

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT *News*

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3rd Edition 2013

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Testing...Testing...Testing...

A new and unique electric fence has been tested this year by several landowners in Northeastern, PA – the “multiple post system” developed by Dr. James Kroll and the Buck Forage Team.

The over 90% effectiveness of this fence at restricting deer is based off the fact that they have 20/150 or worse eyesight with extremely poor depth perception. The offsetting wire and tapes confuse the animals due to their sight limitations as they are unable to judge the distance between the individual wires and tapes, causing them to avoid confrontations with the fence. This fencing will be available this spring; please call 1-800-299-6287 or 570-934-2625 for more information and how to order.



Tom McNamara's soy bean field, which is planted on his Red Oak Farm, has had absolutely no deer activity inside his fence. Tom has been involved with the promotion of Buck Forage Products longer than anyone in Northeastern, PA and New Jersey. He would be glad to hear from you if you have any questions. Reach him at Red Oak Farms at 866-248-3176.

*Additional photos
on page 2*

WMNews can be viewed at these sites:

www.buckforage.com
www.drdeer.com
www.realtreenursery.com
www.buckforage.tv

Testing... Testing... Testing... continued from page 1

Solar Fencing, designed by Dr. Kroll at the Whitetail Research Center, is currently being tested at several sites in NE PA.



Finch Hill Rod and Gun Club is also testing the Dr. Deer approved electric fence. Finch Hill was visited by Dr. James Kroll several years ago for an outdoor seminar hosted by the camp. Pictured here is Jerry Rusek, Bob Wagner and Matt Sellers laying out the posts.

Mike Koneski is installing his fence at his Rock Mountain Sporting Clay facility in Springville, PA. Mike is the Vice President of the Susquehanna QDMA chapter and has recently completed Deer Stewardship I. Mike's soybeans had been decimated by the deer and he set the fence up to see if it would keep them out. Boy did it keep them out! Contact Mike at stackbarrel@frontier.com to check out his video.



Matt Sellers is making the final connections for his fence. Matt is a very knowledgeable wildlife land manager and is very instrumental in the Susquehanna Branch of Quality Deer Management along with his wife Denise who is the chapter secretary.

You can contact Matt at 570-278-9358 or email him at muzz54@frontier.com for questions and info on ordering.



Dave Sienko set up his fencing at his property in Great Bend, PA. Dave is a Buck Forage Product representative and is a professional logger. He is also a consultant and contractor for wildlife management project on natural gas pipe lines.



Sellers' Open House

On Friday Sept. 27, 2013, Matt and Denise Sellers held an open house on their property. Matt has been active in wildlife management for several years and it is likely that his passion will soon turn to his livelihood. The results of Matt's hands-on experience and knowledge is evident in these pictures.

Timing of planting and proper soil preparation are paramount to success according to Matt, and from his results there is no arguing his point! Matt planted his Buck Forage Oat field on Aug. 18th.



Buck Forage Oats For Wounded Warriors

Russ Wagner is a pretty busy guy. Shown here he is unloading a special order of Buck Forage Oats that will be planted for Wounded Warriors. If you ever have the opportunity to speak to Russ, it's easy to see that his passion is not to hunt for himself but to take our veterans out and let them fulfill dreams that they may have thought were no longer possible.

This past Spring Russ took four veteran hunters out for turkey season. It was a challenge but the guys went 4 for 4!

Russ is the owner of Top Calls and the quality of his work and laser engraving has been admired for years. He will be taking wounded warriors out for early muzzle loading season and I look forward to covering their story.



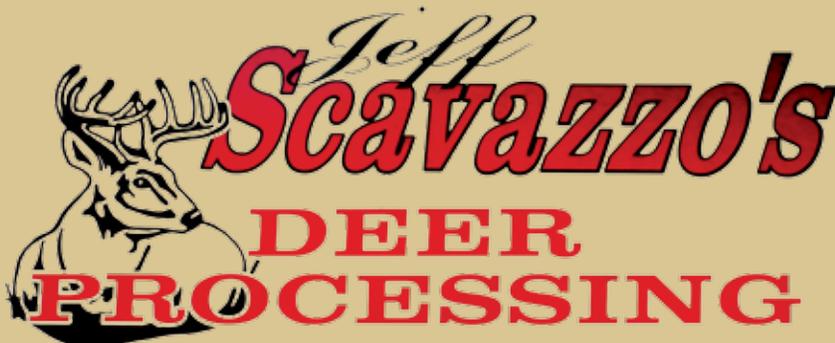
Proud Supporter of
**WOUNDED WARRIOR
PROJECT**

PA Hunters Sharing the Harvest

Jeff Scavazzo has played a key role in Susquehanna County's HSH program for several years. Hunters who wish to donate their harvested deer can drop them off at the plant and for a \$15.00 fee it will be processed and made available to a food bank where this quality meat can be distributed.

Jeff explained to me that only deer that are in good condition are accepted for the HSH program. If weather conditions are unseasonably warm, it is imperative to get donated animals to him as quickly as possible for processing.

As the Susquehanna County coordinator for Hunters Sharing the Harvest, I'd like all hunters to please consider donating extra or unwanted deer to this very worthy program. If you have questions, please call me at 570-934-2625 and visit www.sharedeer.org. Contact Jeff Scavazzo at 570-553-2703.



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Chainsaw Fundamentals *by Joe Ciepiela*

A chainsaw is one of the most productive tools in a white-tail manager's arsenal, but it can be the most dangerous. Accidents happen fast and are unplanned. After all, that's why they are called "accidents."

With a growing number of do-it-yourself deer managers recognizing the importance of dense, second growth habitat to whitetails, chainsaw use has grown dramatically. Don't take that Tim "the Tool-man" Taylor attitude of *I'm a guy so I can run this tool like a pro*. Unlike some of the other power tools out there, a chainsaw can kill you and you don't even have to touch the blade. Here's just a little refresher about how to safely run a chainsaw while doing common habitat work.

The first thing you should do before even starting the saw is to put on your safety gear. Wearing it is the smartest thing you can do. When



running a saw there are a lot of things you can't control, but wearing safety gear *is* one of them.

You should start out with a good, steel-toed work boot. That should help protect your feet from most dangers. Chaps are the next thing that is a bare minimum requirement. Most chaps are constructed with layers of lightweight Kevlar that will stop a saw blade and protect the wearer. The two basic types of chaps are standard and the wrap-around. The standard style protects the front and sides of your legs while the wrap-around protects your entire leg, front and back. This style offers the absolute best protection.

Kevlar jackets and vests are made to help protect your upper body. The last thing you need for your upper body is a good pair of gloves. Leather is always a good bet, but you need to have good mobility in them.

Protective headgear is critical for any budding saw operator. Most saw companies offer a helmet. They'll have a snap-on visor, which is great for keeping branches and debris from your face and eyes. Ear muffs are also part of the package. These should be worn every time you start the saw. Hearing loss creeps up on you over time and as hunters we all need our hearing. It's also not a bad idea to wear safety glasses under your visor. This will protect you should a stick or branch get under the visor. You only get one set of eyes, so protect them.

Hinge-cutting is a technique that many deer stewards use to create habitat. The basic goal of hinge-cutting is to cut just enough material to drop the tree. You want the tree to fall, but you also want it to stay alive to keep sending water and nutrients to the fallen crown. Hinge-cutting creates immediate cover and browse for deer.

Felling a tree and hinge-cutting both come with their own dangers, so basic safety rules apply. The first thing you should do is clear the area around the tree of any brush and debris. To work the saw safely you need to have a solid stance.

The next step is to create an exit lane so you can move to safety as soon as the tree starts to drop. Ideally you want to move away at a 45° angle and take cover behind a large tree that will protect you should the tree barber chair. (A barber chair occurs when a tree being felled delaminates vertically before the hinge is cut thin enough to bend. The term refers to the sliding action of the old-style barber chair that positioned patrons in a head down, feet up position so the barber could more easily shave with the straight razor.) If the tree barber chairs it will most likely come straight back toward you. If you walk straight away from the tree you could be putting yourself in danger.



