

FRONT SIGHT



Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

January - March 2022, Issue 57



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Members of Mid-Michigan SCI or Isabella County Sportsman's Club may use the shooting range located at 2872 W. Millbrook Road just east of Winn Road. In order to receive the lock combination you will need to contact Lance Norris at either (989) 621-2794 or ruter11b@cmich.edu to take a safety training/orientation to familiarize yourself with the club. When visiting the Sportsman's Club please carry membership identification on you.



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Chairmen are listed first

- Chapter Record Book - Autumn Gonda
- Conservation/Govt. Affairs - Autumn Gonda
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- Matching Grants - Jon Zieman
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- Big Buck Night - Mike Strobe, Scott Holmes
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- Shooting Sports - Brandon Jurries
- Humanitarian Services - Mike Strobe
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- Pathfinder Hunts - Brandon Jurries
- Youth - Disabled Veterans - Blue Bags, etc.



The Front Sight is the official publication of the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International, keeping club members informed about local club activities, and encouraging and defining good sportsmanship. The Front Sight Magazine is published quarterly: January, April, July and October. Distribution 400+.

Check www.midmichigansci.org for copies of the Front Sight, listing of events, and fundraiser auction items.

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President's Message

Rifle Deer Season starts tomorrow as I write this on November 14th. I have been hearing reports of decent buck sightings and some success! I am not bow hunting this year after the thumb surgery but expect to be back at it next year. I am taking my oldest son to Montana for a Mule Deer hunt at the end of November. He has never hunted out west. EHD is causing problems in western North Dakota and eastern Montana. Mule deer bucks tend to not harden their horns and are less aggressive when suffering EHD. My buddy with a section in the Killdeer Mountains has found six whitetails dead from EHD. Coupled with the severe drought, it could be rather interesting and different hunting.

The 50th SCI Annual Convention is scheduled in Las Vegas for January 19th to 22nd, 2022. This would be the Annual Convention to not miss! It will be very interesting and exciting. Various entertainers and pundits will attend; Larry the Cable Guy, Craig Morgan, Donald Trump Jr., and Tucker Carlson are scheduled. Travel will be more convenient the next three years with the Convention scheduled in Nashville.

We have a great year planned for the Chapter 2022. Big Night Buck is scheduled for January 22nd, 2022, at the Comfort Inn. Have a good hunting season and bring those racks in! Let us know if you would like to help.


The Chapter Annual Convention will be at Soaring Eagle again in 2022 and will be held on Friday and Saturday, February 25th and 26th. Friday will be Members and Outfitters Appreciation night with a social hour, band, and a free hunt raffle for any member present. Saturday evening will feature the big Auction. There will be tables in 2022! Food will be similar to this year's event, incorporating some suggested improvements. We are expecting strong attendance and excitement. Talk to any board member if you would like to help put it on! You won't want to miss it.

We will have six member meetings in 2022 in the months of April, May, June, August, September, and October. Please send us suggestions on presentation you would like to see.

Thanks to all who help make these events possible and fun.

The eight Michigan 501(c)(4) Chapters of SCI are in the process of forming Political Action Committee in support of the SCI mission. Further details will follow as the they are finalized.

Don't forget to get ready for ice fishing. As always, please share your stories and recipes with Josh Christensen for the Front Sight. Please let us know what you would like to see in this publication and do as a Chapter.


Jon Zieman
President
(989) 430-2985 • jjzieman@tds.net

Editor's Message

By the time you receive this issue our whitetail hunting season will be over. I hope you had a wonderful season filled with excitement and memories. Even though deer season will be over don't overlook the small game hunting opportunities our great state has to offer. I am willing to venture many of us started our hunting adventures as small game hunters with a parent or family member. Be sure to look at pages 30 and 31 for information on how some of our members were introduced into the hunting world.



After a successful afternoon of hunting.

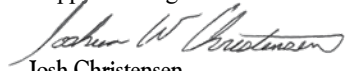
I have recently decided I would like to try to hunt the grand slam of turkeys. To do some research for these hunts I have been going through different issues of our Front Sight magazine and reading articles by Joanne Witte about her and Larry's experiences with each subspecies. As I was reading the articles I was filled with many emotions; joy for the Witte's as they completed their quest for the grand slam, excitement for my upcoming adventures, sadness for the passing of the Witte's, gratefulness that Joanne took the time to share her experiences with us (not only when she wrote them, but all these years later when I became interested in the hunts they took). Who knows, maybe one of the articles in this issue will inspire a reader to take on a new adventure of their own.

Be sure to mark your calendars for our Fundraiser on February 25th and 26th. It will be here before you know it. Our fundraiser is always a great time to see old friends and discuss the adventures you've taken over the year. It is also a great time to plan that next great adventure, by talking with outfitters and possibly bidding on that trip of a lifetime.

For those interested, we have moved our awards presentation from our annual fundraiser to our April membership meeting. This was in an effort to highlight our awards program.

As always, please consider sharing your hunting adventures with us through a written story, journal or pictorial essay.

Happy Hunting!

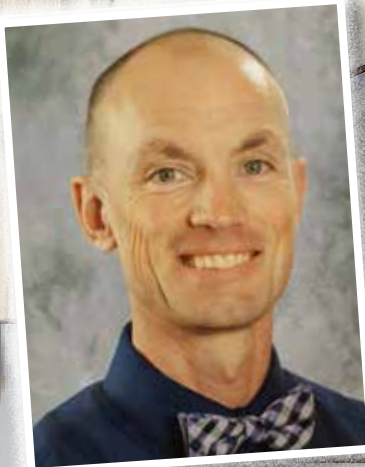

Josh Christensen
Editor
(989) 329-4911 • jchappyfish@gmail.com

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date	Meeting Type	Time	Location
Jan 19-22, 2022	Annual Convention	TBA	Las Vegas, NV
Jan 22, 2022	Big Buck Night	TBA	Comfort Inn
Feb 25 & 26, 2022	Annual Fundraisers	TBA	Soaring Eagle Resort
April 4, 2022	Board/Membership Meeting/Awards	6:00 PM	Comfort Inn
May 2, 2022	Board/Membership Meeting	6:00 PM	Comfort Inn

All board meetings are open to our membership. Reservations required.
Please call and leave a message at 989-560-1061 or email Suzette Howard at suzettejhoward@yahoo.com



Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: EAST OF THE SUN AND
WEST OF THE MOON

Author: Theodore Roosevelt Jr.
and Kermit Roosevelt

Copyright: 1926

List Price: No longer in
publication

I learned of this book from a peculiar source. While looking through the advertisements in a recent Safari Magazine published by Safari Club International I noticed an ad for Mid-Asian ibex, an animal I hope to one day hunt. In this advertisement it mentioned if you hunted with this outfitter you would be hunting the area Kermit Roosevelt hunted in his book *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*. I was intrigued because I read about Kermit in his father's book about an expedition to Africa. Although it wasn't an easy book to find I was glad I took the time to do so.

