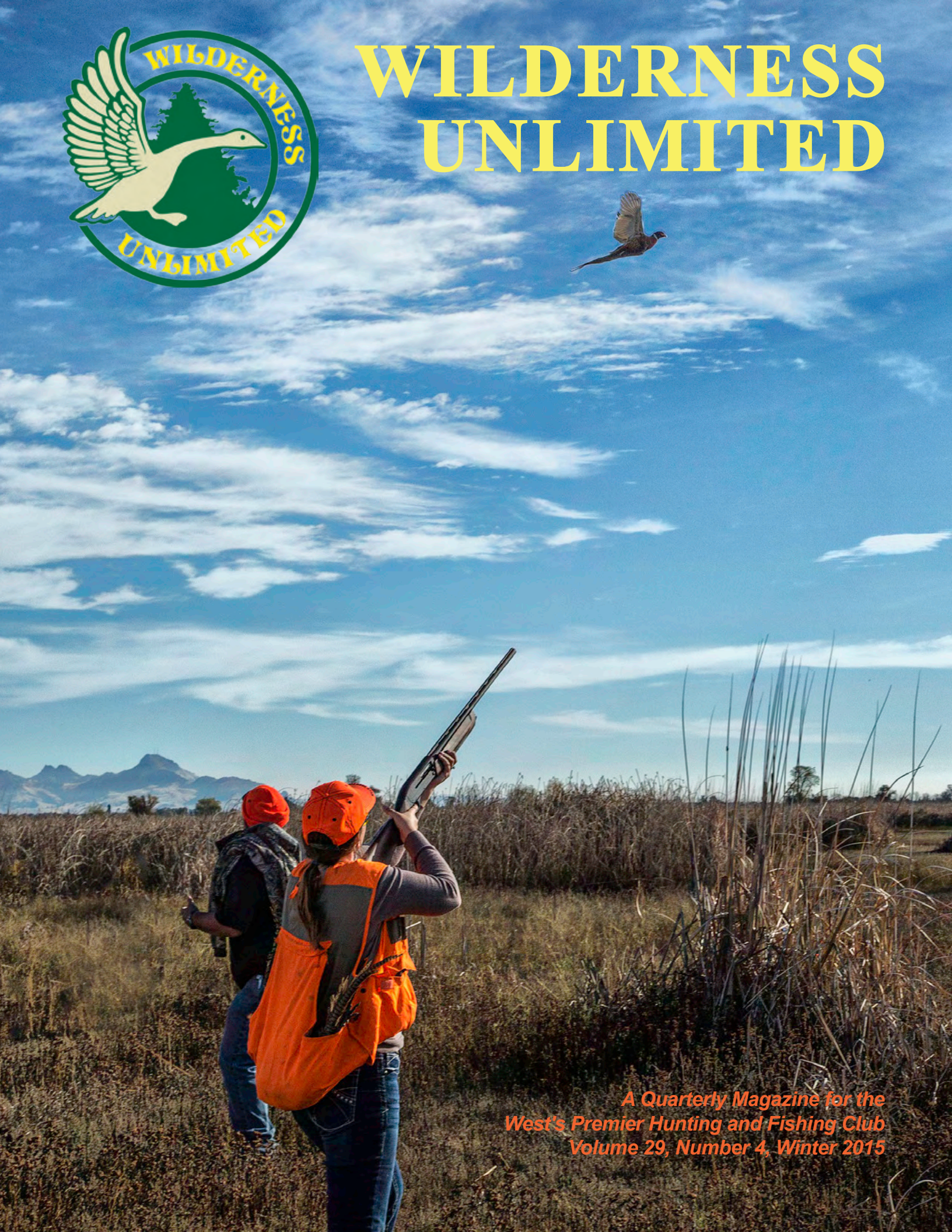
WILDERNESS UNLIMITED



A Quarterly Magazine for the
West's Premier Hunting and Fishing Club
Volume 29, Number 4, Winter 2015

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***Cover Photo* by Doug Ridgway**

Dates to Remember

December

6 Fall Turkey Season Closes

14 WU Staff Holiday Party
Reservations Open at 10 am,
Closed 12 - 3 pm

WU wishes you and your loved ones a Happy and Fulfilling Holiday Season that continues reverberating on throughout the New Year!