After you've cleared your area and created an exit strategy, take some time to examine the tree you will be cutting. Look for dead or rotten spots in the tree where it could snap off as you cut. Also look for dead limbs on the tree and on the other trees around it. These can break off as the tree falls and can come down on you.

Dead trees can be some of the most dangerous you can cut. When you saw a healthy tree that you've notched properly, gravity and the crown of the tree will pull everything away from you. A dead tree has a much better chance of snapping or blowing apart sending debris flying in all directions.

Running a chainsaw is a dangerous activity, but that shouldn't prevent anyone from felling trees and creating wildlife habitat. There are a lot of activities we do that can hurt us if done improperly. If you take some time to learn how to run a saw and fell a tree the right way, there's no reason you can't enjoy many years of accident free time in the timber.

About the author:

Joe Ciepiela is the owner of JC Wildlife Products. He installs food plots, sells supplies, and deals with habitat management. He is a QDMA level 1 deer steward. He can be reached on his website: www.jcwildlife.com.



Deer “Sightability” versus Deer Density

by Kip Adams

How many times will you be asked this hunting season, “How many deer did you see?” Your answer is often followed immediately by, “Yeah the deer herd is up (or down) in my area too.” As deer density increases, do we always see more deer, and do we always see fewer deer as it decreases? The answers to those questions are obviously “No.”

How are deer density and sightability related? Deer density is defined as the number of deer per square mile. Sightability is defined as the ability to view an object of interest – such as deer during hunting season or “How many deer have you seen?”

Are density and sightability directly related? Are they partially related? Using deer as an example, let’s look at the factors affecting each and determine how density influences the number of deer hunters see.

Deer density is regulated by reproduction, recruitment and survival. In the deer world, habitat quality governs these parameters and plays a large role in the number of deer an area can support. Healthy habitats provide adequate nutrition and permit increased reproduction, recruitment and survival. Survival requires adequate food, cover and protection from predators. Forested cover can provide protection from four-legged predators. Legal and moral restrictions on the number, sex or age of animals available for harvest can provide protection from two-legged predators (hunters). In a nutshell, high quality habitats can support higher numbers of healthy deer while poor and/or degraded habitats support fewer, less healthy animals.

Deer sightability is regulated by habitat type, food sources and their availability, hunting techniques (stand/still hunting vs. driving), deer behavior, weather (temperature and precipitation) and deer density. Sightability in open habitats can be deceiving; even though you can see farther and should theoretically be able to see more deer, deer spend less time in open environments, particularly after being exposed to human pressure. Food sources affect deer movements and therefore directly influence sightability. Deer need to eat and are very good at finding the most palatable and nutritious food sources in their home range. Therefore, areas with little or low quality food typically have low sightabilities (even if the deer density in the area is high). Areas with abundant food often have higher sightabilities until human pressure causes deer to become less active during daylight hours (even low density herds can have high sightabilities in feeding areas).

Hunting techniques play a far larger role in deer sightability than many realize. Other than rutting activity, deer during autumn are content with a daily cycle of bedding – feeding – bedding – feeding, etc. This maximizes their weight gain for the upcoming winter and minimizes their exposure to predators.

Unless hunters physically move deer (e.g., traditional deer drives), deer waste little time roaming aimlessly around or in areas with low quality food. Adult deer are masters at evad-

ing predators and they immediately alter their behavior and change their movement patterns at the sight, sound or smell of a predator. They are adept at hiding in cover and are well known for their nocturnal tendencies. Think about how easy it is to view a deer a week before deer season and how that changes after the season starts. Deer hunting for many hunters in Pennsylvania traditionally meant “deer drives” and it is easier to observe deer when you have several hunters working together. The majority of modern day hunters, hunt from ground or tree stands and attempt to become “invisible” in the woods. The difference on deer movement (and sightability) between these techniques is profound. Today’s woods have fewer hunters and those hunters move less. These add up to fewer deer being moved around and lower sightability. For example, take two areas of equal size with equal deer densities. Have 10 hunters “drive” one area and have eight hunters sit in a tree stand on the other. Even though both areas have the same number of deer, the deer on the area with more hunters who are “driving” will be more observable.

Weather affects sightability by influencing deer and hunter movements. During autumn, northern deer move more when it is cold and less as temperatures rise. On average, northern deer hunters follow the same pattern. Snow also affects sightability as it is far easier to view a brown object against a white background than a brown object against a similarly-colored background. Snow also helps hunters find areas of deer concentrations as they can follow their tracks. This statement is not belittling hunters, but is a fact that only a small percentage of hunters can successfully track deer on a regular basis without the aid of snow.

The final variable is deer density, and high densities can have low (or high) sightabilities just as low densities can have high (or low) sightabilities. Density is merely one factor that influences sightability. This is commonly misunderstood and many incorrectly assume sightability is directly proportional to density. In reality, what hunters see during the season is a result of the combination of factors discussed above. Deer density is only one of those factors and is rarely the most important. Deer sightability is typically influenced more by food availability, weather patterns and human pressure.

Article written by Kip Adams, Wildlife Biologist for the Quality Deer Management Association – www.qdma.com

Article submitted by Bob Wagner, Susquehanna Branch of QDMA – www.susq-qdma.org



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Please be sure to include your phone number and email address so we can contact you when the trees are delivered to us. The tentative tree pickup date is April 5, 2014. We may need to push this back to April 12.

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OF TREES: _____ X \$17.00

OF TREE TUBES (optional but recommended): _____ X \$3.75

OF STAKES (optional but recommended): _____ X \$1.50

TOTAL AMOUNT: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to the QDMA Susquehanna Branch. Thank you!



A Salute to an Old Friend's Passing

by Ken Bach

It's hard to believe 13 years have passed since I first met him. I was looking for a German Shorthair Pointer to fill the void that I felt since the passing of my female short hair "Becky" some two years prior. It was the longest I had gone without a bird dog to share the joys of the fall hunting season.

My wife's friend mentioned that someone she knew had a year old male that the owners wanted to find a home for. I had my heart set on a nice small framed dog similar to the one my son owned. When I first saw this dog, he was not what I had in mind. He was much bigger and mostly white with large brown spots. He looked nothing like the other dogs I had owned. The couple that owned him said he listened well and did not wander when they let him out of the kennel.

After deciding to take him in spite of reservations, we headed home and from then on, we became fast friends. I worked with him on a check cord for a month. I let him loose one snowy day only to find out that he would chase deer. After two such chasing episodes, I went and bought him an e-collar and



Cody

the next deer he spotted was the last he chased. He was a quick learner.

He was very stylish on point and had a great nose. Since I raise and release pheasants and chucker partridges, he got to work his share of game birds. His experience came in handy when I was asked to guide hunters on a local preserve. Cody and I, as a team, also enjoyed guiding the Youth Hunts.

I was right he was like no other dog I had owned. The most rewarding hunts for me turned out to be the hunts we did together for the wounded soldiers that participated with Hunts for Healing events. Most of the soldiers had never hunted pheasants or shot over a bird dog before. They really seemed to enjoy the opportunity.

I will not have "Cody" by my side this fall hunting season and though I still have another bird dog, his spot in my heart is empty. He will be sorely missed. I have only found one thing to dislike about bird dogs – they leave us way too soon!



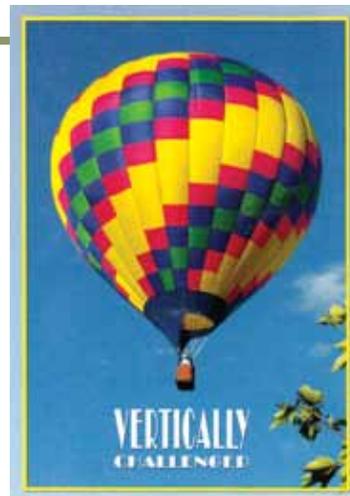
This photo taken by Jerry Rusek from the Finch Hill Hunting Club show us two important points

1) The unique design of the Buck Forage electric fence is highly efficient in protecting the investment of your food plot until you want it available for wildlife forage.

