs, as some families camp out that night to enjoy their catch cooked over an open fire.

Approximately 30 acres is a state-protected Natural Area and old-growth forest, where Fall Brook descends through a gorge, passes the salt spring, and merges into Silver Creek. It boasts towering hemlocks, some over 300 years old. Hemlock groves are attractive to deer, and they can be seen there at all times of the year.

Over 800 acres are undeveloped and open to hunting. Wildlife habitats are varied and include mature hardwood forests, young-growth forest stands, abandoned farm fields, and spring runs, vernal pools, and a forested marsh. Deer, turkeys, ruffed grouse, and woodcocks are hunted, as are pheasants. Five times a year the PA Game Commission releases pheasants in Salt Springs. In 2014 a sixth release was added to the annual schedule for the youth pheasant hunt.

Winter, spring, summer, fall – come to Salt Springs Park and enjoy all that nature offers. Visit the website for full details about the Friends, the park, and programs and special events: [www.friendsofsaltsspringspark.org](http://www.friendsofsaltsspringspark.org).



# DR. DEER'S Management Calendar

by Dr. James Kroll



## Time to Recondition Your Bucks

For almost four decades I have conducted research and testing on both warm and cool season plantings for whitetails. A considerable amount of this work has focused on cereal grains, most notably Buck Forage Oats. Education about oats and other plants takes up a significant amount of my time; there is nothing that “gets me more riled up” than someone telling me, “Oh, an oat is an oat!” I usually launch into a tirade about the difference between a spring oat and a winter oat – particularly that winter oats have been developed primarily for grazing during the cool season and spring oats are basically a grain producer grown during the spring and summer. Winter oats are cold hardy, while spring oats “roll up their tent” on the first hard frost. So, I have no patience with someone who plants a spring oat in fall, much less a company that is willing to sell you spring oats for this purpose. That said, I would like to present an application of winter oats you may not have considered – one that has worked for us since the 1990s.

I grew up on a cattle ranch in Texas. It was (and still is) a practice to pull bulls off of the cows at a time that will guarantee calves are born in the fall. That means that weaned calves will be ready for sale in the spring, when most cattlemen are stocking pastures. It is not uncommon for a rancher to stock bulls at a rate of 25-30 cows per bull. That pretty well keeps the bull busy for most of his time in residence with the cows. Once removed from his cows, a bull should have a recovery time to build up reserves for the next breeding cycle. Now, you probably are asking yourself why in the world are we talking about cattle in a deer article? Well, let's find out.

There is a huge difference between bulls and bucks when it comes to reproductive equipment! You probably have never been tempted to do this, but I compared the scrotum size to body size ratio for bulls versus deer. There is a substantial difference, primarily because a bull is biologically designed for handling a large number of females while a fortunate buck will breed no more than five does. In both cases, breeding males come out of the breeding cycle with lost reserves and highly susceptible to stress-related diseases and mortality. Cattlemen often return their bulls to a pasture with other bulls (and NO cows) to recondition them for breeding. Bucks pretty much do the same thing on their own by significantly reducing the amount of testosterone in their blood, and this allows them to “pal around” with other bucks during the antler growing period. However, although

a buck tends to breed considerably less females than a bull, they come out of the winter often in very poor condition, and have to make up for lost reserves as quickly as possible.

When we conduct our annual late winter necropsies (animal autopsies) in the northern U.S., there is a striking difference between bucks and does. The average doe will have a large amount of body fat, especially around her kidneys while a mature buck will have virtually no fat anywhere! In the far north, a buck without body fat in February still has to survive another two months or so with very little. Since the most important determiner of subsequent antler quality is the nutritional plane in very early spring, that means that a good manager employs management strategies that support this need. The trick is to have an adequate supply of nutritious green forage as soon as possible after snow melt. There are two ways to do this.



The first way is to have enough forage banked at first snowfall, so there remains something green beneath the snow. If we can get snow cover on our fall plots, we often can reach spring with some of this forage still alive beneath the snow. Yet, in winters with subzero temperatures, this rarely is the case. That is why we conducted experiments back in the late 1980s on effective early spring plantings that could quickly provide food for recovering bucks. That is where cold hardy oats come into the picture.

John Butler, owner of Buck Forage Products, literally went “bonkers” the first time he found out we were testing late winter and early spring plantings of his oats! “I have spent years trying to convince people that winter oats should be planted in late summer-early fall,” he exclaimed, “and now you want to tell folks to plant them in spring?” Yet, that was exactly what we were doing and it was paying off more than we ever imagined.

We use two planting strategies for spring oat plantings. First, we may frost seed them, the process of letting the melting snow plant the oats. Second, we may wait until the snow begins to melt and begin planting. The second can be difficult if melting snow produces muddy conditions in our plots, so we often use frost seeding in plots subject to saturated spring soils. We use a very heavy seeding rate of at least two bushels per acre. We purchase our seed at one time in the previous summer, and take care to store the added seed in a safe, dry place. Oat seed usually comes treated for insect pests, so you can be pretty sure of protection for a year.