Office Hours:
Christmas Eve, December 24th Open for Reservations 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Christmas Day, December 25th Office Closed MERRY CHRISTMAS!
New Year's Eve, December 31st Open for Reservations 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
January 1, 2016, Office Closed HAPPY NEW YEAR!
Normal Saturday Office Hours Resume on the Saturdays following Christmas and New Year's Day.

See 2016 Calendar

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Makin' a List

By Rick E. Martin

At my age I can get away with buying something for myself and then act all surprised on Christmas Morning. If you can safely take that approach, great. Or you can go old school and get someone else to buy what you have in mind. Maybe one of the following new products just might make your twice-checked list.

Redington Fly Rods have long been innovative. They were one of the first to offer the "no fault" guarantee for their rods. Boasting a new medium-fast action rod that is the lightest series of rods in its class it is called Hydrogen.

At $300, Benjamin's performance and value is a combination that this company is known for. This rod will be a pleasure to cast with little effort. Line weights run from 2-6wt. and rods that range between 7.5-11 feet in length. Check 'em out at: http://www.redington.com/fly-fishing-rods/hydrogen/

Also from Redington is the new Prowler Boot Sticky Rubber. This is a wading boot that has a modern look and is built to be durable. It also is constructed with quick drying and quick draining synthetic materials. The sole has a wider base for added stability. This promises to be a premium wading boot priced at $150. Take a look: http://www.redington.com/fly-fishing-waders/footwear/mens/prowler-boot-rubber/

Rio products has a new fly line recently released named the LightLine. It was named Best New Freshwater Fly Line at the International Fly Tackle Dealers show. This line is designed to load slower for more traditional action fly rods like bamboo and fiberglass. It's available in 2-6 weight rods and is offered in a weight forward and double tapers, colors are in ivory and brown. http://www.rioproducts.com/blog/rio-offers-the-lightline-for-soft-action-fly-rods/

CastMate Systems offers a series of products for fly fishing or fishing with conventional gear in Float Tubes, Pontoon Boats and Kayaks. They offer support items like rod holders, camera mounts, cup holders, fish finders, lighting etc. This versatile system provides a frame and straps that will custom fit on most floatation devices. Then you are able to design your own configuration with attachments to fit your needs. They also offer a new product called the FishEye Camera Jig for underwater video.
CastMate systems, is WU member owned. For Christmas they are offering 15% off and free shipping.
View their website at: http://teamfishco.com/

Lastly from Sport Bumper is a magnetic device that attaches to the side of your vehicle to hold your rod or gun in place while you're gearing up. Especially on windy days or just while I'm getting organized at my truck to do what is on tap for the day, I often do not have a good spot to place my fly rod or gun. This product simply solves the issue. The Sportsman Bumper is only $19.99. See this product at: http://sportbumper.com/collections/frontpage/products/sportsman-bumper

Questions, comments? Email Rick at rickephoto@comcast.net. See his website at: www.rickemartinphoto.com

Welcome 2016

By Rick Copeland

Wilderness Unlimited is approaching the completion of our 29th year on February 29, 2016. Or March 1 will begin our 30th year!

Either way you look at it, it has been a long and wonderful ride. And a great one. Whether we are good, lucky or just stubborn, we have weathered a lot over the years including the climate. Members mostly appreciate our efforts. WU has a dedicated, hard working staff.

We have been blessed with members sharing their stories, many of which are in this issue, and will continue to do so throughout the year. In fact, we have so many that some had to be set aside until the next issue. You will find the 2016 Member Calendar which forecasts many seasons and dates for the next year and highlights member's photos and successes from the past year as well. New this year, we are combining California and Oregon into one Calendar. Keep the stories about your memories coming because they are always appreciated.

Part of WU's success has been adjusting with the times. With the addition of turkey and bear hunting in the fall and winter months, reservation clarity regarding "do'" and "don'ts" around pig and upland game have become burdensome for all. In an effort to better serve members, look at page 8 for a new way to handle reservations this Fall and Winter. Assuming this adjustment works, our "on line" Reservation program should be much easier to assimilate as well. For update, we are getting a lot closer for launching the on line reservation program.