2) The photo was taken on 9/30/13 and illustrates the ideal condition of Buck Forage Oats just prior to Pennsylvania archery season. If your oats are taller than this or gone to seed head, they were planted too early. For best results in Northeastern PA or the Southern Tier of NY, plant Buck Forage Oats mid-August to mid-September.

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New Partnership between Hunters Sharing the Harvest and QDMA

The Susquehanna Branch of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) Board of Directors met in August 2013 to confirm their verbal commitment to support the Hunters Sharing the Harvest (HSH) program with a donation of \$600 to the venison donation program. The HSH venison donation program has coordinated the processing and distribution of donated wild game from hunters to hungry people throughout Pennsylvania. An average-sized deer will provide enough highly-nutritious, low-cholesterol meat for 200 meals. In an average hunting season, the HSH program's goal is to channel about 100,000 pounds of processed venison annually through the state's 21 regional food banks, who then re-distribute to more than 3,000 local provider charities such as food pantries, missions, homeless shelters, Salvation Army facilities and churches, as well as families.

The Susquehanna Branch (QDMA) met John Plowman, the Executive Director of HSH, at the July 2013 Cabot Field Days. According to Bob Wagner, Branch Secretary, "When I first saw Mr. Plowman setting up his display, I thought, 'What can this nice old man be doing here and what could he possibly be offering people at this field day?'" Wagner later said that, "Mr. Plowman asked if the QDMA branch would be interested in hearing his short talk about HSH since there were six of the Board members present. We said yes we will listen and we were so won over that we made a dollar commitment right then and there!" The meeting may have seemed to be a chance encounter because both organizations had booths next to each other. This was not the case because the Cabot Field Days organizers had been in contact with Jim Holbert, a Susquehanna QDMA Branch Board member and editor of *Wildlife Management News*, who suggested that the organizations that dealt with hunters, wildlife and wildlife management be located close to each other.

The organizations that were next to each other were *Wildlife Management News*, Sienko Forest & Wildlife Management, the Susquehanna Branch of QDMA and its youth exhibit of the Rack Pack, Hunts for Healing, and HSH.

As a further outcome of this meeting, Susquehanna County has a new HSH County Coordinator in Jim Holbert. Jim is currently in contact with Jeff Scavazzo (see page 4) – of Jeff Scavazzo Deer Processing and Endless Mountains Archery – who is Susquehanna County's only deer processor who is involved with HSH. Jeff is interested in holding an archery tournament in cooperation with the Susquehanna Branch, with the funds raised being donated to HSH.

Jeff can be reached at:
Scavazzo's Deer Processing
600 Valley Road
Montrose, PA 18801
570-553-2703

HSH remains as the most effective social-service program conduit for hunters and wildlife managers to directly make a difference, often from actions that take place in the fields and forests. If you want to donate your deer to the HSH venison program please be aware that there may be a cost from \$25 to \$50 to have your deer processed if the donated funds allocated for a certain county have been used up.

The HSH program is a registered 501c3 non-profit charity, with funding and support derived from a mix of public and private sources. Individual financial donations also come from generous hunters and non-hunters who uphold a strong belief in supporting the outreach effectiveness of their own brand of social service. HSH was founded as the signature mechanism for Pennsylvania hunters to demonstrate their own personal and compassionate decision for helping those low-income individuals and families with extra venison.



SHOWN (L-R): JOHN PLOWMAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HSH; BOB WAGNER, DAVE SIENKO, RUSTY ELY, MATT SELLERS, JERRY RUSEK, SUSQUEHANNA BRANCH QDMA BOARD OF DIRECTOR MEMBERS; ABSENT FROM THE PHOTO JIM HOLBERT.





Pray for Our Veterans and Country Every Day!

We especially thank Buck Forage Products, Pump'n'Pantry, and Ayres-Stone VFW Post 5642 Montrose, PA, for making our veterans' voices a little louder by making copies of this magazine available to our veterans at home and abroad!



Ayres-Stone Post 5642

Thank You

SOWING SEEDS

by Ken Bach

Recently BUCK FORAGE OATS and BUCK FORAGE CHICORY seed was offered to Hunts for Healing organization for the planting of food plots. Planting was to be done on land that was shared with the wounded veterans who participated in the different hunts.

The food plots on this particular place had seen their better days and had turned into unused weedy areas. A friend from church offered to brush hog the area for us in July and once that was completed, we just waited for the land to dry out. We then proceeded to burn the area so that the ground was ready for the next phase.

John Picotti and John Host from Ring Neck Ridge sprayed for weeds; after the allotted time, returned with the grain drill, and planted the seed. In what seemed like a very short time the oats sprouted and you could see the chicory start to show.

The amazing part is how quickly both deer and turkey began to utilize the plot. With the abundance of food in the woods this year, I was surprised that the plots got that much attention.

Hunts for Healing is holding an Inline Muzzleloader hunt in October and we hope to have some pictures of the wounded veterans and the deer they kill on these plots. Our thanks go out to the BUCK FORAGE PRODUCT COMPANY and JIM HOLBERT for getting the planting team the seed.



(L-R) Doug Betz, John Host, Ken Bach – Hunts for Healing Food Plot Planting Team



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The Golf Course Bucks *by John Osting*



Northwest Ohio is a difficult area to find a Pope and Young caliber buck. The cover is sparse, the wood lots are far and few between, the land is flat as a pancake, and hunting pressure is high. The only thing we have going for us is that there is corn and bean fields everywhere and the genetics are good. If a buck makes it to two years old, he usually is Pope and Young caliber. So if you are fortunate enough to find an area that's not over hunted, a good buck will be close at hand. I am the Grounds Superintendent at a golf course and you know how a deer hunter is always thinking about deer. I had to devise a plan to hunt the golf course, and lucky for me there was about 80 acres of good cover right next door. I would not be able to hunt the course until it closed in December, so rut was out of the question. I would have to concentrate on late season hunting, which means the deer would be coming to the feeding areas. I planted a small plot of Buck Forage Oats and put out some supplemental feed after the course closed. The first few years were a learning experience to see how the deer were going to use the property. I put out a few cameras and within a couple weeks the deer had found the groceries and were showing up at last light. My plan was starting to take shape, and the next question was, "Where am I going to hang my stands?"

I had a good buck showing up on the cameras that first year, along with a good number of does, but was just not in the right place and I never got to lose an arrow that first year. As a side note, the Something had to change. I moved the plot and the feed, and also moved my stand locations. My exit routes were going to be of utmost importance, and I had to get out without spooking any deer. I had to monitor the cameras and keep a close eye on the wind if I was going to be successful. I only started to hunt when the bucks were showing up on the camera in daylight.

That second year was better – I had a few good deer in the area and some bucks showing up in the daylight, but not on a regular basis. There was one buck that I was wanting a shot at, he was a very heavy eight point with split brows. I saw him a couple times but never when it



was light enough to shoot. I was lucky enough to harvest a couple does that year; my new set up was working – I just was not in there at the right time to harvest the Big Eight. I caught some picks of that buck just before the end of the season that year, so if everything went right, next year would be game on again!

That third year I had everything set up – oats were planted at the right time and looking good, weather was warmer than normal so it would be easier to be in the stand longer. I had seen the Big Eight from a distance a couple times so I knew if I stayed out and waited for him to get hungry, "I was hoping to be in the action." Christmas week my family and I went to Florida; I wanted to be hunting but hoped everything would be ok 'til I got back. When we got back I was looking for a south wind to get in the stand; a few days later everything came together – a low pressure system was coming in and the wind was right – it was time. That evening was pretty slow until just before sundown when I saw a small buck coming through the woods, behind him was a pretty good ten and at the end of the line was the Big Eight. I grabbed my bow off the hook and when I looked down I realized that the first buck had spotted my movement but wasn't sure what to make of it... after a few seconds he settled down.