A spring oat comes out of the seed with one thing on its mind – making a seed head. A winter oat germinates, then begins to send out shoots along the ground surface to protect itself from grazing. It is not until spring that cold hardy oats think about making a seed head. So, what does a winter oat do when you plant them in spring? When planted early, they begin growth exactly the same way one planted in fall would do. Yes, they tend to have a shorter period between establishment and seed head formation, but it is not until mid- to late-summer. Yet, this reduces your economic return on the planting, but in my mind that is an acceptable cost to reduce buck mortality and improve antler growth. You can mow the plot if it begins to send up seed heads, extending your effective grazing period.

Last year, we began doing the same thing at Turtle Lake Club in the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan. Manager Wayne Sitton was so impressed, he is repeating the strategy this spring, as well. “It has allowed us to recover our bucks quickly,” Wayne says, “and we saw a substantial increase in antler mass last year after spring planting of oats.” You might ask why clover cannot do the same thing. Clover is an excellent spring and summer forage, but it does not have the same digestible energy found in oats. We also no-till drill oats through over-winter plantings of clover, and have been very impressed with the results.

So, you might consider trying this little trick we have used in the north for many years. It will pay off in more bucks surviving winter stress and better antlers to boot!

For more information, go to [www.drdeer.com](http://www.drdeer.com). Have a great spring and summer!

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## Kip's Korner

### Food Plots Aren't Just for Deer

*Kip's Korner is written by Kip Adams, a Certified Wildlife Biologist and Director of Education and Outreach for the Quality Deer Management Association.*

I am a food plotter. In fact, I am a proud food plotter. I enjoy planning, preparing, planting and maintaining my food plots. I like hunting them, hanging trail cameras in them, and observing how wildlife use them in and outside of hunting season.

I am first and foremost a deer hunter but I also enjoy hunting turkey, bear, small game, waterfowl and predators, and I have seen animals from all of these categories in my food plots. As a hunter I am also a steward of our natural resources.

I appreciate the presence of and enjoy seeing songbirds, nongame species, reptiles and amphibians. I especially enjoy these as they are often the easiest for my young children to see and/or catch while afield, and they often do so in our food plots.

I grew up on a dairy farm and planting food plots is a tie to my agricultural roots. I rarely do anything in a food plot without thinking about my father or grandfather or how much better farmers they were than I am. Fortunately I also rarely do anything in a food plot without my son or daughter by my side. They remind me of the value of spending time afield with family and friends and of the importance of taking care of the land; this point can't be overstated. Long ago I learned that dirty hands bind a family, that all work for wildlife is worthwhile, and the excitement of a future hunt with my kids over a field they helped plant is priceless. Do we plant our food plots for porcupines, butterflies or ruffed grouse? No, but I've observed each in our plots and smiled each time because of their presence. For the most part I/we plant our food plots with deer in mind. We plant a variety of cool-season annuals, cool-season perennials, and warm-season annuals to provide food for whitetails and numerous other wildlife species for as close to 12 months of the year as possible.

In northern Pennsylvania we have a pretty long dormant season so to provide food year-round we need a lot of corn or brassicas to carry us through the winter. I don't have enough land for food plots or enough expendable cash to plant that much corn or brassicas, so my plots typically run out in January or February. Fortunately the habitat work we do in our woods carries the lion's share of wildlife needs and our food plots just supplement those efforts, as well as provide places to view wildlife and/or hunt over. Many non-hunters lack an understanding of the importance food plots can have for wildlife. Unfortunately, many hunters lack this



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understanding too, and some criticize others for hunting over a plot or sometimes for even planting one. This is sad given the value food plots can have for species ranging from insects to songbirds to bobcats to bears. All of these species can benefit even if the plot was planted by a deer hunter with aspirations of shooting a buck in it. Some food plotters complain when "unintended" species use their plots. I know I've had some strong words for wayward woodchucks in my soybeans and bears in my corn, but I'm fully aware my land and outdoor experiences are richer for their presence. I think the majority of food plotters understand this too, or at least the majority of QDMA members do.

Looking back over the past few years, some of the coolest sightings in our food plots didn't even involve deer. There was the porcupine eating brassicas that kept my five-year-old son occupied (and quiet) during an archery hunt. There was the ruffed grouse hen with her brood feeding in a clover plot that provided great entertainment one summer evening. There was the bobcat with a rabbit in his mouth in a clover/chicory plot one fall afternoon. There was the golden eagle that soared along the edge of a winter wheat and brassicas plot one winter day. Finally there was the beautiful mature buck my four-year-old daughter and I watched feed in brassicas one November evening for nearly an hour. She pleaded for me to shoot it but I was unable to do so as I had already filled my buck tag. A member of our camp shot that buck

four days later in another food plot and surprisingly the buck was older than my daughter!

Clearly, as a hunter, I like food plots. I hope it is equally clear to see that I also like food plots as a wildlife steward. A colleague and expert habitat manager summed it up well in a story he shared years ago about a non-hunter who chastised him for shooting a deer in one of his food plots. As a bit of background, my friend has planted literally hundreds (and maybe thousands) of acres of food plots for wildlife in his career. He calmly asked the person if they had a bird-feeder at their house. The person proudly admitted to having one. My friend quickly did the math and showed how their bird feeder would at most provide 100 pounds of feed to a few dozen birds that winter while his food plots would provide literally tons of feed to hundreds of birds in addition to numerous other wildlife species. He ended by saying that given everything, he was providing the wildlife that called that land home; it was clearly in his right to shoot that deer. I couldn't agree more.