Regarding Ranches, drought and wildfire. The things we can't control. The longterm drought and summer fire seasons have been a thorn in the backside. Just look at the adjustments we are doing on Northern California duck hunting properties. Water at this time is still a premium. Most landowners cannot wait for predicted rainfall to run their agriculture programs.

The on again off again predicted El Nino would be nice, but we'd rather just have normal rainfall to avoid the mudslides and flooding that may be on the horizon next. We are in need of water, so we'll take it anyway we get it.

One casualty of the drought was the WU Game Bird Club. We had to cease the operation again this year due to lack of cover.

California's longterm drought stressed many of the ranches including causing Goldpan to be closed altogether for the time being. The only ranch we had that wildfires hit this summer was the Mariner Ranch and then it was sold.

Back to waterfowl, several Northern California duck clubs were not assured of irrigation water. We had to keep Keeley, Story and Lonestar dry, the same as last year. They will be used for dry geese hunting and we hope for late water. C&S was dropped altogether. And we picked up one new duck club, Ferreira (#220), that has a water allotment for flooding its rice fields.

WU encourages you to get out there and create some memories.

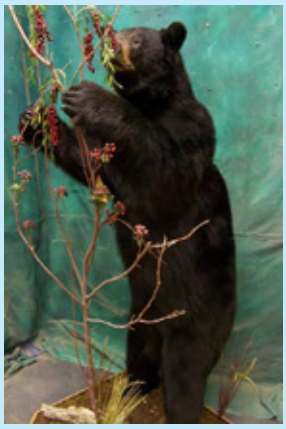
Mounts Unlimited

Museum Quality Taxidermy

I've had the privilege to have Kerwin of Mounts Unlimited bring back the memories of a Blacktail buck, a Wild boar and a 6×7 Elk (and another boar waiting in my freezer). Each mount far exceeded my expectations in that the attention to detail really stands out. His mounts are one of a kind and he is a pleasure to work with especially because I was back and forth with what I wanted. He showed me many different options and was very patient with my decisions. I recommend Mounts Unlimited to anyone wanting to give respect to the animal through taxidermy after the meat is gone.

- Charles Whitwam - Pacifica, CA

On all shoulder mounts, Wilderness Unlimited members will be given front of the line privileges resulting in a guaranteed 4 month or less turnaround on your trophy. Returning WU members will receive, in addition to the 120 day or less turnaround time frame, a 10% discount on all shoulder mounts. Pricing can be viewed on my website.



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Pig Hunting Regulations Reminder

An individual hunter can harvest one pig per ranch during their membership year. Once a pig is harvested from one ranch, they cannot hunt that ranch again for pig until the next year. However, a member can continue to hunt for additional pigs on different ranches.

Archery Only exception: During the archery pig seasons it may be possible for archers to take a second pig from archery only ranches depending on space availability. However, the second animal cannot be taken on the same trip. Reservations to take a second animal from one of these ranches can be made no earlier than 48 hours prior to the starting date of the intended hunt

All other pig hunting regulations can be found in the WU Rules.

Game/Meat Care and Sausage Making Clinic

Saturday, January 16th at the Sac Valley RV Camp starting at 11 am. Go for a hunt in the morning and come on in.The class will last approximately 4-5 hours.

The course will be taught by Rich Ambrosino, a club member since 1992. He started processing meat back in 1971 when he was a senior in high school. Rich took a meat cutting class, which was part of the agricultural program. Over the years he has processed both domestic animals and wild game for friends and family. Sausage making has been a major part of Rich's experience. He has served as the WUF camp chef and has helped with many WU functions, all in a cooking capacity, over the years.

In this class, you will learn the basics on the care of your meat, including cleanliness, chilling and what cuts to use. When making ground meats or sausages you will gain knowledge of what spices and how to prep them for use in your meats. Mixed ratios will be covered, as well as the types of casings to use. The advantages/disadvantages of preparation into stuffed links or bulk packaging will be discussed. The last thing discussed will be meat curing agents, whether it is Instacure #1, or Instacure #2, or celery juice powder and their uses. Equipment such as grinders, knives, meat mixer, sausage stuffer and Vac sealer will be demonstrated.