The Big Eight stopped at the ditch to inspect the area, all he had to do was take a few more steps and he was in my shooting lane. It seemed like forever but finally he came on in. I drew the Hoyt to anchor, settled the pin and the shot was off. I watched the deer run off over the hill and was hoping for the best. I called a buddy and told him to meet me in an hour to take up the trail. The blood trail was short, not much blood was found but my arrow looked good. So we proceeded and in short order the Big Eight was found and my two-year quest was over.

This year was a little easier. I had a nice buck showing up on a regular basis and hoped I could get an arrow in him. December 13 I got off early from work, the wind was in my favor and knew it was time to get to the tree. Going in I jumped a doe and two fawns; the night wasn't starting off well. At 5 o'clock I caught some movement, it was a doe and two fawns coming my way. I figured it was the doe I jumped when I came in. She was really nervous and kept checking the wind. My tag was burning a hole in my pocket. I hadn't had much time to hunt this year and the rest of the year was looking the same so my finger was getting itchy and she was on my list. This doe never offered me a shot – she was not messing around the area where she had heard something earlier. Ten minutes later a small six point came in with a button buck and just behind them was the Ten Point. I readied the Hoyt for the shot – the deer came into range – I drew, settled the pin on the buck's vital, squeezed the shot off. The Slick Trick had met its mark, the buck ran about 60 yards and toppled over. Thank God the doe made it through my shooting lanes. Never underestimate the power of food during the late season; this time of the year is my favorite to hunt whitetails.

Kip Adams, Director of Education and Outreach



Kip's Korner

Labor Day has passed, and the unofficial end of summer means archery season is nearly upon us. We've even had our first frost in north-central Pennsylvania. Dawn arrived on September 6 with a heavy sheet of ice on my truck's windshield. That was exactly 102 days since our last frost on May 27. One hundred two days between frosts is great for keeping insect pests and hemorrhagic disease to a minimum, but it certainly makes for a short growing season from an agricultural perspective.

Food plots aside, most hunters prepare for hunting season by hanging stands and trail-cameras and by shooting their bows and guns. These are necessary, but preparing for the hunting season should also include a meeting with everyone who will be hunting on a particular property. For me, September means it is time for our annual camp meeting and work day. This is a great day for the guys (and girls – my daughter and my best friend's daughter) to get together to cut wood, repair anything needing attention at camp, and more importantly, go over our camp talk.

The camp talk is a good opportunity to discuss where we are relative to our Quality Deer Management goals, what to expect for the upcoming season, and what our target antlerless harvest will be. Specifically, here is what I cover with our crew.

1) **Recap the Prior Season** – I begin with a recap of the previous season showing photos of deer, bear, turkeys and coyotes we shot as well as some pictures of bucks our neighbors shot. I follow with photos of bucks shot in our neighborhood during the past few years. It's always nice to reminisce on successes of our QDM program, and this typically draws some hearty cheers from the gang.

2) **Annual Survey Data** – I present the results from our spring pellet count and browse survey and from our summer trail-camera survey. I have seven years of pellet and browse data and nine years of camera data, so we have some great trend information for what's happening with the deer using our property. The surveys

Hunting Season Prep

provide a great double-check of the deer density, and when combined with harvest and observation data, we have a really good feel for the density, sex ratio, age structure, productivity, and health of the herd and habitat. Our camera survey always ends Labor Day weekend, so I include pictures of each individual buck we photographed. This provides a good snapshot of bucks using the property and creates tremendous excitement for our hunters. It also causes a little angst among our firearm-only hunters who may secretly hope the nicest bucks make it to rifle season. (We're all good friends at camp but it's no secret that some guys flat out pray the nicest bucks don't get taken before the rifle season opens after Thanksgiving.)

3) **Habitat Work** – I go over the habitat work performed during the year including any browse cutting, TSI projects, wetland work and tree plantings. I also cover the status of our food plots and include what is planted where and the productivity of each plot.

4) **Deer Harvest** – I cover our buck harvest requirements to ensure everyone is crystal clear on what we'll shoot and pass. Nothing is more deflating for a hunter or camp member than to have someone shoot a buck that doesn't meet your criteria. Education and communication are the keys to combat this – combined with some good ribbing and a little peer pressure. If you shoot a buck that doesn't make the cut at our camp, there's no fine involved. However, you lose the ability to shoot a buck the following year, because you've essentially shot that buck a year early. You can still come to camp, shoot antlerless deer, and do everything else that camp guys do, but you just can't shoot a buck. That said, I'm proud to state that our camp has not shot a buck that didn't meet our harvest criteria since 2002. We've been through 10 hunting seasons with no mistakes. That's not by coincidence, that's due to commitment and effort by our camp members.

If you're wondering what our criteria are, it's pretty simple. Youth hunters are allowed and encouraged to shoot any buck they see. Pennsylvania has a one-buck limit, and their buck can range from the smallest yearling spike to the biggest deer on the farm. Adult hunters must shoot bucks that meet 1 of 2 criteria: bucks must be 3.5 years or older or they must have at least a 16-inch inside spread. Some of our hunters pass 3.5-year-olds, some don't, and this criteria works very well for us. Also, anyone who shoots a buck pays a \$20 cementum annuli aging fee as we send all buck incisors away for analysis.

During this portion I also provide our target antlerless harvest. I calculate it each September using our harvest, observation, pellet, browse and camera survey data, with a close eye on where we are relative to our deer density goal. I also include a dose of "gut feeling" using my knowledge of the local pre-season deer herd. This part ends with a review of what harvest and observation data everyone needs to collect/record, how to do so, and why it is important to collect/record this. It's amazing how this simple message improves the quality of data I receive.

5) **Rules** – Whether it's football, bull riding or hunting, you need a set of rules, and they should be reviewed with the group before the season commences. Our #1 rule is to have fun. Far too many people get hung up on inches of antlers or where you can go on a property and they forget that hunting is fun. We have driving and hunting restrictions too, but we balance them with our desire to enjoy the woods with family and friends. This part of the talk includes a reminder to stay on our land, to not break any game laws, and concludes with a session on firearm and treestand safety.

6) **Current Research** – I always include current research that may help our crew see and (hopefully) shoot more mature bucks. This year's talk includes information on mature buck movement patterns and hunter avoidance. Check out the article "Seeing and Killing Mature Bucks" on pages 10-13 in the October/November 2013 Quality Whitetails if you're interested in this information.

7) **Grand Finale** – I'm an optimist and I end the talk on an upbeat note about the upcoming season. Sports have played a big role in my life, so maybe this comes from too many pre-game pep talks. Whatever the reason, I always end with photos of the nicer bucks on the property. The value of trail-cameras cannot be overstated when it comes to capturing information on the deer herd or sharing it with fellow hunters.

Good luck this season, and I hope you have as much fun with your camp talk as I do with mine!

Kip's Korner is written by Kip Adams, a Certified Wildlife Biologist and Director of Education and Outreach for the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA). The QDMA is an international nonprofit wildlife conservation organization dedicated to ensuring the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage. The QDMA can be reached at 1-800-209-DEER or www.QDMA.com.



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Hunting Whitetails

C.J. WINAND



It's Back...The Mighty American Chestnut

Deer everywhere are rejoicing at the return of this once prolific and preferred food source.

WHAT CAN A hunter do if he doesn't own land or have enough dollars to invest in a food plot? Purchase and plant a nut or fruit tree. With very little maintenance required compared to a food plot, you can have highly nutritious deer food dropping out of your trees in short order. Better yet, this is a

gift you can give to yourself or a landowner that will last for years. And, by keeping the landowner happy, you can ensure yourself a property to hunt for years to come.

We have all heard about chestnuts roasting on an open fire in the classic Christmas song, but exactly what happened to the American chestnut? In 1904, the New York Zoological Park's

(now the Bronx Zoo) chief forester, Hermann Mekel, noticed a fungus on some of his American chestnut trees. It was the lethal Asian bark fungus, and it evolved within the Chinese chestnuts the Park was using as nursery stock. Although the Chinese chestnut was not affected by the fungus, the American chestnut was highly susceptible. Because American chestnuts never evolved any resistance to the fungus, it was literally the beginning of the end for what many called the "Redwood of the East."