## How to Kill a Turkey When Your Calling Sucks

by Jim Stickle, Associate Wildlife Biologist®

Growing up hunting in the Adirondacks, I thought I was a pretty darn good turkey hunter. However, turkey hunting in Pennsylvania was a humbling experience! I learned that my best calling was terrible, and my knowledge about turkeys was minimal. In the Adirondacks, hens were so few and far between that my pathetic attempts at calling seemed to be sweet whispers of seduction to nearby gobblers. Beard-dragging toms would come running into my set-up all hot and bothered only to be met with a face full of #5 shot. In contrast, most mornings in Pennsylvania ended in complete failure, a sore ego, utter resentment for turkeys, and many lessons learned.

In recent years, I have come to rely less on calling and focus more on using the lay of the land to get ahead of birds. Because I am not a strong caller, I use this technique as a “back-up plan” for mornings when birds do not “read the script.” It is not my preferred method of taking turkeys, but it has been reliably successful. However, it does require good woodsmanship to get in front of turkeys without spooking them. The following success stories illustrate how I have used this technique in the past, and will hopefully give you another turkey hunting tool to use this upcoming season.

### Redlands Wildlife Management Area, Central Georgia

This was the first time I had hunted this location, so I had no previous knowledge of how to navigate the landscape. At first light, I heard a gobbler on the roost and quickly closed the distance. Unfortunately, the tom pitched off roost in the exact opposite direction of my set-up with three hens in tow.

Using a topo map, I determined the direction he was headed and planned a route to get around in front of him. I figured the creek bottom he was headed toward would act as somewhat of a barrier and keep the bird in that general area for a majority of the morning. I planned my route to head





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west and then southeast using as much downhill terrain as I could to move quickly through the woods but remain far enough from the bird to stay undetected. At 11:30AM, I killed the bird in the creek bottom.

### Private Land, Northeastern New York

I heard a gobbler within 100 yards from the edge of a fallow field and setup just inside the wood line. Unfortunately, I rushed my setup and by the time I realized I would have no shot opportunity, the gobbler had closed the distance. A fan of feathers was visible at 40 yards as he strutted trying to impress me and a hen that he was following. The hen literally passed by the end of my gun barrel; however, the tom passed by me a few yards to my right, my weak shooting side. Although I have moved to shoot turkeys on my weak side in the past, with the turkey at no more than five yards, I feared that the tight pattern of the shot at that distance would require very precise aiming. To pass the bird was a gamble, but I knew the landscape well and thought I may be able to get another opportunity, so I waited for the turkeys to pass

by. I watched them re-enter the woods in the southwest corner of the field and made my move. I knew exactly where this bird was headed! I quickly and quietly left the area using the wood line for cover. When I reached the main road, I ran as fast as I could to a

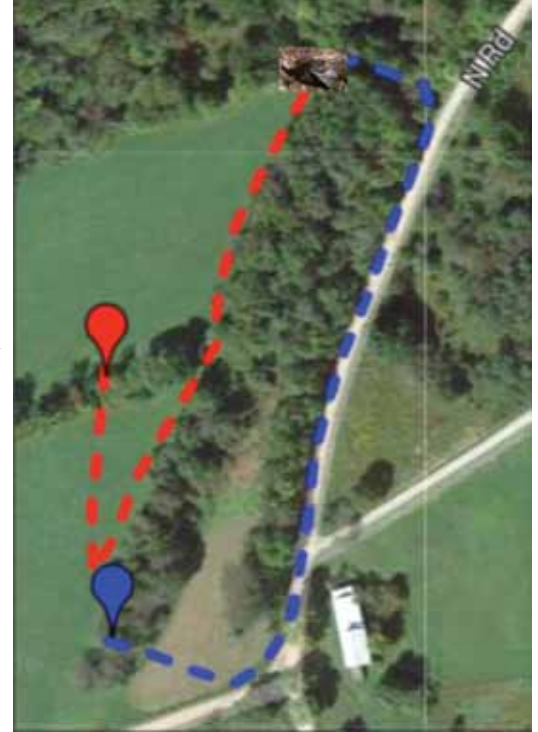


hedgerow that I knew would cover my approach to my next setup. Checking the field, I suspected the gobbler may be heading to with my binoculars, I could see it was all clear. I knew there was a big oak tree on the north end of the field, so that's where I headed. The first scratch on my slate call elicited a thunderous gobble! Within a minute, I harvested the bird.


### Private Land, Northeastern Pennsylvania

I roosted this bird the previous evening, so I knew exactly where to setup in the morning. Unfortunately, a couple of hens to the south of my position came off roost before the

gobbler, and they walked right through my setup and continued heading north. As soon as the gobbler came off roost, he hit the ground and went right for the hens, never getting close enough for a shot. As he disappeared along the hedgerow, I used the terrain and cover of the woods to access an old log trail that entered the northeast corner of the neighboring field where he and the hens were headed. With my silhouette broken by thick brush in front of me, I stayed low to the ground peeking through gaps in the brush in an attempt to see the bird. I could hear him strutting, so I knew he was very close. Suddenly I saw his fan appear at 20 yards. I waited for him to turn away while he was in full strut and slowly stood up. He turned in my direction and dropped his fan, and in turn, I dropped him.