East of the Sun and West of the Moon was authored by two of President Theodore Roosevelt's sons. Not only was Kermit an author of the book but his brother Ted co-authored the book with each taking turns on writing the chapters. The book details their travels from the United States to Asia as they set their eyes on hunting ovis poli, or as we call them today Marco Polo rams. Although Marco Polo rams were number one on their lists these were not the only animals on their lists.

Throughout the book the brothers detail their adventure. Not only the hunting but also how they made it to the hunting grounds and back. This was a fascinating portion of the book, because they had to take a ship from New York to India with a stop in England along the way. Not quite as easy as getting on a plane like today. Also explained was the culture of the people they came to meet and the topography of the landscape. On a side note many of the place names used in the book are no longer used.

And to top it all off this expedition was funded by the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, which amazes me because Kermit and his father Teddy were able to take a similar trip to Africa funded by the Smithsonian around ten years earlier to this hunt...what luck!

So if you are looking for a challenge in "hunting" down a book and reading about a time when central Asia was still unexplored, this book may be for you.



This book gets 10 out of 10 bullseyes.



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The following are the terms and conditions for the Buy, Sell or Trade section of our magazine.

- It is **FREE** to all members of our Mid-Michigan SCI Chapter.
- One photo per item will be used in this section. This photo will be displayed in a small size (about 2"x2").
- You may have up to four ads per issue. (You must renew each ad each issue.)
- Beyond the description of the item, each ad will need your name, e-mail and/or phone number
- Each ad should be limited to 25 words plus your name and e-mail and/or phone number unless otherwise discussed with the editor.
- **The Mid-Michigan Chapter is not responsible for items sold.**

Send listings and questions to Josh Christensen at jchappyfish@gmail.com



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"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door." - Milton Berle





Card/Riley Conservation Wildlife Education Center

By Josh Christensen

Throughout the past four issues of Front Sight we have explored some of the different programs and organizations we support with money raised from our fundraiser and through our chapter dues. One of those who receive money is the Card/Riley Conservation and Wildlife Education Center located on the ground floor of the Arts and Sciences Commons building on the campus of Ferris State University.

On August 17th members of our board made a trip to Big Rapids to take a guided tour of the Card/Riley Conservation Wildlife Education Center. This tour included cometary about the exhibits as well as information about the purpose of the Wildlife Center and information about many of the animals on display. Roger Card accompanied us on the tour and gave us some additional information on some of the exhibits.

In all there are around 200 animals and fish displayed in the 5,000 square foot facility that is open to the public and free of charge. The primary function of the Card/Riley Conservation and Wildlife Center is to serve as an educational resource for Ferris State University students, K-12 school children, and members of the greater Michigan community.



If you haven't had the opportunity to visit the Wildlife Center I recommend you make an effort to do so. The Wildlife Center is located at 820 Campus Dr, Big Rapids, MI 49307. For more information and current hours of operations visit www.ferris.edu/card.



September Membership

by Josh Christensen

On September 13th our chapter hosted its' last membership meeting of 2021. Our guest speaker for the meeting was Joe Pedersen, life member to our Mid-Michigan Chapter, president of the Michigan chapter and our Region 19 Director. Joe discussed two topics for the evening, his recent trip to Greenland and the Safari Club International Foundation (SCIF). This event was held at the Comfort Inn in Mt. Pleasant and consisted of 33 people in attendance with door prizes, a .22 caliber rifle give away to a 5-17 year old in attendance and a gun raffle for a Winchester turkey gun cambered in 12 gauge.

The evening started off with social hour where the people in attendance were able to visit and discuss the upcoming hunting season. This was followed by an invocation by our chapter president



Meeting



Jon Zieman and then an excellent dinner of salad, chicken, vegetables, rice, cheese cake and chocolate cake. Jon was sure to tell all of our younger guests it was a must for them to eat at least two deserts.

After dinner Joe started by thanking our chapter for inviting him and complemented our chapter on our most recent fundraiser and the Friday night membership/outfitters night we held. Joe then went into detail using a video and then a slide show of pictures of his recent trip to Greenland where he hunted both Musk ox and Reindeer/Caribou. Part of his presentation discussed why all Reindeer/Caribou in Greenland are now classified as Reindeer.

Joe vividly described his experience from the accommodations to the temperatures to the landscape and hunting techniques. He also discussed the journey he took from Michigan to make it to the small town in the sparsely populated landmass of Greenland. (Joe

said only 55 thousand people live on this giant island.) This was followed by Joe discussing the SCIF and how it helps all of us as hunters.

To end the evening tickets were drawn for the door prizes, youth gun and flashlights and the gun raffle. Winning the Savage brake down .22 was Jacob Howard. The winners of the two flashlights were Harper Chapin and Ivan Christensen and the winner of the 12 gauge Winchester turkey gun was Doug Chapin.

The board would like to invite all of our members and friends to join us in 2022 as we continue to bring you entertaining programs.

Membership meeting dates

April 4th, 2022	May 2nd, 2022
June 6th, 2022	August 1st, 2022
September 12th, 2022	October 3rd, 2022



Thank you

from Reed City Schools Trap Shooting League



Editor's note: Our Chapter also uses money from our annual fundraiser and membership dues to assist shooting teams like the Big Rapids Trap Team.

Dear Safari Club International (Mid-Michigan Chapter)-

Thank you so much for donating \$400 to Reed City Schools Trap Shooting League. This money will help out with clays, shells, and help take care of some of our fees. It also helps out with kids who can not find shells.

Trap shooting is a place to go and hang out, shoot, and have fun but you are treated like family. We build each other up and help each other out. We all encourage and support each other. We do that because it gives use confidence so we feel when we shoot. The main thing though is to have fun.

Thanks again for your generosity-

Colton Gilland
8th Grader at Reed City Middle School



Dear Members of Safari Club Int'l,
Thank you for your support
of the Mt Pleasant Area Community
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Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari
Club International is greatly
appreciated.

Sincerely,
Marydoughie

Brandon Juries -
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+
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Team



Megan M. Knopf
731 N. Fourth Avenue
Big Rapids, MI 49307
(231) 260-0709
mknopf@yahoo.com

15th July 2021

Brandon Jurries-Mid Michigan SCI:

On behalf of the Big Rapids Trap Shooting Team we want to extend our heartfelt appreciation for your generous monetary donation to the Rod and Gun Club. I am a parent of a returning athlete and we certainly have enjoyed every minute of this sport. We have seen this program double in size, seen great athletes leave and new athletes join. Not to mention how we have grown into one big family in the short two years we have participated. This is a sport that the kids won't outgrow but certainly can grow from implementing discipline, routine and marksmanship. Each of these young athletes have a huge respect for our Second Amendment and take pride by showing their individual talents weekly while conquering the three main goals set by The USA Clay Target League.