Within short order, scientists found that airborne spores from the fungus enter a wound in the tree and choke off the flow of nutrients. It didn't take long for the entire tree to be killed as a result.

Based on historical records, it's estimated the airborne bark fungus traveled 50 miles a year. Within a few decades, the chestnut blight killed up to three billion American chestnut trees on over 200 million acres of woodland. By 1950, the iconic American chestnut had virtually disappeared from its native range because of the chestnut blight.

Back in the 1950s, forward-thinking Dr. Robert T. Dunstan saw an opportunity to save the American chestnut by grafting it to a Chinese chestnut. His goal was to produce a blight-resistant chestnut with American traits. Sounds simple, right? Not really. First he had to find a surviving American chestnut, which was discovered in Salem, Ohio, in the early 1950s. After the tree was purposely inoculated with the blight and proved to be resistant, Dunstan had to grow a grafted tree until it produced nuts.

Once this tree produced nuts, Dunstan crossed the grafted tree to a Chinese chestnut and let it grow to production. This is when the fruits of his labor would



The American chestnut is the most important tree in our country's history. But, because of the lethal airborne fungus called chestnut blight, we lost 25 percent of the Eastern woodlands from Maine to Florida and from the Piedmont west to the Ohio Valley.

show whether or not the hybrid American/Chinese tree would be resistant to the blight. It was a success, and the cross now bears his name — the Dunstan Chestnut — the only chestnut tree to have a plant patent. As you can imagine, this whole process took decades.

Chestnuts Versus Acorns

Dunstan Chestnuts can produce nuts in as few as two years, and by year six, can be loaded. All hunters know the attraction between acorns and deer. But did you know deer actually prefer chestnuts to all kinds of acorns? According to wildlife biologist Bob Humphrey, “Chestnuts are nutritionally superior, containing 40 percent carbohydrates, compared to



Chestnuts are a highly nutritious food source, and the good news is that deer prefer them to even acorns.

Most importantly, American chestnuts are hardy down to -25 degrees F. (Zone 4), and can withstand a wide variety of soil types, even rocky, acidic soils.

Thankfully, within the last century, white and red oaks have filled the void caused by the chestnut blight. Since chestnut trees grow faster and bigger than oaks, and since deer prefer chestnuts to acorns, many believe it's just a matter of time before the general public fully embraces the return of the iconic chestnut tree our forefathers depended on so heavily.

Dunstan Chestnut

Following on the heels of his pioneering work, Dr. Dunstan's grandson, Bob D. Wallace, established a commercial chestnut nursery. Since 1981, Wallace has operated Chestnut Hill Tree Farm, the recognized national leader in the return of the chestnut to America. One important question he regularly answers is, “Does the blight affect your Dunstan Chestnuts?” As Wallace says, “It's very important to know that after over 30 years of research, no Dunstan Chestnut has ever died from the blight.” Another important aspect of Dunstan Chestnuts is the total biomass of nuts per acre. These trees can produce hundreds of pounds of food per year, far exceeding any oak tree. Recently, Wallace has teamed up with Realtree Nurseries to help distribute and market the Dunstan Chestnut.

Chestnut Hill Tree Farm has also created special prices for the Quality Deer Management Association, Boy Scouts of America, 4-H, and other conservation groups that buy in bulk for fundraising projects. As Wallace says, “When it comes

to deer and the Dunstan Chestnut, plant it, and the deer will come!” In fact, he has problems every year with deer digging up and eating the nuts out of his potted plants. Without a doubt, chestnuts are a deer's most preferred nut, period.

C.J.'s Summary

Because a chestnut tree flowers late, it's unaffected by an untimely frost which could wipe out an entire acorn crop. The reliable chestnut tree produces a highly nutritional nut on a yearly basis. You'll need a minimum of two trees so cross-pollination occurs for nut production. Most folks plant them in groups of five to 10, no more than 100 feet apart or as close as 30 feet.

After all these years, there are very small pockets of American chestnuts that survive. Most American chestnuts that survive today come from old stump sprouts and many never get more than 20 feet tall before the blight kills them.

To order the proven blight-resistant Dunstan Chestnut tree, go to www.realtreenursery.com or call 1-855-386-7826. Order early because supplies are limited. This year, Dunstan Chestnuts will be available at Walmart. These trees grow in almost any soil type between Zones 4 to 9. You can expect nuts that are high in carbohydrates and protein in two to four years. This equates to 10–20 pounds of nuts per tree in 10 years.

For more information about chestnuts, visit The American Chestnut Foundation at www.acf.org or the American Chestnut Cooperators' Foundation at www.accf-online.org. Other nurseries such as Edward Fort Nurseries and Morse Nursery also sell Chinese chestnut and Chinese hybrid chestnuts. <<<



This picture clearly shows why the American chestnut was often called the “Redwood of the East.”

about 10 percent for white oak acorns; 10 percent protein compared to four percent for white oak acorns; and two percent fat, compared to 10 percent in acorns.”

To put this into perspective, American chestnuts are prolific carbohydrate machines. They can produce as much carbohydrate per acre as corn (without annual planting), and they are just what deer need for winter survival. And unlike oaks, which are very cyclical when it comes to nut production, American chestnuts produce nuts on a yearly basis.



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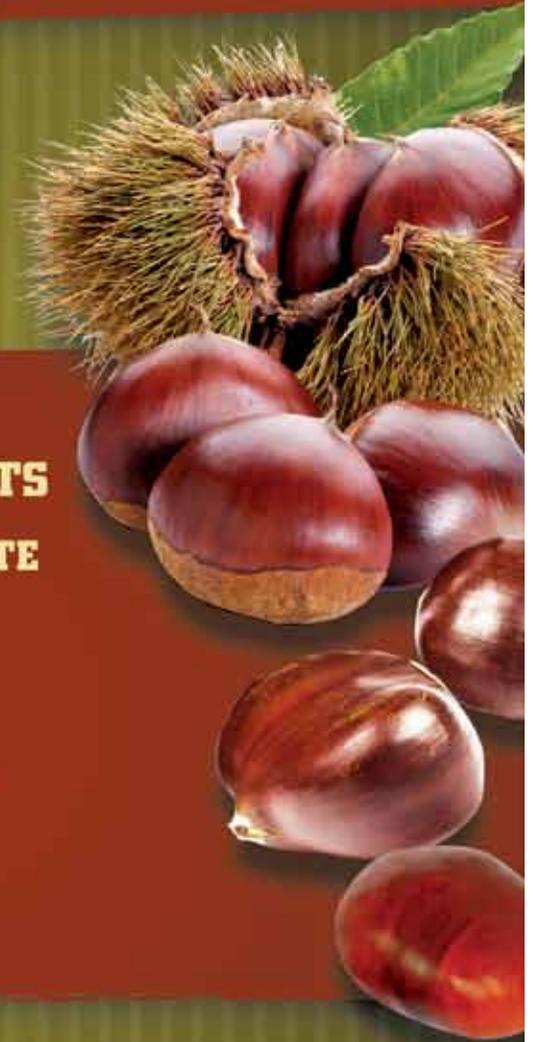
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# Next Year Starts Now

by Robert Fearnley, Watershed Specialist,  
Susquehanna County Conservation District

It's now October, bow season is in full swing, the rut is approaching and soon rifle season will be here. It is the high point of the hunter's year; but if you are a game and land manager, it is also the best time to start next year. It is never too early to start planning for the future. While you are in that tree stand, look around – not for that buck sneaking behind you but at the habitat. Are there apple trees that need more sunshine, is that an oak sapling under the shade of a soft maple or is that field near your stand growing more "poverty grass" than clover?