**Conclusion** – Like many turkey hunters, I prefer calling a bird to my gun. However, given the fact that I am not a strong caller, whenever a tom does not cooperate with that plan I fall back on my knowledge of the terrain to try to get ahead of the bird. It is much easier to get a bird to come to you when you are located in his direction of travel, and all it takes is a few soft yelps to seal the deal. Good luck this season!



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# Lyme Disease Symptoms

*Please check if you have the symptoms listed below:*

- Unexplained fever, chills, or sweats?
- Unexplained weight changes, gain or loss?
- Fatigue, tiredness, especially around 3 P.M.?
- Unexplained swollen glands?
- Chronic sore throat or sinus infections
- Testicular/pelvic pain?
- Unexplained menstrual irregularity?
- Irritable bladder or bladder dysfunction?
- Sexual dysfunction or loss of libido?
- Stomach problems?
- Change in bowel function, constipation, diarrhea?
- Chest pains?
- Shortness of breath/cough?
- Heart palpitations, heart block, racking heart, slow beat?
- Muscle pain/cramps?
- Joint pain/swelling that come & go - knees, hips, ankles, wrists?
- Twitches of facial or other muscles?
- Headaches, sometimes days at a time?
- Neck creaks/cracks - stiffness?
- Stiffness of the joints or back?
- Tingling, numbness, burning or stabbing sensations?
- Facial paralysis - Bell's Palsy?
- Double or blurry vision, floaters, pain, light sensitivity?
- Buzzing or ringing in ears, ear pain, sensitivity to sound?
- Dizziness, poor balance, increased motion sickness?
- Light-headed?
- Confusion, difficulty thinking?
- Difficulty with concentration, reading, or following plots?
- Decreased short term memory loss?
- Disorientation, getting lost, going to wrong places?
- Difficulty with speech, think one thing and another word comes out?
- Mood swings, irritability, depression, crying for no reason?
- Disturbed sleep - increased, decreased or nightmares, night sweats?
- Exaggerated symptoms from alcohol?
- Diagnosis of Carpal Tunnel, Chronic Fatigue, Epstein Barr or M.S.?
- Do you feel like dying?
- Have you seen multiple doctors without success?
- Do people say you are a "hypochondriac" or tell you it's in your head?



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# Lyme Disease 101

## The History of Lyme Disease in America

by Dr. Gregory Bach, D.O., F.A.A.I.M., P.C.

Lyme Disease just came on the radar screen in 1970's when a nurse by the name of Polly Murray, RN reported an outbreak of young males with swollen knees in Lyme, Connecticut. Her son was one of them. She kept calling the CDC and saying something is going on up here, please send a physician to come to investigate. His name was Dr. Allen Steer who then reported the findings in an article concerning this event. Dr. Steer becomes famous and Polly Murray, RN never did, but continued on to write a book later called *The Widening Circle*, a play on words describing the Erythema Migrans or "E.M. Rash" that expands in the center and now is known as the infamous bulls-eye rash of Lyme Disease.

In the early days of Lyme Disease, these young researchers had labs and would apply for grant monies. Question...



How did the doctors figure out in the early days how long they should treat for Lyme Disease? The answer comes about by looking at the spirochete, the causative organism that causes Lyme Disease. This bacterial organism – called *Borellia Burgdorferi* – was named after the Nobel Prize winner who isolated the organism. It was very close in structure to *Treponema pallidum* {the causative organism of Syphilis}, the scourge of the twentieth century.

Syphilis was treated and eradicated in 10 days using the antibiotic Doxycycline. So the logic was simple – this spirochete was killed in 10 days, up to one month of treatment; they assumed so should the Lyme Disease spirochetal organism. But this was not always the case – 10 days, two weeks, one month of Doxycycline didn't always work in all cases. The reason for this we now know – Lyme Disease organism travels with co-infections and they must be addressed when treating the patient. However, this is where the division in medicine about this disease starts, so over the next 40 years the battle over this disease erupted and the perspective of "The Two Standards of Care" was born: the perspective of short-term treatment and you're cured, versus longer treatment until the patient's symptoms resolve.

Nowhere in the history of American medicine has the

modern medical doctor been told only to treat patients for two weeks and they are cured. WHY? The question begs to be asked, what is the usual answer in life? Follow the money trail. Let's take a quick look back at these early researchers. Something was being formed back then, an alliance, between the researchers and the insurance companies. But what? It was an alliance between health care costs and what the young researchers were up against when they applied for research grants. When looking at long-term treatment research, there were no funds to be found. But why? Economics, the costs. You see in this story, how would I know this? Because I sat on a panel of research physicians in the late 1990's early 2000's by Glaxo-Wellcome Pharmaceutical Company and spoke with these early researchers, firsthand. I truly believe that these individuals started out with honest and good intentions but years of pressure on containing this outbreak took its toll upon them.

Question... Is the Medicine we call Doxycycline ever been FDA approved for Lyme Disease? Answer... NO. The correct answer is "Ceftin {cefuroxime axetil}" is the only FDA approved drug for Lyme Disease. And how would I know this? Because as a research physician I worked with a top vice president in this company who was in charge of this drug and asked him to do so, he also helped form the panel that I just spoke about.