If you've ever wanted to learn how to make your own sausage, but have been unclear on where to start, this is the class to start with. You'll gain some basic hands-on skills and knowledge to whet your appetite (and taste buds!) for wild game sausage! With a little luck Rich may include his secrets on making duck pepperoni sticks! Space is limited! Please call early for reservations. Bring your own game and processing equipment (if you have it) to process.

Rich will be on hand Sunday, January 17, for any follow up game processing for clinic attendees.

USPS Form 3526

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www.hulicat.com • tommattusch@comcast.net

WU Camping & Fishing Properties Currently Available:

13	**Bidwell**	Trout, Bass	All Year (Trout Stream Opens April 30, 2016)
14	**La Marr**	Trout	Closed until April 30, 2016
15	**St. John**	Bass, Panfish	All Year
48	**Lake Margaret**	Trout	Closed until Spring 2016
57	**Spring Valley**	Bass, Panfish	Seasonal
74	**Barsnick**	Bass, Catfish	All Year
90	**Lower Fall River**	Trout	Opens April 30, 2016
91	**Upper Fall River**	Trout	Opens April 30, 2016
110	**Trion Ranch**	Bass, Panfish	All Year
156	**Garcia River**	Steelhead	November-March
167	**Middle Fall River**	Trout	Opens April 30, 2016
171	**Camp 19**	Bass, Panfish, Trout	All Year
185	**Killian**	Trout	All Year (weather permitting)
195	**Benz**	Bass, Catfish, Panfish	Seasonal
208	**Kramer Ranch**	Bass, Panfish	Scheduled to open May 1, 2016

HOT DEALS to warm up your winter sports fun!

AWESOME Float Tube

Ultra-Light weight (only 9.5#) yet rugged construction and a 300# capcity. Air seat sits higher out of the water, lrg. side pockets, rear storage, insulated drink holder and more. Perfect for packing in.

***Awesome Price*:**
$209.88 (fob Oroville, CA)

= = = Shooting Closeout Deals = = =

Bersa Firestorm .380ACP $329.88
Free box of ammo with purchase

ATI 12 Ga, semi-auto, 26" - $399.99
Black synthetic, vented rib

ATI Hybrid AR15 223/5.56 - $499.98

Rock Island 1911, 45ACP 4.5" - $484.88
Free box of ammo with purchase

ISSC 22LR (Glock Clone) Demo $199.88
Free box of ammo with purchase

ATI-GSG 1911-22lr Compact - $359.88
Free box of ammo with purchase

- All prices are fob Oroville, CA -

AWESOME Fish Boat

An Awesome value, this boat is loaded with features and accessories including 8' pontoons, oars, locks, pump, cargo deck, motor mount, foot bars and more. Weight capacity is 375# with a total weight of only 55 pounds.

Awesome Price:
$379.88 ***(fob Oroville, CA)***

Awesomeproshop.com - *your online store for shooting, fishing and camping.*
WU Member owned - A portion of all proceeds are donated to the WU Foundation

Late Season Tactics

By Terry Knight

Late season duck hunting can be one of the most challenging of all hunting sports. By the time late December and January rolls around just about every duck has been shot at several times. There is a saying that veteran duck hunters use "Late in the season all the dumb ducks are dead." How true that is.

Despite the shyness of late season ducks there a few things a hunter can do to improve his chances of bringing home a limit of birds. One of the top priorities should be the proper camo clothing and how well the blind is concealed. A duck flying several hundreds of yards over a rice field can see the smallest item. A duck's vision is often compared to a man using a set of four power binoculars. They have an eye sight that is second to none. Like most birds they can see 300 degrees and can pick out the slightest movement. They can also see colors better than a human. Why do you think a duck makes several passes over a decoy spread before deciding to land? They're looking for danger.

In today's high tech society, camouflage has come a long way. There is a type of camo to fit every situation from rice fields to tule marshes and the best part is that it's cheap. A turkey hunter wouldn't think of going into the woods without the proper camo, yet duck hunters do it all the time. The reason being they think their blind will conceal them and they don't need to wear camo. However, with good camo you can sit on a levee and ducks will pass right over you. Along with body camo, wear a face mask. Ducks can see the flash of a white face a half mile away. The other advantage of using a headnet or face mask is that you can look right at the ducks as you call them. Which you should do.