This season consisted of twenty-six Team members, thirteen new kids joined as young as seventh grade extending to seniors in high school. These young men came to represent and show their skills. Recently six of the Team members returned from Nationals held in Mason, Michigan where they placed 61 out of 160 (Team) and sophomore Noah Brandt placing in Individual Finals. These fine athletes have seen and competed elite and know the caliber of work and support that is necessary for success.

Organizations like yours show the necessity of our gratitude in helping the prosperity of our Team. Thank you doesn't seem like enough but the donation has allowed these kids to thrive in a positive environment and your support opens the opportunities for the future endeavors of the Big Rapids Trap Team.

With all of our gratitude,

Megan M. Knopf
Big Rapids Trap Shooting Team



Dear Safari Club International (Mid-Michigan Chapter)

I'm writing this from the perspective of a parent and a coach from the Reed City Team. Your generous donation helps in so many ways, most parents and kids don't understand our donors help this year especially with donor funds we were able to secure ammo when there wasn't any, and at a great rate! It also goes towards the kids range fee which is usually zero money to them. These things add up and make it able that our athletes can, and do succeed. Reed City team this year secured a 2nd place State team title and a 3rd place individual state title. Our team then at Nationals took 11th out of 180 teams. 3 individuals in the top 100 out of around 1700 competitors from across our great country. This does not happen without donor funds. Thank again.

Sincerely Jack Adriance






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42nd Annual Awards & Hunter's Convention

*Friday & Saturday
February 25 & 26, 2022*

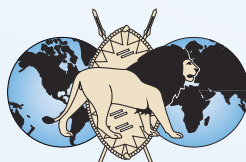
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Friday, February 25, 2022

Membership/Outfitters Celebration!

Drawing for a Hunt

*to be given to someone in attendance
Must be a member to attend and to win!
(Memberships for sale at the door.)*

Doors Open at 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, February 26, 2022

- ***Open to public from 10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.***
(\$5 admission)
- ***Evening Auction (Tickets Required)***
- ***Progressive Silent Auction***



Tentative List of Outfitters and Vendors 2022 Convention

- Balam Outfitters
- Baldy Mountain Outfitters
- Baranof Expeditions LLC.
- Bell Wildlife Specialties
- Carter Outfitting LTD.
- Cascade Furs
- Central Coast Outfitters
- Cork & Ale
- Dan, Dan the Mattress Man
- Fejes Guide Service, LTD.
- Fish Hunt Charters
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- Tails-A-Waggin'
- Total Outdoors Adventures
- White River Knife & Tool
- Wildlife Gallery
- Wildlife Legends Taxidermy
- Windy Ridge Outfitters
- World Class Whitetails

Chapter Board Training

by Autumn Gonda

The weekend of July 16th-19th Mid-Michigan SCI board members Abbe Mulders, Brandon Jurries, Janis Ransom and Autumn Gonda attended an SCI training seminar held at Lazy CK Ranch in Hunt, Texas. They were joined by other chapter members from around the state of Michigan and the country. The weekend included leadership training and team building.



Janis learning about archery from Will.



Fellow attendees under the pavilion waiting for one of the team building activities to start. Pictured are John and Mike from the Flint Chapter and Cory from the Utah Chapter.



Joe Pederson on the electric bike being photographed by Mia during the Quiet Kat electric bike demonstration.



This large area at the lodge was used for down time and team building. Pictured here are some of the attendees receiving training from Mark Stewart of the Georgia Chapter.



Mia Anstine(4 corners chapter) and Autumn going on a ranch tour.

Walleye Fishing on Saginaw Bay

By Mary Harter

In May, Don, myself, our son Todd and Tracy Bennett fished with Dale Megie and had a wonderful time. This trip was booked at our Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI fundraiser. Dale was booked out through the summer but Don left with the understanding that Dale would call if he had any cancellations. Well, Dale called on August 3 to say that fishing was good and he had a cancellation for that Thursday.

On August 5, 2021, Don along with Tim Schafer, Dennis Tilmann, and Ron Graham traveled to Au Gres to meet up with Dale Megie of Reel Rumors Sport Fishing Charters for a day on the Saginaw Bay walleye fishing. They arrived at 6:00 a.m. and out they went on his King Fisher boat docked at the Au Gres Yacht Club Marina.



It is fun fishing with Dale because he lets you bait the hooks, set out the lines with the planer boards, and tend the poles when you get a hit. Dale has fished this area most of his life and knows the waters well.

Fishing was slow for the first three hours and they tried several of Dale's favorite hot spots. Then they went over near the Charity Islands and started getting hits and bringing in walleyes. In a couple of hours, they landed 24 walleyes, beauties as you can see in their picture.

Everyone had a great time and booked again for next year. You can also plan a trip by calling Dale at 989-915-3312 or check out his business card within this magazine and website, www.reelrumors.com. Call him now for next year as he gets booked out early.



Denim and Diamonds Event

By Mary Harter

On Saturday, July 31, Abbe Mulders, Autumn Gonda, and Mary Harter traveled to Frankenmuth to attend a Ladies Night Out, Party for a Cause! to benefit the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Chairman of this event was our newest board member, Lori Card. The evening's theme was "Denim and Diamonds" as you can see from our picture.

Baskets of goodies were raffled off with Abbe winning one and Autumn was high bidder on three silent auction items. Auction items included jewelry, home décor, fishing trips, grouse hunts, a canoe trip, and many more hunting and fishing items.

Next year's event will take place on Saturday, July 30, 2022 with the theme being "Margaritaville". Hope some more of our ladies can attend.





Conservation Affairs

*Compiled from the DNR website and
submitted by Autumn Gonda*



CONSERVATION CORNER

Precaution About Lead in Venison

Deer that are shot with rifle bullets containing lead, particularly copper-jacketed and hollow-point bullets, can have particles of lead remaining in the meat, some too small to be seen or felt.

Lead can be harmful to humans, even in very low amounts. Children under seven years old and pregnant women are at the greatest risk from lead exposure.

The following suggestions can minimize potential exposure to lead in venison:

- Remind your meat processor to, or if you process your own venison, trim a generous distance away from the wound channel and discard any meat that is bruised, discolored or contains hair, dirt or bone fragments.

- Avoid consuming internal organs.
- Practice marksmanship and outdoor skills to get closer, cleaner, lethal shots away from major muscle areas (don't shoot running deer).
- Consider alternative non-lead ammunition such as copper or others that have high-weight retention.

If you have questions about the health effects of lead exposure from lead shot or lead fragments, call the Michigan DNR Wildlife Disease Lab at 517-336-5030 and/or look through the information on the DNR website at Michigan.gov/WDM. You may also contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800-648-6942 or visit Michigan.gov/MDHHS.

CWD Testing

The DNR is beginning a five-year process of strategic, focused CWD surveillance around the state. In 2021, surveillance occurred mainly in the southernmost 3 tiers of counties. Over the next four years, the remainder of the state will be systematically sampled to determine if CWD is present in other parts of the state where it has not yet been identified.