In Susquehanna County this year almost every apple tree mature enough to bear fruit is weighted down with apples to the point some branches are breaking. If your apple trees are not fruiting, now is the time to ask, "Why not?" Is it receiving too much shade? While the foliage is on is the perfect time to observe shade patterns. An apple tree that in winter appears to be bathed in sunlight may in fall reveal a larger tree shading it. This winter would be a perfect time to "day light" the area around apple trees. A lack of fruit or small fruit may be improved by pruning this winter. Just removing dead limbs and branches that cross another would be a great start for this dormant season.

Fall is a great time to look at under story trees and pick out young mast producers. Many of us would have a

hard time telling a young oak or hickory in winter from many other species but with leaves on most can pick out the oak. Place a marker ribbon around a tree you want to save. If that valuable mast producer is over topped by a larger tree less valued by wildlife, maybe the larger tree is a good candidate for the woodpile or hinged-cut for winter browse.



What about the unproductive field? Now is when lush green food plots of summer and fall are started. The first step is to do a soil test. Contact Penn State Extension or your local feed store for a soil test kit. Sample the soil in several spots in the field; 15 samples is a good number. Take a core of soil to the depth of six to eight inches. Dry the soil and package and ship to the lab. Soon a report with recommendations will arrive. For this fall the most important recommendation is for lime. Applying lime in the autumn will allow it to work its way into the soil with the fall and early spring rains, thereby raising the soil

pH for spring or summer planting. Fertilizer can wait until planting time but lime requires months to work its magic.

Enjoy your time on the deer stand, think about the future management decisions and don't let that buck sneak behind you.

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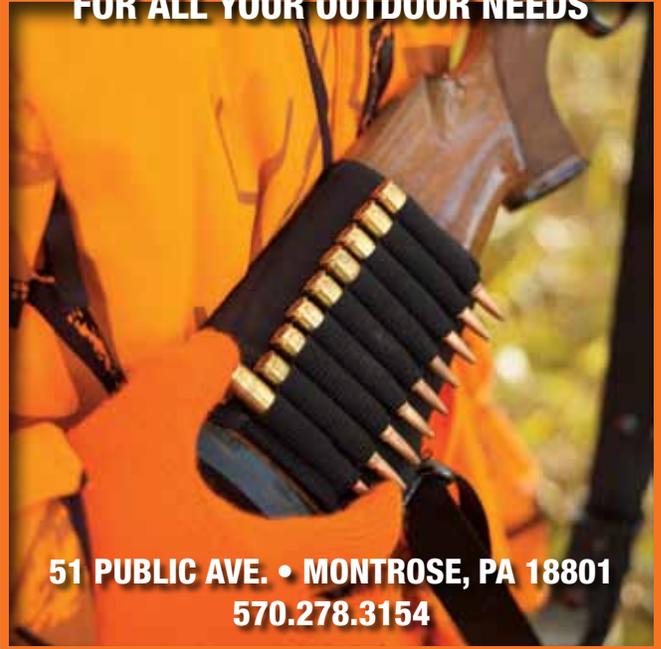
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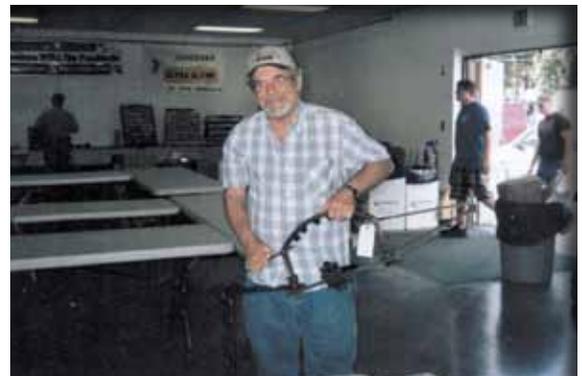
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# The Art of Mapping Deer – Saddles, Benches & Points

By Jim Stickles, AWB®

With hunting season quickly approaching, scouting is likely on your agenda, and if you are hunting the hill country, then here are some good terrain features for stand locations. Keep in mind that these areas are not always loaded with deer sign. Rather, they are travel corridors, and deer may just pass through them briefly to get from point A to point B.

## Saddles

A saddle is a low spot between two hill tops and they are most easily identified using topo maps, or 3-D images. They are very easy to identify, and they serve as excellent deer funneling features.

## Benches

Benches are relatively flat areas along hillsides and they are most easily identified using topo maps. They can be subtle or blatantly obvious. Basically, what you are looking for on a topo map is an area on a hill side where the topographic lines are farther apart from each other than the surrounding topo lines.

## Points

Points are isolated ridges that gradually slope down to lower elevations. They are easily identified on topo maps, and 3-D images. Deer will often funnel along points to access the bottoms and/or hill-tops



Figure 1. Two saddles with predicted deer trails depicted (red lines). Notice how the trails tend to converge at the saddles.

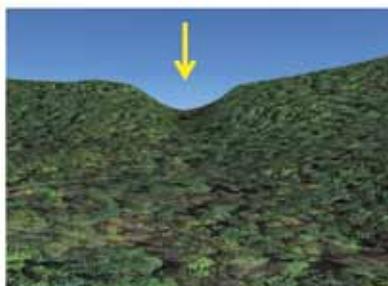


Figure 2. Ground level 3-D view of a saddle from Google Earth.

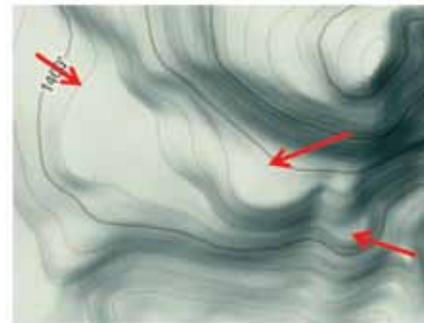


Figure 3. Benches can be big or small, but regardless of the size they funnel deer.

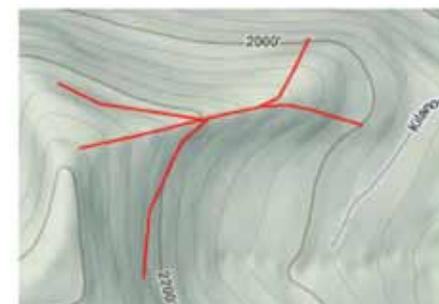


Figure 4. Points also vary in size, and even very small points can funnel deer from hilltops to bottoms and vice versa.

## Hindrance to the Hemlock

by Scott Sienko

If you often take a stroll through Penn's woods in the northeast, you'll most likely come across a stand of Eastern Hemlock. They seem like a stoic undaunted facet of our state's forests, they're even the Pennsylvania state tree. However, if you look closer at the branches that you're passing under, you may notice small white specks on the underside of the ends of the branches. Upon closer inspection, these specks resemble something like thick cobwebs or wisps of cotton. This is an indicator that the tree is being predated by the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. The white fuzz that is observed is in fact the eggs of this small insect that hails from Asia. Once mature they proceed to suck the sap from Hemlock trees that they settle on. This invasive species has already caused obvious damage to the environment, and is most easily noticed by dead stands of eastern hemlock, or trees that are still living and are sickly will exhibit an off color compared to the usual dark green. The sad thing is that this foreign intruder is causing the eastern hemlock to begin to decline. Eventually in some areas, there is the possibility that stands will no longer exist. The problem with such a situation is that the hemlock is an integral part of the ecosystem in northeastern Pennsylvania. Often growing in wet acidic soils, they are prevalent along streams, to which they act as a buffer from erosion. Taking the hemlock out of the equation in such a spot, allows the stream bank to simply erode away unchecked. This is just one problem caused by such a species being removed from the local ecosystem. There have been measures taken to hybridize the hemlock with more resistant species, such as the western hemlock or Asian varieties, and they have been moderately successful. However, there is a long road ahead if we are to prevent the eastern hemlock from going the way of the American chestnut.