Blind cover is another important ingredient. Always take along a piece of camo cloth to cover up your blind. By midseason most of the blinds have been stripped of their grass cover and often stick out like a sore thumb. Driving around the Sacramento Valley I often see a spread of decoys in a rice field and right in the middle will be sunken blind with no cover. Good blind cover is so important that some of the duck club members will actually fly over their blinds in an airplane to get a bird's eye view of it.

It goes without saying that proper decoy placement is extremely important. Especially during the middle and latter part of the season. Ducks wise up to decoys by the third week of the season and if they're not placed just right will usually flare out of gun range. Many of the WU blinds already have decoys set out around the blinds. If that's the case, check and make sure they are placed where the ducks can see them. Check that they are floating correctly and not turned over or half sunk. Observe the decoy spread from at least 100 yards away to see if they look natural.

Decoys normally congregate by species. Mallards will stay with mallards and so forth. Arrange your decoys by species. If there are some magnum decoys make sure they are placed on the outer edges of the spread. I like to place the drake decoys where they will show up the best. In fact, my decoys consist of 75 percent drake decoys because I have found that ducks can see the colorful drakes at a much greater distance.

WU allows hunters to take out their own decoys. Include in your decoys at least a dozen super mag decoys. Super mag mallard decoys are deadly on attracting all species of ducks. Goose hunters learned years ago that magnum decoys will draw birds quicker than standard-sized ones. One trick that veteran duck hunters use is to place several decoys on the actual levees. Ducks either spend most of the day feeding or sleeping and it's not unusual to see ducks sound asleep on a levee.

Since the motorized spinning wing decoys are legal, invest in one. They cost about $100 and have been proven to attract distant ducks. Another trick I learned a few years ago is to give your regular decoys some movement. Drive a stake in the ground in the middle of the decoy spread about 20 yards from the blind. Attach a 3-foot limber bungee cord or heavy rubber band to the stake and attach the other end of the bungee cord to the front eyelet on the decoy's keel. Attach a 30-yard cord to the rear eyelet on the keel. When a duck flies over your decoys, pull on the cord and then release it. The bungee cord will stretch and then retract making the decoy appear as it is swimming. Believe me, I used it many times and have it draw in even the wariest of ducks.

Without a doubt, calling is important in duck hunting. But often too much emphasis is placed on a hunter's calling ability. You don't have to be a world class caller to lure in ducks. If you're new at duck hunting, stick to three basic calls. The "hail" call for ducks off in the distance, the soft quack for decoys out 100 yards and the chuckle for ducks that are swinging over the decoys. The other mistake novice duck hunters make is to constantly blow on their call. Call just enough to keep the birds interested.

Like all hunting, being observant is a big part of duck hunting. On any given day, ducks will fly a different pattern, depending on wind, fog and other factors. If most of the birds are passing to one side of your blind, relocate a few more decoys to that side.

The other mistake hunters often make is quitting after a few hours if the birds aren't flying. If you go to all the trouble of reserving a blind and drive for several hours to reach your hunting area, why would you want to quit by midmorning? Take a lunch and plan on hunting all day. Often late in the afternoon a brisk wind will come up and the ducks will start flying. In fact, some of the best hunting occurs the last hour of the legal shooting time.

Readers can contact me at tlknight3021@sbcglobal.netor (707) 263-1699.

Fall / Winter Hunting Regulations (Non waterfowl)

In an effort to better serve you and make property use clearer, WU is changing our basic reservation rules regarding pig, fall turkey, bear and upland game hunting opportunities.

Essentially, any reservation made for big game, upland or fall turkey will be considered a single reservation. The plus side is a member can book any of the activities noted as an "all inclusive" reservation. A member cannot be booked for another of the usage (of the type noted) until the first hunt is completed.

The current rules state a member can hold one reservation for an activity at a time. Due to the cross over of species on some of these ranches, having a "winter" hunting reservation for any of the listed species here simplifies things. A member can still hold a waterfowl, pheasant (where applicable) or camping and fishing reservation in addition to a "winter" reservation.