In 2021, the DNR needed deer heads from Allegan, Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Eaton, Gratiot, southern Isabella, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kalamazoo, Lenawee, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, St. Joseph, Washtenaw and Wayne counties, and also from the core CWD surveillance area in the Upper Peninsula (portions of Dickinson, Menominee and Delta counties) for CWD surveillance.

This fall, hunters that came in for disease testing were asked to bring only deer heads to check stations, removing them ahead of time, if possible. Those who wanted to keep the antlers were asked to remove those from the head but bring the antlers so that antler measurements could be taken. Also, the DNR staff wanted the location where the deer was harvested including the county, township, range and section.

If you harvested a deer outside of these areas or time frame but still would like it tested for CWD (for a fee). The Michigan DNR has confirmed two USDA-approved Laboratories willing to accept deer samples directly from hunters; Michigan State University Diagnostic Laboratory and the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

Please be aware that test results may require additional processing. Available results will be posted at Michigan.gov/DNRLab. If CWD is found in a submitted deer, the hunter will be notified by phone. If CWD is not found, the test result will be posted online.



White-tailed Deer Population in Michigan Upper Peninsula Predator-Prey Project

Submitted by Mary Browning

Jon Zieman asked if I would attend this meeting to celebrate the culmination of a decade of the Michigan Predator-Prey Project. Below is a summary of this meeting by Joe Goergen, Scif Conservation Manager.

By Joe Goerge - SCIF Conservation Manager

SCI leaders and other interested conservation stakeholders from across Michigan met on Saturday, August 21st, at the amazing Legends Ranch in Bitley, MI, to celebrate the culmination of a decade of the Michigan Predator-Prey Project.

The day's agenda was emceed by Jim Hammill, SCIF's past Conservation Committee Chair, retired MDNR biologist, wolf expert, and forester. Highlighted presentations were given by Drs. Dean Beyer, retired MDNR biologist, and Jerry Belant, now at SUNY-ESF, covering the scope of this massive three-phased study and its major research findings over 10-plus years of field work.

The project ultimately found that winter habitat quality rather than wolf predation is the driving factor of white-tailed deer population declines in the Upper Peninsula. Since then, we've initiated

a winter habitat improvement program with willing landowners led by forester Stu Boren—a perfect example of SCIF investments leading to on-the-ground management. These implications are applicable to deer range across the upper Midwest and Northeast in areas with heavy snowfall and a full suite of predators. Funding for this flagship project came from all different levels of Safari Club International and SCI Foundation including large grants from the Foundation and contributions from local SCI Chapters via the Michigan Involvement Committee. A total of some \$750,000 was used to leverage a 3 to 1 match from PR funds through the Michigan DNR.

While the team is still analyzing millions of data points and making recommendations, the project has been the MDNR's most productive ever in terms of scientific publications. Several M.S. and Ph.D. students and hundreds of wildlife technicians gained invaluable training and experience. This project, which lives on through these biologists and the ongoing habitat work, has given SCI a high profile in the state of Michigan.

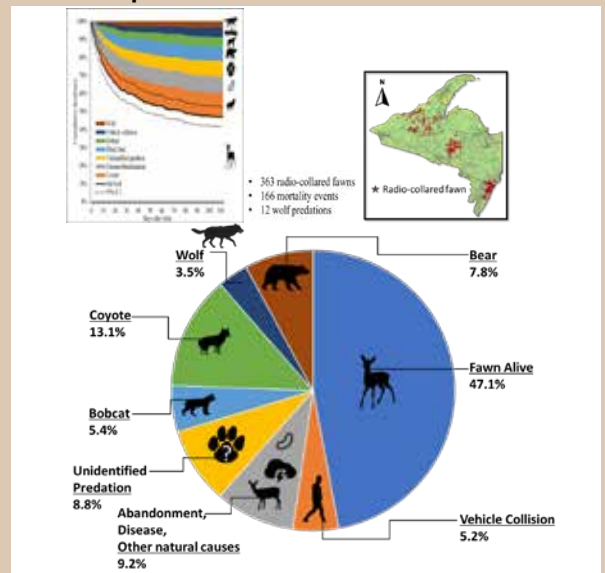
The event also included an introduction to SCIF's new strategic approach to its conservation mission and an overview of our new CWD risk modeling effort by Dr.



Aniruddha Belsare from Emory University. We hope this new project will be a useful tool to state agencies in evaluating the effectiveness of policy decisions related to baiting, carcass transportation, and other hunting activities.

The group in attendance shared stories from time spent in the field around the campfire, raised a glass to such a successful project, and enjoyed the incredible Legends Ranch's Wildlife Center.

Fates of white-tailed deer fawns, 16 weeks post-birth



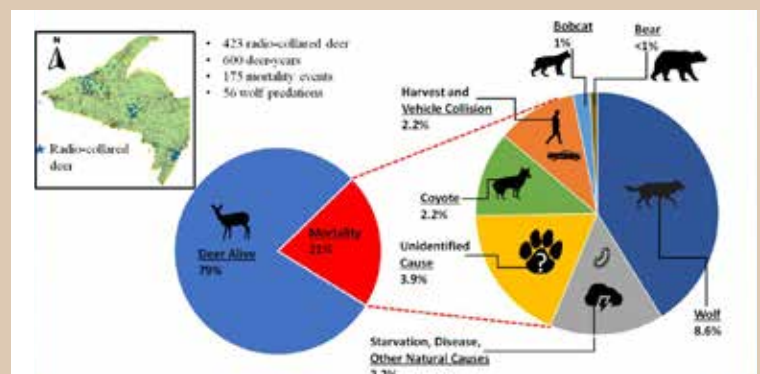
Role of predators, winter weather, and habitat on white-tailed deer fawn survival in Michigan

Presented by Drs. Dean Beyer, retired MDNR biologist, and Jerry Belant, now at SUNY-ESF

From the perspective of the four predators, bears, wolves, coyotes, and bobcats, we are trying to estimate the rate at which individuals of each species, kill fawns. Then by combining this information with the abundance of those predators and the abundance of deer we can get an idea of the importance of predation by the various species to the deer population.

In addition, because we know from previous research that both weather and habitat are important factors affecting deer populations we are also gathering information on these factors.

Annual fates of adult female white-tailed deer



A RIO GOOD HUNT

By Josh Christensen

"You're going all the way to Oklahoma for a turkey?" I heard that sentiment many times over the past year when I would tell people my plan to head west to hunt Rio Grande turkeys. I also explained on many occasions there are several subspecies of turkey, with Michigan being home to the eastern turkey. Probably my favorite interaction when telling a friend I was going to Oklahoma to hunt Rio turkeys, was when he asked me, "Don't we have real turkeys here?"

The idea for this hunt was hatched from our time in quarantine due to Covid-19. In the spring of 2020 I had an ample amount of time to concentrate on turkey hunting. I found my time in the outdoors even more enjoyable and while listening to the spring woods come alive I had the thought that it might be enjoyable and challenging to hunt the other subspecies of turkeys. That season, in the spring of 2020, I was able to harvest my largest eastern turkey and my wife Sara was also lucky enough to bag her first turkey.