Back to the history and economic lesson. Around this time "The Americans with Disabilities Act" was passed by the brave individuals who lobbied for the full treatment of AIDS under the protection of law. Wait a minute, but we are talking about Lyme Disease. What does AIDS have to do with this story? Again, the answer... economics. You see, when this epidemic is addressed, the insurance companies said we are forced by the government to pay for AIDS, we are not going to pay for any long-term treatment of Lyme Disease, and thus the basis for this unique but devastating alliance was forming. The fight progresses on over the next 10 years and the early research scientists continued to form alliances with other professionals and research institutions, and hundreds of thousands of dollars were poured into "the two weeks and you're cured side" and it became so entrenched in corruption that in May of 2008, the Attorney General of Connecticut, who is now Senator Blumenthal, had to bring anti-trust charges and sue them; all this is a matter of public record today.

Did this change anything? NO, the debate wages on, the stakes become much higher, but the story continues (with Lyme 101). Read next time.

## Preparing for Early Morning Hunts

Preparation for those early morning spring turkey hunts will take some time and effort on your part. To be in the right place before dawn and to hopefully harvest a mature tom, with your first setup, each day once tom leaves the roost.

This preparation begins before that first spring hunt by you spending some time observing and listening for turkey activity in your desired hunting areas.

Start by observing where the turkeys are when they are still in their winter flocks. This usually is as early as mid-March, before they do their yearly spring activity.

When those flocks break up, spend some time right about a half an hour before official sunrise as light starts to appear in the eastern sky. Listen for those early morning gobbles and try to establish the general area they are coming from. Hopefully you can locate a few areas that you can plan for those early morning hunts. If you don't hear toms on the roost, use a locator call such as an owl, crow, hawk, or peacock sounding call to entice a gobbler from a tom on the roost. Leave your turkey calls at home. You don't want to educate those toms. It's natural for most turkey hunters to love the sound of a hot gobbler, but don't use that favorite turkey call. Leave it at home, whatever that call is, be it a mouth diaphragm, friction pot call, or that one-of-a-kind box call when you are scouting prior to the spring season.

Once you pick three or four areas you feel are where the gobblers are coming from at dawn, become familiar with those areas by walking, so you know how to get to where you feel is a good spot to set up for that early morning hunt. Take these walks later in the day to look for possible obstructions or natural road blocks for both you and the birds. Make sure you can get to that desired spot in the dark.

Select a tree, if in a mature forest, which is as big at the base of the trunk as you are at the width of your shoulders. This is where you want to get to in the dark. Usually in the first part of the spring season this distance from the roosted bird would be greater than later on in the season, due to sparse foliage. As the greening of the landscape increases, you can set up closer to the roosted birds.

Hopefully all of this preparation on your part, from observing winter flocks, to that first setup of the spring season, will make for a successful hunt. Good luck and hunt safely!

*-Jack White-*

## Hunts for Healing – Old Glory Shoot

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## Spring Turkey with "Hunts for Healing"

My first experience with Hunts For Healing was the spring turkey hunt in 2013. From the moment I arrived I knew this was a special and different place. This wasn't your typical dog and pony show where they parade you around and show you off like a show cow. The atmosphere was laid back and friendly. The event was very organized and well planned which is a big help with someone with PTSD and a traumatic brain injury. Having John Host as a mentor was a huge help and it doesn't hurt to have a world class turkey caller, Glenn Rathton from Top Calls, doing the "bird talking." In the four short days I was with these great people from "Hunts for Healing," I made larger strides mentally towards recovery than the whole two years I was at the WTB at Fort Benning, GA. Seeing the genuine care and concern from all the mentors, staff, and volunteers has inspired me to become a mentor myself. I have since been able to accompany several groups of warriors from the south to PA so they can experience "Hunts for Healing" for themselves. I'm looking forward to future events with Miss Mindy and John Piccotti at "Hunts for Healing" on my continuing road to recovery.

*-Randal Jones-*

## Gunsmithing 101

For going on ten years now I have worked as a gunsmith. And without fail, every November has brought dozens of disabled deer guns, the majority of which share a common theme: “This broke last year.” More often than not the firearm’s ailment is something relatively simple. Perhaps the scope rings or bases need to be tightened or replaced. Maybe some overzealous oiling has slowed the lock time down to the speed of molasses. And there are of course the embarrassing operator error problems, i.e. using the wrong ammunition or forgetting to switch from safe to fire. But then we get into the interesting ones.



Much like the professional automotive technician who laments over the shade tree mechanic “fixing” their car with household goods such as duct tape and bailing wire, I always cringe a little when my customers start the conversation with, “Well I tried to fix it myself.” Twice this season, customers have come in toting their rifles with a loaded case jammed in the excessively dirty chamber. In both cases, the extractor failed to extract and so these two (separate and unrelated by the way) well-meaning men decided the proper course of action would be to use a wooden dowel to dislodge the round. And in both cases when light tapping didn’t yield the desired result, they moved to the next logical step – a bigger hammer. As one of the two said, “It’s just like a concrete wall anchor.” You put it in the hole, hit it with a hammer to expand it, and everything is now locked up tight. Ahh, but what about muzzleloaders? By their very name we are instructed to shove things down the barrel. They even come with their very own rod for ramming things all the way. But there are limitations to such things. In those little manuals (that for unknown reasons are included with new guns), the author suggests only one charge of powder, and only one projectile, in that order. And while rather unimaginative, this method generally yields the most desired effect. However, anyone who has shot a muzzleloader (particularly a traditional one) knows it’s easy to make mistakes or lose a cleaning patch down the barrel. When that happens, STOP.