An example to illustrate the change is: A member books Twin Peaks Ranch (104) for a hunt on December 10th. Pig, turkey, dove and quail can all be hunted at the same time.

Spring turkey hunting rules regarding one hunter per reservation and 3 day maximum reservations are being waived for this time of year only. Therefore in the above example, if the member had booked his family as a group, anyone would be eligible to take a turkey and hunt for more than the 3 days. However, the membership limit of two turkeys per membership per year remains intact.

The one big game animal per reservation, per member, per ranch remains in effect. However, a turkey also ends the big game hunting as well. If a member bags a big game animal or turkey that part of the hunt is over but the member can stay to hunt other non-big game species, predators, upland birds or stay with friends.

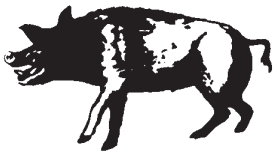
Members with a Bird Hunting Membership only, that want to hunt turkey or quail at a ranch that also offers big game hunting, can do so without a 48 hour notice.

Note the Fall / Winter Hunting outline on the opposite page. (page 9) The pig, bear, turkey and upland opportunities are all posted on one display. The display essentially displays the ranches from north to south. All of the dates of allowable opportunities are listed. If a box is empty, that opportunity does not exist.

Andrew Dourgarian

Brett Stocks

Fall / Winter Hunting



Ranches are loosely organized geographically.

Hunt Days: Most ranches hunt 7 days a week unless noted otherwise

AO: These ranches hunt archery only. Hunting for noted animals only.

Ranches in grey are lead free for big game only. Calif condor zone

Big Game Season: Remember, one big game animal per reservation

Winter Pig season ends generally on January 31. Some ranches hunt longer as noted.

Bear Season ends December 27 unless otherwise posted by DFW.

Some ranches noted are marginal for bear. (13, 57, 80, 99) Call the office if bear is your priorit

Fall Turkey season ends December 13.

Most DFW quail seasons end Janurary 31, 2016

Dogs are for quail and dove hunting only!

Ranch Access Depends on Weather Conditions. If roads are wet at all do not drive on them!!

Spy Rock and Stenzel must be vacated immediately if there is any precipitation.

			Big Game			Turkey	Upland Game			
Unit #	Ranch	Hunt Days	AO	Winter Pig Ends	Bear Ends	Fall Turkey Ends	Quail Zone	Quail Ends	Late Season Dove Ends	Dogs Permitted
	Northeastern Ca									
13	Bidwell	7 days			12/27					
15	St. John	7 days					Q1	1/31	12/27	Yes
	Mendocino / Humboldt Counties									
133	Buckeye	7 days		1/31						
8	Maguire	7 days				12/13	Q2	1/31		Yes
20	Spy Rock	7 days		1/31	12/27		Q2	1/31		No
63	Ridgewood	7 days	AO	1/31		12/13				
47	Rockport	7 days			12/27					
125	Big Timber	7 days			12/27	12/13	Q2	1/31		Yes
156	Garcia River	7 days			12/27	12/13	Q2	1/31		Yes
157	Leggett	7 days			12/27		Q2	12/27		Yes
218	Wages Creek	7 days			12/27					
171	Camp 19	7 days			12/27	12/13	Q2	1/31		Yes
57	Spring Valley	F,Sa,Su			12/27					
219	Comptche	7 days			12/27		Q2	1/31		Yes
	Northern Ca									
99	Hill	7 days		3/13	12/27					
135	HE Ranch	7 days	AO	12/27						
80	Running Deer	7 days		12/13	12/13	12/13		12/13	12/13	Yes
197	Rancho Chimiles	Tu, Th, Sa		3/12		12/12				
183	Stenzel Ranch	F,Sa,Su		1/31			Q3	1/31	12/27	Yes
110	Trion Ranch	7 days	AO			12/13	Q3	1/31	12/27	No
	Central Ca									
103	Los Gatos Creek	7 days		1/31			Q3	1/31	12/27	Yes
104	Twin Peaks	7 days		1/31		12/13	Q3	1/31	12/27	Yes
134	Willow Creek	Th,F,S,S		3/13		12/13	Q3	1/31	12/27	Yes
191	Jacalitos Ranch	F,S,S,M		1/31			Q3	1/31	12/27	Yes
54	Montgomery	F,Sa,Su		12/20	12/20		Q3	12/20		Yes
122	Cummings Ranch	7 days		12/27			Q3	1/31		Yes
195	Benz Ranch	7 days		12/27			Q3	1/31		Yes
216	Wickenden	Sa,Su,M	AO	1/31						
	Southern Ca									
173	Nuevo La Paloma						Q3	1/31		Yes