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# Wildlife Leadership Academy

*This summer Alex Clapper attended the Wildlife Leadership Academy's Pennsylvania Bucktails field school. The mission of the Wildlife Leadership Academy is to empower youth to become ambassadors for wildlife conservation in order to ensure a sustained wildlife legacy for future generations. This is Alex's story about her experience...*

I would like to tell you my personal account of the PA Bucktails boot camp. Yes, it is a boot camp.

At first, when my mom told me there was an outdoor camp that my grandfather taught at and I was going, I was much less than thrilled. Personally, I am not a very outdoorsy person. I would much rather play a video game, watch YouTube videos, or figure out how to solve a Rubik's cube than go ride my bike or play outside. I was convinced that this camp was going to be awful and a waste of a week. To make things worse, I was going by myself and wouldn't know any of the other students there. This would be the first time I would be going to a camp without a friend or sibling. So I was nervous, and annoyed.

When I got there, I got my stuff, and my mom and I headed to my cabin to unpack. I reached my cabin and all the other girls were either unpacked, or in the process. At 14, I was clearly the youngest there and was feeling really awkward about having to share a small space with people I didn't know. Eventually I was unpacked and we all went into the main building. A short time later, I was alone with my team, aka five people I didn't know. We all introduced ourselves and then we had to come up with a team name. We soon settled on the White Wolves. After all this, we dove right in with a bunch of classes and a deer necropsy. I was getting to know my team a little better, but I still wasn't happy being there.

Then, we had to do team cadences. We had to pick a cadence and yell it as loud as we could and march in step. Needless to say, no one was very loud, or marching very well. But as the week wore on, we got louder and louder to the point of losing our voices.

Every day, we had a few classes that remained the same, such as Team Building, Plant of the Day, Plant Quizzes, Deer Trivia, Cabin Inspections, the Dailies, and a few others.

As the week went on, we did more and more activities and I got more and more comfortable with my team, the students at camp, and the instructors. I felt like I could talk to anyone whenever I needed to and we addressed all the instructors by their first names.



ALEX SHOOTING THE .22 RIFLE AT THE SCOTIA RANGE IN CENTRE COUNTY, PA, DURING THE FIELD SCHOOL.

A few of my favorite things from camp included: going to the shooting range, playing deer trivia, meeting new people, cabin inspections and the Dailies. I know you may be thinking, "Cabin inspections? She finds cabin inspections fun?" These cabin inspections were hilarious! Every night two or three of the teachers would present things they saw while in the cabins, and they were really picky. For example, my team leader always left out a heavy-duty metal flashlight and every time the teacher would pretend they had been hit on the head by "the unsecured, blunt object." Another frequent topic of the cabin inspections was my wolf stuffed animal. The first day there, the instructors had said that my wolf had bitten one of them, so just to be funny, I taped a fake angry mouth on my wolf's face. The instructors had a field day and everyone thought it was hilarious. The next night, because I feared we lost points because of my joke, I made the wolf apologize with a "paw-written" note.

The Dailies (or Dailliees as the instructor jokingly spells it) are basically a humorous recap of the whole day with lots of funny pictures the instructor took. These two periods at the end of our day always had everyone laughing our heads off, and laughing right along with everyone, I felt like I was part of the group.



Then came... The Night. I will refer to it as The Night because it deserves its own title. Everyone stayed up until at least 3:00 in the morning working on projects for the next day. But, instead of feeling completely overwhelmed like I would if these were school projects, I knew I would be able to get everything finished. We did, we got every project finished – our tri-folds, PowerPoints, plant collections, and nature photos. There was no way we could have finished everything without help from the amazing instructors, though.

The next day, we had to present our PowerPoints to everyone at camp. Yes, I was a little nervous, but not nearly as much as I usually am. Later, when the head instructor was talking to us, everyone's eyes were glued to the scoreboard. Every few minutes a new score would go up and some team would cheer. That morning, my team had been in second place by 13 points. We thought it was the point of no return, but we gave our best anyway, and we pulled ahead. We won! I was no longer the shy little girl who had walked in on the first day, I was an equal to every 15-, 16-, and 17-year-old in that room. We were all friends now, we will all keep in touch.

I am currently working on this thing everyone has to do after you complete the camp, called Community Outreach. Everyone is required to do at least three Outreaches, more if you want to get invited back as an Assistant Team Leader. I have done four Outreaches so far, this newsletter article is my fifth, but I plan on doing many more so I will be able to return next year. You never know, if you have just heard about this program and are planning to apply, I may see you there :).

The moral of my story? This camp will change you forever, for the better. Come join us! You'll have loads of fun and learn while doing it!

~Alex Clapper, 2013 Bucktails Student

*The Wildlife Leadership Academy is a cooperative initiative of various state agencies and conservation organizations. It is coordinated and administered by the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information and to find the application, visit [www.picweb.org](http://www.picweb.org). 2014 Field School dates will be posted on the website soon!*

SHOWN AT LEFT IS ALEX (FAR LEFT) WITH HER TEAM, THE WHITE WOLVES.



# The Art of Mapping Deer – Barriers *By Jim Stickles, AWB®*

Earlier this year, I discussed how water can act as a natural barrier, but there are many other barriers to deer movement. Learning how to identify barriers on a map can vastly improve hunting success and minimize the amount of human intrusion. The great thing about barriers is they are fairly easy to identify on a map and deer movement along barriers is remarkably predictable. Deer will skirt the edges of barriers to get from point A to point B. This makes barrier edges great places to find cruising bucks during the rut. So let's take a look at some other barriers!

## High Traffic Roads

Although deer-vehicle collisions are an all-too-frequent occurrence, high traffic roadways are actually pretty effective



Figure 1: Rather than cross a high traffic interstate, deer will usually travel parallel to the roadway.

barriers to deer movement. My master's research involves monitoring deer movements along a high traffic interstate (>25,000 vehicles/day). Looking at a map of some of those locations (Figure 1), it almost looks as if somebody built a wall along the highway, but rest assured, deer can easily cross the 5-ft. high right-of-way fence just about anywhere if they desire. Additional benefits of hunting along highways is the noise from the traffic can help cover your approach, you can gain a wind advantage if the wind is blowing toward the road, and these areas tend to be overlooked by a majority of hunters. Other GPS studies have seen similar movement patterns on roads with much less traffic, so do not overlook areas along frequently traveled roadways as they may be potential honey holes.

## Urban & Suburban Development



Figure 2: Deer movement through suburban woodlots can be very predictable. Cruising bucks will be looking for areas where they can access the next woodlot. The urban development often acts as a barrier.

be able to get away with a less than ideal wind because deer are conditioned to smelling people in those areas regularly. Additionally, it is often unlawful to hunt with firearms in these areas, so hunters are usually limited to archery equipment, meaning that shot opportunities are limited, and bucks are able to get a few years of age on them before they are harvested. This is primarily why many of the big bucks that are harvested each year come out of the suburbs.

## Steep Terrain

Deer usually do not climb cliff faces, nor do they jump off them on a regular basis, meaning these features are usually a pretty effective barrier. Most flat-land hunters do not need to worry about identifying steep terrain, but I grew up hunting in the Adirondacks of New York, and these were key features to look for on a topo map.



Figure 3. Steep cliff faces can do a remarkable job at funneling deer, especially when they are combined with other barriers to create funnels.

Some of the best spots to hunt are small woodlots in urban areas, because there is enough human activity where the urban development can act like a barrier, and you might



Figure 4: Example of a classic funnel where two large woodlots are connected by a small strip of woods between two large, open fields.



Figure 5: Large fields tend to direct deer movement toward the corners. Setting up a stand on the inside corner of a field is a good place to intercept a cruising buck.

## Open Fields

Generally speaking, big deer are usually old deer, and deer do not get old by making a habit of exposing themselves in wide open areas during daylight hours during the hunting season. On the rare occasion, a mature deer may "break cover" along a field edge long enough for a hunter to get a shot, but a majority of a big buck's day during the hunting season is spent in the woods. Knowing this, look for areas on aerial images where large wide open fields nearly converge with the exception of a small strip of woods that acts as a bottle-neck, forcing every deer wanting to get from forest patch A to forest patch B through that narrow strip of woods. Also look for "inside corners" where large fields tend to create high traffic areas just inside the corners of the field.