Also, check the barrel before you start. A new record was set this year for the number of things pulled out of a flintlock barrel: two charges of powder, two patched roundballs, a cleaning jag and patch. By the way, this pales in comparison to the rifle barrel from which I removed seven stuck bullets and gave up when there were still more. It was cheaper to put a new barrel on that one.

The lesson behind all this is twofold. Firstly, when you experience a problem with a firearm, take it to a reputable and licensed gunsmith sooner rather than later. Firearms makers, much like the automotive industry, have gotten to the point where they make umpteen different models of rifle each and they routinely discontinue one model for the next. Unlike the automotive industry, however, there are not throngs of aftermarket parts vendors for firearms. When



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companies such as Savage or Remington discontinue a particular model of firearm, they quit making parts for it too. And while there are a handful of vendors making a select number of replacement parts, we are mostly to rely on either used or New Old Stock items. Tracking down the appropriate pieces can take great deals of time, and once the items are located there is still the time it takes for order processing and shipping. The other lesson here is to maintain and care for your firearms properly in the first place. Most malfunctions can be traced back to either what the owner did do that they shouldn't or what they didn't do but should have.

When you get done hunting or shooting for the day, wipe down entire firearm with a clean dry cloth. This will clear off any moisture or contaminants such as water, blood, sweat, or grease from breakfast. Follow that up with either an oil or silicone coated rag on all of the metal parts, including stainless steel items. Remember, its stain"less" not stain"proof." When it comes to cleaning and oiling the internal parts, use a "less is more" type of attitude. Trigger assemblies and firing pins are precision pieces with very tight tolerances. Using excessive oil will lead to build up of oil within these assemblies. This oil will collect and hold dust, dirt and other crud and as it dries will turn to a varnish, essentially gluing moving parts in place. This leads to misfires, hang-fires, missed deer, bad tempers, and name calling. Conservative use of very light synthetic-based oils, such as Rem-Oil or Hoppes, will generally prevent this from

happening. Additionally, over-oiling of your gun will allow excess oil to leach out into the stock. This leads to discoloration of the wood, turning it black with a corresponding loss of integrity and strength.

A few other common problems that, while lucrative to a purveyor of firearms and accessories, lead to expensive bills for the gun's owner are how guns are commonly stored. By far the best way to store any long gun is muzzle down at a slight angle in a climate controlled safe. This is also the least practical way. But you can at least take steps in the right direction.

- Do not store guns in a hard case. Moisture gets trapped inside and the foam liner holds it against the metal causing rust. This is to a lesser extent true of soft cases as well. If you want to store the gun in something to offer some protection, consider a silicone treated gun sock.
- Do not use WD40. I know it says on the can that you should use it, but they are lying to you. WD40 has chemicals in it to help dissolve rust and oxidation. Blueing, that beautiful blueish black finish on your rifle, is a controlled oxidation of the steel. WD40 will, over time, dull and remove this finish. It also thickens up quite quickly and holds and traps grit and dust.
- Do not remove bolts and magazines from your gun and store them separately. At some point you will lose them. Bolts are machined and fitted to a specific receiver and are not interchangeable. Magazines are generally interchangeable, but on older guns may not be readily replaceable. Every year we get at least five or six individuals looking for replacement bolts and dozens looking for magazines. I know some believe it is a theft deterrent to remove the bolt. To be blunt, that is just plain stupid. If a criminal robs your house, they are going to take the gun without ever looking to see if there is a bolt. Others believe that it is safer to store the gun without a bolt. If you are truly concerned about that, use a gun lock. Inexpensive cablelocks are often available for free through local law enforcement agencies.
- Do not store a dirty gun loaded. Don't get me wrong, I am a very strong advocate of having one or more loaded guns for home and personal protection. The key word here is dirty. Powder fowling from a fired round sets in the barrel and chamber and is hygroscopic. As the fowling absorbs moisture in the confined space between the steel chamber and the brass case, galvanic corrosion occurs between the dissimilar metals. This is that powdery white or green corrosion you find on some brass cartridges and it will attack the metal in the chamber, possibly ruining the gun.
- Use the proper tools for the job. This applies to everything from the cleaning rods to screwdrivers. Firearms

come in all sorts of varieties and sizes. Using the proper size cleaning rod, bore brushes, jags, and patches will make cleaning the bore of your gun that much more efficient, as well as lessen the risk of something breaking. Also, if you must disassemble your firearm, using properly sized and shaped screwdrivers and punches will leave the reassembled final product looking good.

Many of us have guns that are family heirlooms, passed down by parents and grandparents as we began hunting in our youth. Others take to the field with a brand new rifle, fresh from the factory floor. In either case, if you are truly a sportsman, you see and appreciate firearms as not only tools for harvesting game, but as pieces of art and history to be both used and appreciated. With proper care, your guns will far outlast you.