PROPERTY UPDATE

Any recent changes and instructions on how to keep you membership manual up-to-date are listed below. Please follow the directions and either add or remove property descriptions accordingly.

Unit #	Property Name	Instructions	Change
123	Mariner	Remove from Land Manual	Lease Expired
151	C & S	Remove from Land Manual	Lease Expired
153	Keeley	Add to Land Manual	Revised Property
220	Ferriera	Add to Land Manual	New Property

NOTE: Some of our duck clubs, as well as many non-WU clubs, never got flooded last year! WU made some early clubs (ones without flood water available) dry field goose pits to start the season and then when the surprise heavy rains came in December, staff was ready to catch all available flood waters. We held this water up pretty much to the end of the season. The strategy of switching from dry to flooded to dry, trading duck for goose decoys etc... does not come without hiccups. We try to divvy up the opportunity equally among members and try to communicate with members of the status on a day by day basis. The WU website was used extensively last year, sometimes changing by the hour.

A membership advantage of WU is that we will have opportunity somewhere for our members to utilize. But please, don't plan on hunting over water everyday this year. The following program was implemented last year to deal with the above reduced water availability and worked good enough for us to use it again this year.

California north to south.

The northeastern areas will have water. The Balance of State (Colusa) portion is still changing as we go to print. We leased a new duck club with water, Ferreira 220 and were able to get Pintail, Butte Creek and Honker open around opener. Other clubs were dry as normal or dry by default (lack of water). C&S was dropped completely this year. In the Los Banos area we did manage to get Rubino and Wild Duck flooded by opener. The southern California properties had water for the opener also.

Now all we need is a consistent source of new water to get through the season.

CONTINUED POLICY CHANGE:
Due to the expected pressure being exerted on our waterfowl facilities in the Balance of State areas, and because of drought related water shortage, we will be limiting **"duck" reservations to 3 day maximums** on duck blinds that have water to give all members the opportunity to hunt early in the season. This does not apply to the dry field goose hunting areas. Once a blind or shooting area opens, members can shoot the appropriate shoot days as specified on the properties, but can only have 3 days of "water" reservations in the mix. What will be flooded or not can only be guessed at as of right now. WU's waterfowl property rules now allow members to take their own decoys whether or not WU has supplemental decoys out. You are encouraged to bring your own decoys to all waterfowl properties.

Waterfowl Regulations for 2015-2016

Be familiar with all State and Federal Waterfowl Hunting Regulations. You must have a State Hunting License, State Duck Stamp, Federal Duck Stamp and Harvest Information Program Stamp. All of these stamps must be affixed to your hunting license to hunt waterfowl.

Reservations will be accepted for dates on properties and/or specific blinds only after they are determined to be huntable.

Standby reservations will not be accepted for properties that are not determined to be huntable. However, once a property or portion thereof is opened, standby reservations will be accepted for all shooting positions (including blinds not open at that time) within the guidelines of the standby system.

The information as the various properties become available to hunt will be put on the 24-Hour Property Update Phone System (510) 785-4868 (press 3). Also, you can refer to the Property UpDate on the WU website.

Most waterfowl properties with limited shoot days per week will be available for hunting on Christmas and New Year's Days. These clubs will also hunt daily during the last two weeks of the waterfowl season (January 16-31, 2016). The properties in Southern California will maintain their same shoot days throughout the season.

If you intend to shoot at waterfowl or have any waterfowl in your possession while in the process of pheasant hunting, it is illegal to have lead shot in your possession. You can be cited.

As the waterfowl season progresses, shoot days may be increased on clubs that do not normally shoot seven days per week.