These are just some of the more common barriers and "hunting hotspots" that can easily be identified from an aerial photo or topo map. I hope you are beginning to understand how mapping deer can reduce your scouting time and impact and help put you in prime hunting areas on properties you have never hunted before. I have a few more mapping topics to cover in upcoming issues, so stay tuned!



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## PLANT MAX *Article by Ray Reeves*

PLANT MAX is a product that we have been testing now for three years on our personal farm as well as a few other farms that we manage. We are now, after these years of testing, confident enough to start marketing this product at a retail level.

There are many benefits of PLANT MAX, but three that are most important to those of us in the “deer world.” Now these benefits do vary from place to place depending on soil conditions, moisture, temperature, humidity etc; however, these three benefits are still always there regardless, they just might be more evident in better locations.

1) **Nutrition density** – As a “deer farmer,” this benefit is the most important to me. As most of us know, deer are very picky eaters; they know what their body needs and wants and that’s what they will eat. Any kind of plant life that provides high nutrition... they will seek it out and find it. PLANT MAX does just that. It increases the nutrition and sugar levels to a degree that we have not ever seen from any other products that we have used. Our soybean brix levels (sugar) normally hold around 12; when using PLANT MAX this sugar level goes to 24. This will also be true on brassicas and any plant that contains sugar. Now if you were to hold an ice cream cone and a potato up in front of a child, which one do you think they’d take first? So as deer hunters, we want to create the most attractive and nutritional “dinner plate” that we possibly can.

2) Another benefit that PLANT MAX has is the fact that it is a **growth stimulant**. This is how it got its name. Now depending on conditions, this will vary from place to place; however, we have personally seen (even this year) our soybeans grow 11" in two days then to 24" in 12 days and brassicas that were sprayed reach 30" with four times the tonnage than the unsprayed, hence the name PLANT MAX. Now I know as well as anybody that looks aren’t everything and bigger isn’t always better, but when you couple large plant life with high nutrition and high sugar levels, you have a pretty product to attract deer.

3) Now the third benefit, not to be diminished by its rank in this article, is super attractive to me as a whitetail hunter. PLANT MAX provides and promotes **longer plant life**. As long as it is sprayed within its recommended times (every 14-21 days, 8 oz. per acre) it will not allow your plant life to go dormant. PLANT MAX has been created through “nano-technology” and attacks plant life like no other product that we have ever used. This attacking process stresses the plant by pulling the moisture from it putting the plant into “survival mode” causing it to keep growing and growing faster. Because the moisture is being pulled from the plant, it now offers the plant frost protection! So while our neighbors hunt over dried up wilted soybeans, we are hunting (in November) over top of green soybeans that are still alive. This will be the case until the temps dip around 25 degrees.

I want to be very clear and reiterate that not everyone that uses this product is going to get the same result as his neighbor, but none the less you will have positive results! This is not the wonder drug of the century – you should still lime and fertilize and condition your soil; however, this will definitely increase and promote plant life in a huge way!!!



This end of the field has not been sprayed with PLANT MAX.



This portion of the field WAS sprayed with PLANT MAX. Notice the difference in lushness!



Here the plants have reached full maturity at 6'7".

Take a look at the bean density between these two group 7 soybeans. Both plants were picked at the same time.



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See Lock-N-Load ad on page 20.

# Shopping for a New Bow – A Girl's Story

by Sherrie Bazin

I have been hunting with a bow – a PSE Nova – that I purchased on Ebay for the last couple of years. It has been a great bow. I shot a nice doe my first year and, well, missed a big buck last year. I learned how to hunt with this bow and gained experience the last two seasons. This bow was a very good purchase for the money I spent; however, it was just slightly large for my 5'3" frame. Last fall I was climbing out of my stand and the bow caught on a branch and I broke my LED sight. Several other items are in need of replacing on the bow. It is time to upgrade/replace my first bow.

Where to begin? Let us start with the budget. I am able to spend \$500 for a new bow and the extras. When shopping, remember all the extras – they add up fast, so budget wisely. Second, I am not partial to name brands but some good names to look at are Hoyt and PSE. There are others but I am familiar with these and friends have had great experiences with both brands. This purchase will be from a sporting shop or dealer. Ebay is great for second hand items and good deals, but I want a bow that fits me... just not my pocketbook.

I searched the internet for recommendations and was able to shop without the gas expense. I needed a bow that fit me well. Measuring your draw length is easy but very important. Hold your arms out and measure. Take that length



and divide by two. That is your draw length. My draw length is 25". My PSE was set at 27". I wanted a little lighter draw weight. I was pulling 42 pounds. My new bow is set at 37 pounds. This is still strong enough to put down a deer with proper placement of the shot.

I chose a smaller bow that many young people and women use. It is a Bear Apprentice II bow. It is available in camo pink or camo green (I chose camo green). Pink is fine for many things but I cannot see myself turkey hunting with a pink bow. I will make a statement with my aim and save the colors for the celebration dinner! The Bear weighs a mere 2.7 lbs and is straightforward to adjust the sights (lists at \$279). I also purchased six carbon arrows and new broad heads. The fletchings are pink and white – just had to point that out. I purchased a basic case for storage and travel. I

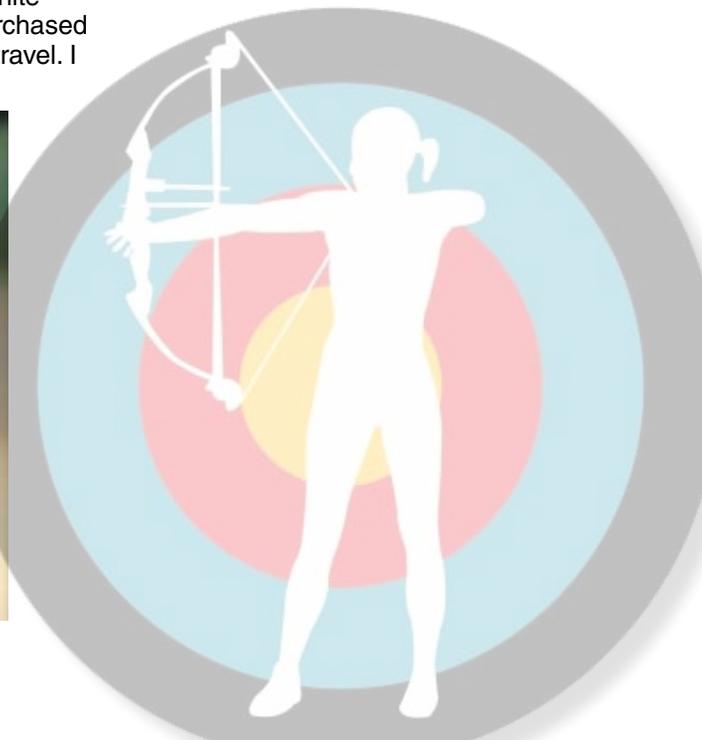
came just under my budget and I had a good bow that fit me well.

A good friend and hunting partner assisted me with sighting in the bow. I have to work on my form – I forget to bend at the waist at times. Shortly after we began, I was zeroing in on the target. It should be a great season! I have to practice, practice and practice to get my muscle memory.

My daughter is learning to hunt with the PSE Nova. She is a bit taller than I am and it fit her perfectly. Updating the sights and a few lessons, she was hitting the target – mark on! She is a natural and she will be dragging out a large buck this year!

Last weekend I moved around my deer stands. The trail camera is catching some great shots of deer foraging on the abundant apples. The crispness of the air is beckoning the fall hunting season in with a clean scent of falling leaves.

Ladies, it is not hard to be properly outfitted for a safe hunting season. Do your research, ask questions and do not be afraid to try something new. Hunting with a bow can be extremely rewarding. I even broke down and purchased a new hat – one that has a hole made for my ponytail. I will be styling this year for sure!



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