*-Ryan Coy, Montrose Sporting Goods-*



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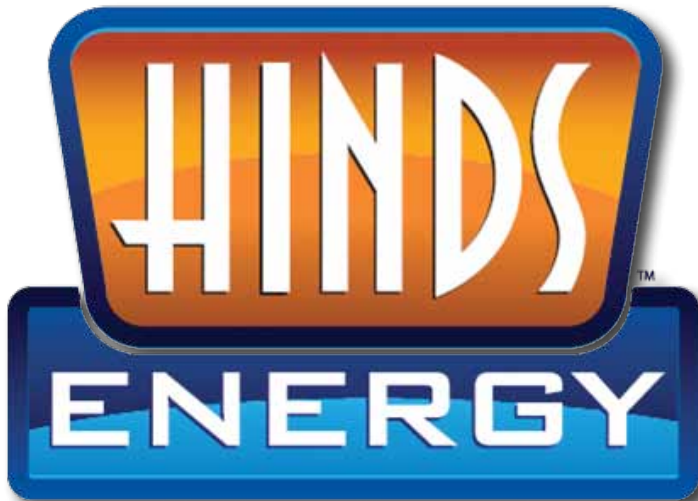
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## The Bond “Hunts for Healing”

It's hard to explain, though almost 50 years separate the wars we were in, how quickly we form a bond and friendship with the post 9-11 veterans of today. I don't think people that have never been in a war can truly appreciate what these men and women sacrifice on a daily basis. That, in a nutshell, is why “Hunts for Healing” was formed, to not only show some appreciation but to help those veterans that need our love and support.

The recent flintlock hunt took place from January 7-11. We had four veterans as participants. We had “Little Bret” from Texas who was about 6' 6”, and “Big Bret” from New Hampshire, about 6' 8” and 380 or so pounds, thus the nicknames. Nick from western NY and Milt from northern NY were also there.

The first afternoon was a meet-and-greet session followed by a safety and sight-in session. It was bitter cold and windy but we were able to get all the guys out to hunt for a few hours. We all saw deer but no one scored so hopes were high for day two. Nick and Milt were the shooters in my area and once on stand, along with their mentors, the rest of the crew put on a short drive. The excitement level really went up with the sound of the flint locks going off. Milt scored on a nice fat doe after missing on the first attempt. Nick missed clean on his first shot. Each veteran had two tags and on the next set up Nick made a perfect 80 yard shot.

After a nice hot lunch put on by one of the local churches at Ringneck Ridge, it was back out in the cold and wind. The temperature read -9 degrees in the morning so 4 degrees above zero didn't feel all that bad. At the next spot we tried, no one got a shot. The coyote tracks in the snow told the story of the lack of deer on that hill. On the final set up of the day, Nick got a shot at a big doe. The hit looked low, so after some tracking, we backed out and recovered her in the morning. Once the deer were



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taken care of, the guys were treated to a pheasant hunt at Ringneck Ridge Preserve. The guys really seemed to like the way the bird dogs worked and everyone scored on a number of birds.

Dale Bennett was the head mentor for the flintlock hunt and he and Pete Hatton and the rest of the crew put on some drives. Little Bret from Texas filmed his own hunt and bagged a nice doe. Big Bret missed a few shots because the stock on the first flintlock was not a good fit for his size. Bill Daniel fixed him up with one of the custom flintlocks that he builds and the next day Russ Wagner took Bret to Chuck Stone's property. We had set up a “Shadow Hunter Blind” by a food plot and Bret was able to make a good shot on the first doe that showed up.

A special thanks to Ray Reeves who donated the blind. He is one of the largest dealers of the blind in NY and PA, and Russ and Bret were warm and comfortable in it.

It turned out to be a great time hunting, but more importantly, just saying thanks to these guys for the sacrifices they made as soldiers. I'm sure some lasting friendships were made also.

Once again, a special thanks from “Hunts for Healing” to all who helped out in many ways!

**-Ken Bach-**





## Successful Shed Hunting

Unpredictable inclement weather hasn't been squeezing the joy out of just the northern states this winter. Our trip to Dr. James Kroll's research center in Nacogdoches, Texas, proved that. A couple of years ago the Texas droughts were so damaging that cattle farmers were just about giving their animals away because of a lack of water.

This year, just a week before Doc's seminar, over seven inches of rain fell on his part of the state. The hog hunt we were scheduled to have was called off due to the high water.

By no means was our trip any disappointment though. Doctor Kroll put us to work on the several hundred acres of his Whitetail Research Center hunting sheds. He and his partner Ben Koerth had been way too busy fighting mud to make the rounds. They told us to keep our eyes open for deer skulls as well because several good buck were known to have perished this north Texas winter. We learned that natural predators take their toll on the deer and sometimes the big rutting bucks gore each other with mortal wounds.

Mark and Sal Peretore, Jamey Bohonyi and I had a great day slopping through the red clay mud of Nacogdoches. We found several trophy buck skulls and at least three sets of matching antler sheds. One buck skeleton that was found was a victim of a bobcat.

That first day of our trip just flew by. A walk through the woods in the upper fifties, regardless of the rain and mud, sure beat the foot of snow that was still on the ground in PA!