The idea of hunting the other subspecies stayed with me for a few months and then I began to research outfitters for the different hunts. It didn't take me long to decide on my first out of state turkey hunt. In August I sent my deposit to Ruff Creek Outfitters in Oklahoma to pursue the Rio Grande turkey.

According to the Nation Wild Turkey Federation hunters can try to attain the Grand Slam of turkeys which includes the eastern, the Osceola, the Rio Grande and the Merriam's turkeys. There are two additional turkeys that can be added for the World Slam. These are the Gould's and the ocellated. When I saw there were six different kinds of turkeys to hunt I decided if I was able to I'd like to try to hunt them all.

In April of 2021 I was heading southwest to Oklahoma to try to begin my quest. After two days of driving and having lunch with my brother and his wife in Oklahoma City I arrived in the small town of Thomas, Oklahoma where I met my guide, Chuck, for the three-day hunt. Chuck is the father of the owner of Ruff Creek Outfitters and is a passionate predator hunter and a great people person.

Shortly after I arrived that first day Derrick, the owner of the outfit, called his dad and told him he spotted a long beard in a bottom on one of their leased properties. (The "bottoms" as they call them are river bottoms or lower areas where trees grow.) Chuck and I jumped in his truck and drove a ways to get to the property to see if the tom was still there. As we drove around the property to get to the bottom I spotted two turkeys in a wheat field next to the bottom. We



stopped the truck to glass them and they took off out of the field and ran away from us. That was all she wrote for our turkey hunting that night. We did stop at another property to see if we could locate any birds going to the roost before dark, but didn't see any.

The next morning, we were up well before the sun and started a drive to another bottom on a property we could hunt. This bottom was over a mile long and quite deep. When we arrived at the bottom it was still dark, with the sun not even showing any color in the eastern sky. We waited a while then I got out and hit the owl call, in hopes we could locate some birds by their shock gobble. We didn't hear anything so Chuck figured the birds

must have roosted on the other end of the bottom so we drove through the property to the opposite end and hit the owl call again, with no answers.

By now the sun was pushing its' rays of light up in the east, painting the sky a unique shade of orange. We made our way to the middle of the bottom, half way between the two edges we already were, and Chuck used his box call to make a few yelps. Off in the distance, across the bottom, we heard the gobble of what sounded like a lone bird. We started to devise a plan for me to venture down the bottom and up the other side to try to call in the gobbler when Chuck noticed two vehicles about two miles away approaching another part of the bottom from the neighboring property.

When these two vehicles stopped four hunters got out and headed into the bottom from their part of the property about a mile away. Chuck didn't like the idea of me going in there and all of us possibly working the same bird so we decided to leave and try other locations.

The rest of the morning consisted of us drive from property to property looking for birds and calling from the road when we came across accessible bottoms. During our travels we spied a tom with four hens and later in another area a tom with seven hens, but neither group were on properties we could hunt although one was across the road from where we had access. Later that morning we stop at the property across the road from where we saw one of the two toms and I went down into the bottom to call and slowly work my way through it, with no success.

After lunch, we went right back out and I worked another property. I walked slowly and called every 75 to 100 yards and listened for a response. This property was around 250 acres and had a creek flowing through it where giant trees grew, a couple fields of varying size and some railroad tracks.

Chuck dropped me off at one end and I worked the creek bottom and fields, but once again had no luck.

Around 3:30 we started driving around from property to property again (the area we covered from all of the properties was an area close to 25 miles by 25 miles in two counties). As we went, we would stop each time one of us saw a bird so we could glass the bird and see if it was a tom or not. We ended up stopping at three different properties as we spotted three different birds, but each was a lone hen so we moved on.

As we were heading to another of their properties, this one had an old barn about 40 yards off the road, I caught a quick glimpse of a strutting tom and some hens behind the barn. I said, "There's a tom!" and Chuck stopped the truck to see where I was looking. When he stopped the truck, he put the barn directly between us and the tom. Chuck inquired as to where the bird was and I told him the tom was right behind the barn and to stay where he was as I tried to use the barn for cover.

I quickly and quietly got out of the truck, put on my camo face mask and gloves, grabbed my shotgun and my MOJO Tail Chaser Max and began to walk toward the barn. (For those not familiar with this MOJO product it is an accessory where the hunter can attach a turkey fan to the shotgun barrel via a clamp.) I stayed roughly 30 yards from the barn, which was roughly 40' by 60' with the 40' section closest to the road, and crouched behind my shotgun with the fan and walked parallel to the side of the barn and the road to try to get around the barn and see the tom.

As I crept along I noticed this old barn was constructed of wood planks and over the years several had fallen off due to its' age. Then I noticed at one point I could see the tom and he could see me. We were about 60 to 70 yards from each other with the barn between us. He was no



longer strutting and when he saw the fan with me behind it he put his head straight into the air. Any time I have ever had a turkey take this pose when walking in the woods he or she would usually start running away, so I was worried this would happen again.

As I continued along my paralleling path I continued to see the tom from time to time where a wood plank would be missing. It was almost like a game of peek-a-boo. When I finally cleared the barn, the tom had paralleled with me on the other side of the barn and was in a full strut. When he saw the turkey fan on my shotgun he did a double take then charged at me for about 10 yards before he came to an abrupt stop and began to strut again about 50 yards from me. I crept a few yards closer and dropped to a knee for a possible shot. My guess is now (in hindsight) that his charge and strut was a challenge and my creeping forward a few yards was accepting his challenge because as I dropped to one knee the tom came at me on a dead run. He was literally charging me.

At this point Chuck could see the bird bearing down on me and he later told me he was thinking, "Shoot! Shoot! Why isn't he shooting? Oh is he going to try to catch this bird?" When the tom was at 20 yards I squeezed the trigger and he ended up doing a back flip as his momentum carried his bottom half toward me, but the 2 1/8 ounces of lead from my Winchester XR Long Beard round sent his top half back the way he was coming.

When I walked up on this old tom I was truly amazed. He was the biggest bird I had ever taken and after looking at his spurs I figured he was the oldest as well. My decoy was not the first bird my tom had fought that spring for the right to keep his hens. The old warrior was missing two tail feathers from what I guessed was another skirmish.

After taking pictures and reliving the story over and over again we took the bird back to Chuck's place and I processed him before we headed back out. In Oklahoma two turkeys are allowed in the spring season as long as they are taken in different counties. Chuck knew of a property fairly close to his place that could hold some birds. It didn't take us long to get to this new location, but to get back to the bottom we had to drive close to a mile and a half on the farmers two tracks. Once we got close, we edged our way over the rolling hills toward a small grass covered field containing two big oak trees with river bottom trees on two sides and open fields on two

sides. We approached from one of the fields and notices as we came over a rise there were several toms strutting in the field. We eased forward and out of sight of the field and Chuck stopped his truck.