*-Jim Holbert-*





## Average Joes are the Force of Whitetail Management

by Mark Peretore, Editor

As the years go by, everything is continually changing and that also holds true for the world of whitetail deer. From the creation of research centers to the technology of all the new gizmos and gadgets, even the actual methods of hunting deer are changing. I grew up hunting with my father and brothers on a small wooded lot, maybe 50 acres behind our house. We nearly always hunted from the ground, in-between crotched trees, located in areas that had that way of making you feel “deer must like it here.”

We walked into the woods the most convenient way and at the end of the hunt stomped all through the woods trying to drive the deer to the others. Don’t get me wrong, we did scout the area, but mostly by hunting the woods season after season and learning the deer patterns. There is no substitute for time in the woods... and never will be. My point is that today’s hunters wouldn’t dream of hunting from the ground or leaving scent everywhere in the woods, doing drives, and especially walking in from the wrong direction. It’s safe to say hunting has changed.

The biggest change that I’ve seen with the people around me, the publications, and company advertisements is the idea of creating the perfect deer sanctuary. After seeing Dr. Deer’s whitetail research facility, I have bought into it too. Recently, I had an amazing opportunity to go to Texas with Jim Holbert to see Dr. Deer’s facility, and that brought hunting and creating a wildlife habitat to the next level. Coincidentally my father, brothers, and I recently acquired a decent plot of land and now plan on creating a deer sanctuary and I will bring you updates through *Wildlife Management News*.

As the title suggests, I am the “average Joe.” Busy work

life, busy family life, and lack of all the time and money needed to create that perfect deer habitat. Luckily for us average Joes, to get to the awe inspiring Dr. Deer property, it took them nearly 30 years. So don’t expect a miracle... just get out there and get something started – there are no excuses and there is no overnight magical remedy. This year I set out to do the one thing everyone does first: a food plot. After going to Texas in March, I made a plan to get a spring food plot established with Buck Forage Oats, Clover, and Chicory; however, spring rolled around and no food plot was planted, but I did strategically pick the location, get the seed, lime, fertilizer, and equipment ready for fall. As fall rolled around and hunting season was only a few short months away, we got to work around August 20th to make sure we didn’t miss this season.

So what’s important for the average Joe food plot? First, let’s look at what makes seed grow. Sunlight, water, and seed-to-soil contact are probably the most important factors for germination. For me, this means how I can get the best of all these factors so I don’t have to spend a fortune on seed, and the challenge is how can I do this without the expensive farming equipment? We bought a good seed from a great family, the Bulters, of Buck Forage. On my trip to Texas, I was fortunate enough to meet and talk to the Butlers and hear their story. These men are great people as is their company and that means a lot to me as I’m sure it does to you. It’s important to note that you need to make sure seed is appropriate for your area and try not to use blends unless made by your local farm store. National big brand companies tend to blend their seed so that something will grow no matter where you are located, but all this means is there are

a lot of seeds dying since only a few seeds are appropriate for your area. Also, you must understand where your seed is coming from. Buck Forage is the only company that owns their variety of oats; most other companies are just buying seed and bagging it. This can be seen by searching the tags on the seed bags and seeing the label variety not stated or unknown. Think about that. I know several sources that used Buck Forage in our area with amazing results and I talked to the local farm store, Andre & Son's in Montrose PA, about it.

Second comes the challenge of preparing the soil comes at a great cost. Whether the cost is your backache or the actual money, there is a cost. In an earlier issue of *Wildlife Management News*, Ray Reeves from Lock N Load of Owego NY, wrote a great article on the ways you can prepare a seed bed from steel rakes, to weed whackers, to tractors – I suggest you find that article. I used a great piece of equipment called the Dirt Works System from Kolpin. This system is a category zero 3 point hitch system for an ATV or UTV. There are several attachments for it and I can't say enough good about it, especially for the price. With its 300lbs of downforce plus the vehicle's weight, you have enough power to really turn the dirt. After using nearly all the attachments, the two that really stand out to me as "must haves" are the rake and the discs.

Another impressive product that I used is the DR Roto-Hog. This tow-behind rototiller is essentially your one stop shop for quick and easy food plots, especially DR's Land-scaper package that comes with a broadcast spreader and culti-packer.

Now that you have the seed and soil prepped, plant it by any means you have – broadcast spreader, drop seeder, or by hand. Make sure you plant to the specifications on the packages, both by depth and quantity. But don't stop there – make sure you get a good seed-to-soil contact. After the seed is down, roll it, drag it, or drive on it; make sure you pack the seed to create good contact and remove air pockets. Air will typically kill a root system. From here, just manage it with your fertilizers and make sure it gets the water it needs. Our plot grew in great and



brought the bucks to prove it!

One thing that still stands out to me from Dr. Deer and Jim Holbert is that even if you don't have the time or money, you can always do *something*, and one of the biggest ways to improve your habitat is just managing the forest. Clearing some of the canopy and getting light to the ground can make a world of difference, not to mention if you fertilize and turn the dirt over every once and a while for new growth. By doing this, the natural forage can be improved and work as well as any food plot.

Lastly, remember food sources are only one part of the habitat; think bedding areas, summer thermal areas, winter thermal areas, water holes and much much more.

I want to thank Jim Holbert for giving me the opportunity to take my game to the next level and I hope the rest of you take this as *your* opportunity! Happy hunting!