We were still over 400 yards from the field so I told Chuck to stay there with the truck and I would get my shotgun and fan decoy and continue up the two track and then drop over the top of the hill on the field and see if I could get a tom to investigate. Chuck thought I should use the draw we were in to move down by the bottom and then move toward the field. I decide to try the draw approach. Unfortunately, the grass in the draw and that entire field leading up to the green grass field the birds were in consisted of old straw-like grass and I sounded more like a heard of buffalo than a turkey. Needless to say, by the time I made my way to the small grass field the turkeys were gone.

I decided to give a couple yelps and from the bottom of the river bottom I hear a gobble, and it was close. I quickly made my way to the edge of the field and peered down into the bottom and saw two very nervous toms scurrying left and right, not quite sure if they wanted to fly over the river in the bottom. I tried to quickly get set up for a shot and unfortunately rushed it at close to 60 yards (a shot I had practiced with my shotgun and am confident in). I missed the bird and both toms flew away. So, I messed up the stalk, but this field had me excited because of the way it sat far back on this property and it appeared to be a perfect location for birds to mill around in out of sight from the surrounding area and out of the wind.

The next morning, we were up early and I was dropped off near that small field well before it was light. I set up, with my back against, one of the large oak trees in the small grass field and began to wait. After twenty minutes I could start to see objects in the trees around me. They weren't turkeys, but instead two barred owls. A few moments later one hooted followed by the other. After one hooted again, off in the distance around 200 yards to the southeast I heard the sound I had come for. Multiple gobblers let loose and the morning began to come alive. Birds of all kinds began making noise, with the toms gobbling again and again in the cool spring air.

When I felt the birds were coming off the roost I gave a few quiet yelps in hopes of drawing the toms into the field. Every five minutes or so I would do a combination of calls, with the toms answering many of the times. After twenty minutes to a

half hour of this I heard the gobbles further away. And for the next thirty minutes I heard the flock move further and further away. I surmised later that my calling made the hens in the flock decide not to visit the field because they didn't like other birds already being there (this was a case of overcalling). I stayed on the field for several more hours in hopes a tom would visit, but one never did.

While sitting against the oak tree looking over the field, watching and feeling the warmth of the day starting to arrive with the rising of the sun, I began to scheme a new plan for this field. I decided I would talk with Chuck about putting up the pop-up blind I brought and sitting on the field for the rest of the day. I was confident from my own experiences back in Michigan and the advice of a turkey hunting friend (Pat) that these birds would visit this field before the day was through.

On our way back to Chuck's house I explained my plan, but Chuck seemed a little hesitant to go along with it. You see, most of the guys from this outfit are deer hunters and you wouldn't want to put a pop-up blind on a field you were planning to hunt that night because deer wouldn't be comfortable with the blind for a week or so. Turkeys on the other hand, they could care less as long as the blind isn't moving. After a little bit of convincing Chuck agreed to let me put up the blind and hunt from it the rest of the day.

After packing a lunch and putting up the blind I settled in for my opportunity around 1:00. This day was to be the warmest day of my hunt with the temperatures topping out around 85 degrees which unfortunately meant the temperatures in my pop-up blind would go well above that. For this set up I placed my blind backed up to a brush pile between the two large oak trees in the field the turkeys were in the night before. At this location my furthest shot to the south (the main direction I was facing) was 55 yards, the furthest shot to the east and west was around 35 yards. I also decided to use decoys, but put them to the west at the edge of the green field and the noisy grass field

on the recommendation of Pat. Pat told me one of two things would happen if I put out decoys; either the birds would come straight to them to investigate or they would stay at the other end of the field because the decoys were unfamiliar birds.

Every twenty minutes I would quietly call to see if I could pull a gobbler out of the bottom. At 2:20 just before I was to call I spotted two turkeys in the field to the southeast. These birds were both hens and over the course of the next two and a half hours I watched them walk around the field eating grasshoppers and other bugs. For the first hour and a half these hens stayed as far from the decoys as possible, but after that amount of time they must have figured my decoys were okay and fed to that side of the field also. As I was watching the hens the temperatures inside the blind were getting quite warm and I was beginning to wish I had worn shorts instead of my camouflage hunting pants.

Just before 5:00 I spied another bird, a bigger bird, in the southeast corner of the field. This bird was a large hen who clucked once to let the other hens know she was there. These three birds fed in the southeast corner of the field, avoiding the decoys again.

When 5:15 rolled around I heard my first gobble of the sit. Far off to the north I heard a tom sound off. He must have been close to 400 yards away. Shortly after this tom gobbled I heard another couple of birds call out to my east. These birds also sounded like they were at least 400 yards away. Roughly every five minutes these birds would let out gobbles. Although they were far away I was optimistic they would arrive at the little field I was set up on before they roosted. Sometime around 5:30 in the chorus of gobbles a new group made themselves known. These toms were much closer, around 200 yards, to my southwest.

These new birds would sound off, like the others, every five minutes or so, however I could tell these toms were working



their way closer with every gobble. I guessed their distance at 200 yards, with their first gobble, but only 150 yards with their next they were coming. When they were set to gobble next the big boss hen on the field let out a yelp to let all birds in the area know she was at the field and when she did this the toms to the southwest gobbled at about 100 yards. These birds sounded like they would be on the field within minutes.

Five minutes passed and the toms from the groups sounded off again. This time the ones to my southwest were right across the river bottom. All I needed them to do now was cross over the river and come visit the hens that were still to my southeast. I waited anxiously for the birds to show up. Five minutes passed with no sight of the toms. The birds to my north and east called in their locations, but the ones to my southwest remained silent. I began to worry they decided to move on further south. Another five minutes passed and then I saw two tank sized toms come strutting into view right next to the hens. I quickly glassed the birds and saw they were both nice big toms and ranged them at 52 yards.

I knew I could make that shot, but the voice in the back of my head told me to wait, because they should come closer and offer me a better shot. I also didn't want to shoot a bird in full strut. With their head tucked back into their feathers it is a smaller

target. I prefer to shoot a tom when his feathers are relaxed and his head is up providing me with a much larger target with his long neck exposed.

As I was planning my shot these toms continued to stay in full strut. The two smaller hens that arrived first must have decided they didn't want anything to do with the toms as they both decided to leave the field and head toward the bottom to my east. The larger hen stayed in the field and began to move from the southeast to the east providing me a great shot if the toms followed her path.

I quickly ranged the large hen at 30 yards and the toms following her were at 42 yards. I put my range finder down and slowly and quietly slipped the barrel of my shotgun out the shooting hole in my pop-up blind. I placed my Truglo red dot on the toms and waited for one of them to stop strutting and put

his head up. I'm not sure what prompted them to do what they did next, but I am grateful they did. Out of nowhere, the toms gobbled in unison. Immediately after the gobble one of the two toms went straight back into full strut, whereas the other tom stayed in a relaxed posture. This was my opportunity. I moved my reticle to the spot where the neck connects with the head of the tom. As I did this he picked his head up providing me with a perfect shot opportunity. I squeezed off the shot and my second Rio Grande turkey went down.

After thanking God for this awesome opportunity and retrieving my bird I called Chuck to come back to this part of the property to pick me up. When Chuck arrived, I relived the experience and think I might have convinced him that the pop-up blinds are a good idea for turkeys if the setup calls for it. He mentioned he had a "feller" coming in next that didn't get around well and he might have to set up a blind where I did to give the guy an opportunity.



We took pictures and transported the turkey back to Chuck's place to process the bird. After this, I began to pack for the long journey back home. Once my truck was loaded with all of my gear and I was ready to start heading home, I shook Chuck's hand and thanked him for a "Rio" good time!

Editor's Notes: 1.) The use of the MOJO Tail Chaser Max described in this story is not legal to use in every state when pursuing turkeys. Be sure to check the regulations of the state you plan to hunt if you plan to use this method of hunting. 2.) The state of Oklahoma recently announced hunters are now only allowed to harvest one turkey during their spring hunting season.



DRAKE QUINCY DAWSON
2014 SCI North American Professional Hunter of the Year

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"Now then, get your weapons - your quiver and bow - and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me." - Genesis 27:3

EUROPEAN RED STAG HUNTS

by KEN LEHMAN



Enclosed photo taken mid October 1984 of Kenneth J. Lehman of Sheridan, Michigan. The trophy is a medium sized 12-pt European Red Stag. Hunter stayed at the Kru in Mou - Kru meaning hotel. Mou is a small town in north-east Denmark. Hunt was arranged by Ken's good friend, Bjorn Hedstrom of Boras, Sweden.

The stalking took place on a large private estate. The first two days hunting not a single animal was spotted in the dense forests. On the third day, there seemed to be a stag or hind behind every tree. The beasts begin roaring about the middle of September and best hunting time usually lasts until the middle of October.

The Swedish and Danish people are most kind to American guests. Ken plans a return trip to Denmark to look for a larger stag on the Lindenberg Estate this fall.

2nd photo taken fall of 1984 of European Red Stag which Ken took near the south-western corner of Poland. Ken's friend, Chris, on the left is a world-famous wildlife photographer from Warsaw. He acted as Ken's guide and interpreter. Hunt was booked by Diana of Denmark.



MY GRAND SLAM RAM

by Roger Card

After many days discussing with Pat Bollman, we decided to try for the Mexico Hunt of a lifetime.

I sent in my deposit for a Mexico Desert Ram Permit after the S.C.I. convention in Las Vegas, February, 1984.

Whenever Mexico hunting came up during the following year, I tried to ask questions, read books and all the hunting magazines I could get my hands on. Almost everything gave me the same conclusion - that this would be a real endurance run. The water would be bad, no food, weather from 110° to snow with no heat. I wouldn't be able to get the necessary permits and the language barrier would stop me from having a good hunting trip.

Well, in December, 1984, I received a telegram from Mexico, in Spanish, that I had received a Sheep Permit. After much looking and finding some friends who could read Spanish, it was determined that I was to hunt the Loreto, Baja Mexico area starting February 1, 1985, for 10 days.

I tried to get all the necessary Visa, and gun permits but was unable to get a Military Permit for my rifle. I tried to call several times to get information on what I had to do and what I needed to bring and where I was to go, etc., etc. but I always got someone speaking Spanish and couldn't communicate. I finally talked my hunting buddy, Larry Powell, into going with me for moral support. Just before I was to leave for the S.C.I. convention in Las Vegas on January 30, I got a call through to Mexico City and they told me to get to Loreto Airport and I would be met by someone.

Even at the S.C.I. convention, the other hunters told me about the problems with their Mexico hunts, sickness and loss of equipment.

My day finally came on February 1. I left Vegas for Los Angeles Airport to meet Larry. He was flying out from Michigan and bringing our sleeping bags and other gear. Larry was there but our duffle bags containing our sleeping bags had gone on to Hawaii via United Airlines.

We decided to go on to Loreto and hope they would send our bags on the next day.





We were met at the airport by two of my Mexican guides; they helped me with customs and showed me to the military man for my gun clearance. They suggested that we stay in Loreto at the local hotel for the first night so we could pick up the bags the next day.

After a little drink in the lounge, we hit the hay. The next day the two same guides picked us up. Our bags arrived and we went on to base camp. Sighted in the rifle, and met all the other guides, 8 total.

The next morning the 2nd day of my hunt, we all packed up and started the hike up into the mountains. We did a lot of glassing on the way up the mountain. It took us 7 hours to make the 5,000' plus top. They decided to make spike camp about 3:00 P.M. The main two guides went on ahead to look for sheep for the next morning's hunt. About 4:00 we spotted a ram on the skyline about 600 yards off. I was ready to pop a cap, but they said to wait. Then a second ram showed up. We just let them walk away. I hoped that wasn't all I would see.

About 5:00, I saw one of the guides on the next mountain waving for us to come. We all made a fast climb up to him. He told me that they had spotted two good rams already and wanted me to look. After a short rest, to get my wind back, we went on over the top to where the other guide was watching the rams. I tried to see the rams on the next ridge over but couldn't pick them out of the rocks. Then the guide takes my arm and pulls me up to the edge of the cliff we were on and pointed down. There was my ram only 80 yards; almost straight down. My heart rate picked up another 100 beats per minute.

Well, you all know me, with my steady hand and calm breathing I just slid into position and took careful aim, touched one off and shot right over his body. I couldn't believe I missed; but my second shot was true to the mark. I'm just glad the ram didn't move after the miss.

Larry and the other guides came running up after the second shot just in time to catch, on movie film, my ram sliding over the edge of the cliff he was on. We knew he went all the way down, maybe 1500 yards. But luck was with us again; he only went maybe 50 feet and landed on a ledge.

The guides pulled him back up, field dressed him and covered him up for the night. We had to get back to camp before dark or the cactus would fill our bodies full of pins.

The next morning we all went back up to the ram for capeing out and lots more pictures. This was the best ram shot from the Loreto Camp this season; mine was number 7. It scored right at 170 points, 35½ length with 16" bases.

Larry did an excellent job of filming our trip and him being along for companionship was the best part. We have a 15 minute sound movie that will be shown at our chapter meeting in the near future.

I am having my ram mounted half life size. The place in my trophy room will look real good with him in the center and the three shoulder mounts of my other grand slam rams surrounding him. This makes number 24 on my list for all 27 different trophies.

MAINE MOOSE HUNT

by CHRIS CHASE

October 7 - 14, 1984

Maine

Jan and Chris Chase

56" Moose 22 pts.

SCI score for Eastern Canada moose - 182 2/8. Pretty high when the new book comes out.

796# field dressed.

8.5 years old.

One shot from 270 caliber. Chris used his 375 caliber. One of the most fun and beautiful hunts I've ever been on.

P.S. Would help to speak French.



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"If we have the attitude that it's going to be a great day it usually is." - Catherine Pulsifier

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Reponses to: Who or what got you into hunting?

☛ My dad took me hunting birds and then took me on my first hunt for a warthog when I was five years old and from there I was hooked and am still loving what I do as a P.H. – **Tommie Steele of Marupa Safaris**

☛ I got into hunting through the stories of my grandfather. As a boy I would listen intently to the tales of his days afield. I can remember many of those stories still to this day. I attribute my initial interest in hunting to his enthusiasm and love for the sporting life. – **Chad Donahue**

☛ My dad was a hunter - mostly deer & pheasants. He mostly hunted on State Land or farms that were around our house. I remember when he would get a deer, his recipe for liver & onions was super tasty - my brother & I loved it - my mom wouldn't touch it though!

I did not hunt with him, but saw his joy when he went and hunted with the guys, and then my brother. When Joe and I were dating, he and his dad began hunting with my dad and it got to be a family affair.

My one and only trophy was a Mule deer that I shot in Montana when I won a Mid-Michigan SCI raffle for the trip. It was an exciting moment - mainly because I proved I could 'bag the buck' with one shot. It ran about 25 feet and dropped dead! - **Abbe Mulders**

☛ My late Father. I remember at a very early age going out to hunt pheasant, rabbit, squirrel and especially deer. One of those years, at around 8-10 years old, I remember falling asleep in the deer blind, barely breaking enough shooting light, and was awakened by my dad whispering... "There is a deer right there looking at us"... then, hearing the gun go off and being completely thrilled at the rush of the whole event. Dad was never an extremely successful hunter if you're judging by trophies. If you're looking at putting meat on the table... he was the guy! To this day, at 53, I still keep that little bag of Ginger Snaps in my backpack and think of him every time I reach for one. My children do it and now... my grandsons will too. Just one example of the small, but deeply important things handed down while hunting. Thanks Dad! – **Kevin Chamberlain**

☛ All of the men in my family hunted from my grandfather, father and uncle and I went along with them until I was old enough to carry a weapon of my own on the hunt. – **Ron Browning**

☛ My husband Chris got me started. Basically he was going on a hunt every year and I could go along or stay home alone. What a blessing it has been. – **Shari Agle**

☛ What or who got me into hunting? I would have to say it was myself, although my Dad would go once a year to deer camp, he didn't really hunt. He went to be with his friends and enjoy nature. My Dad would go into the woods, sit all day and then come back and tell everyone what he saw but never really had the heart to harvest a deer.

☛ I wasn't raised in a hunting family. I was raised on a farm in rural Michigan. Our farm was close to a 30 mile round trip from the school and my parents weren't able to coordinate the logistics for me to play sports. My Dad encouraged me to hunt and enjoy the farm setting primarily because he didn't want to work around sports and schedules. I grabbed onto it, read every outdoor magazine I could get my hands on. Jack O'Conner and Elmer Keith were my heroes.

I pretty much hunted on my own and learned by trial and error. Rabbits, grouse and pheasants were what occupied most of my time and the hunting was great for small game then. Today deer and other big game account for most of my time, but I'm happy I had a father that would let me run out of the barn with my 20 gauge because I was hearing a pheasant rooster cackling. I know my Father never understood my affliction with hunting but he was always happy the farm was the root of the love of the sport. – **Doug Chapin**

For me, I saw hunting as a way to fill the freezer, a way to get out of the house, and a way to be closer to God. Where ever I hunt I always look at God's creation and try to take it all in. Weather it's in Montana where I am currently elk hunting or in South Africa hunting Cape buffalo.

In conclusion I guess I have to say there are many reasons why I hunt and what got me into hunting. Hunting has taken me all over the world and has brought many friends from those places. I wouldn't trade my experiences for the world, God is good. – **Brandon Jurries**

NEW
QUESTION:

Many of our readers have hunted in multiple places around the world. Maybe you've hunted the open plains of Africa, the tundra of Greenland or Alaska, the Outback of Australia or maybe you've never felt the need to hunt anywhere outside of Michigan. I think our readers would be interested to know...

Where is your favorite place to hunt and why?

Write in and let us know. Submit your answer to jchappyfish@gmail.com and look for it in our next issue of the Front Sight magazine.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Reponses to: Who or what got you into hunting?

☛ What got me into hunting? Nothing and everything; hunting was an everyday part of life where I grew up. I came from a town in predominately rural western North Dakota with much of my extended family involved in agriculture. There was no intentional thought or aha moment of becoming a hunter. One big difference at the time compared to Michigan was we did not have a hunting camp. We also did not build blinds for rifle hunting, rather used posters and drives in shelter belts, sloughs, and draws. We would drive to the hunting area from our house or a family/friend's place. I became more intentional in hunting after I returned from a stint in the Army. Eventually, I ended up as a SCI Chapter President. — **Jon Zieman**

☛ My uncle Randy got me into hunting. When I was a kid my dad never hunted, but my uncle did. My uncle would stop by our house after his hunts at my grandparents' farm and give details as to how his evening sit in the woods went. He took me bow hunting with him when I around twelve. I enjoyed sitting in the tree with him watching the woods come alive all around me. Later that year he took me rifle hunting and I was able to witness the excitement of him harvesting a large doe, and to top it off he took me small game hunting. From that point on I was hooked. — **Josh Christensen**

☛ I am reminiscing back over 50 years to when I began hunting. I was 25, expecting our son, Todd, and Don, my husband, asked me if I would like to go out hunting with him. Well, why not? I thought it would be nice to spend some time in the woods enjoying the out of doors, and I did! I sat on a hollow log and a fox tried to run through it. When he saw me, he did a 180 and ran away. But I was hooked and have hunted ever since.

The first deer is always the hardest and after I shot one Don came over to see how I was doing and just had one comment. He usually took off his watch first before gutting a deer so it wouldn't get bloody.

My father always hunted small game, ducks, birds, and deer but he went out either alone or with other guys. Not that many women hunted back when my husband started. My father did teach me to shoot. Guns were always around and available and I could shoot a predator, if necessary. My father was pleased when I started dating Don as he had someone to take hunting.

I grew up watching Michigan Outdoors with my father. It was always exciting when he came home from deer camp and watching him skin a deer. I always helped with the wild meat processing and knew how to skin a rabbit or pheasant and help cut up a deer. My mother always cooked whatever my father brought home.

But, be careful what you ask for. When doing all the hunting out of the country as we have, when your wife also hunts, it costs twice as much. — **Mary Harter**



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Sharing Some Good Cookin'!

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From Sara Christensen

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**One package of nestle toll house
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(the break apart squares, the package
has 24 cookies in it)

**24 reese's PB cups, the miniature cups
mini muffin pan**

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees.
2. Grease your muffin pan then place one
cookie in each cavity of the muffin pan.
3. Bake for 10 minutes.

4. While the cookies are baking unwrap 24 PB
cups.
5. When the cookies are done, remove from
oven and QUICKLY smush one peanut butter
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Makes 24 cookies



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