Refer to DF&W Regulations regarding the use of mechanical duck and goose decoys.

a. For waterfowl and pheasant hunts, members must complete check-in and check-out cards on a daily basis.

b. Some units have blinds with decoys provided and are designated as "decoy properties".

REMEMBER! Members can take as many of their own decoys to WU "decoyed" properties as they like, duck and/or goose. We only ask that when your hunt is complete, that the decoys that WU had provided be returned to where they were located (in the blind or in the water/field).

c. Properties without decoys will be available for those who wish to use only their own decoys. Decoys must be removed at the end of the reservation period.

d. Hunters are required to be at the blind or shoot position one half hour prior to shooting time or they must wait two hours after shooting time begins. Do not leave the blind except to retrieve downed birds.

e. Some properties will be posted with designated break times for retrieval of downed birds or leaving the field. These times must be adhered to.

f. Hunters must stay out of unharvested crops.

g. Plucking of birds on the properties is prohibited.

h. On some properties birds may be drawn, but entrails must be removed from the property.

i. Dogs must be kept under control at all times. In parking areas dogs are to be kenneled or kept on a leash not to exceed 8'.

j. When making waterfowl hunting reservations indicate whether or not you are taking a dog.

k. Arriving in the parking area (check-in) an hour before shooting time is ample for most hunting days, allowing enough time to be at the blind, decoys situated etc well before shooting time. A few blinds like 7 at Webfoot require more time and that information will be given at time of reservation.

2015/16 Waterfowl and Pheasant Properties

		Shoot Days							Flooded*	Decoys Provided		Blinded		Pheasant Season
Unit #	Unit Name	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		Yes	No	Yes	No	Nov 14 - Dec 27
Northeastern Season Dates - Duck: October 10, 2015-January 22, 2016														
White Geese: November 7, 2015-January 17, 2016 * Dark Geese: October 10, 2015-January 17, 2016														
13	Bidwell	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	
14	La Marr	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	
15	St. John	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	
90	Lower Fall River	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	
185	Killian	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	
Balance of State Season Dates: Duck and Geese: October 24, 2015-Janurary 31, 2016 Youth Hunt Days: February 6 &7, 2016 Late White-Front and White Goose Season: February 13-17 2016														
4*	Pintail II			x			x	x	W	Duck		x		
19*	Butte Creek Farms	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	W		x	x	x	x
71*	Honker Club	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	W	Duck		x		
78	Webfoot	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Goose		x		
114*	Bransford	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	W	Duck	x	x	x	x
115	Highway Club	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x	x
116	White Goose	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
152*	Correia Club (Delta) (W, S, S)			x			x	x	W	Duck/Goose		x		x
153*	Keeley Club			x			x	x		Goose		x		Nov 14 > Nov 29
168*	Lone Star Club	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				x		x
177*	Story Club	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Goose		x		
217	Snowgoose	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Goose		x		
220*	Ferriera	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	W	Duck		x		New map available
Balance of State Season Dates: Duck and Geese: October 24, 2015-Janurary 31, 2016 Youth Hunt Days: February 6 &7, 2016 Late White-Front and White Goose Season: February 13-17 2016														
147	Rubino Duck Club			x			x	x	W	Duck		x		
186	Wild Duck Club			x			x	x	W	Duck		x		
Southern California Season Dates: Duck and Geese: October 24, 2015-Janurary 31, 2016 Youth Hunt Days: February 6 &7, 2016														
97	The New Old Hazard	G		x	G		x	x			x	x		
181	Pipeline Goose Field	G	G		G	G	G				x	x		
189	Gentry Goose Field			G	G		G	G			x		x	
209	Cottonwood Club	G		x	G	G	x	xG			x	x		
210	Hazard NE	G	G	x	G	G	x	x			x	x		
211	Alcott Duck Club		x	x			x	x			x	x		

*NEW FOR 2015. Properties with a * indicates a potential flooded blind property. When flooded these properties will be included in the 3 day water blind limitation see pg Most water blinds have decoys & are restricted to a maximum of 3 day reservations at one time. If dry these properties may have goose decoys or take your own.

Northern California clubs will shoot daily the last two weeks of the waterfowl season. 3 day water reservations restriction applies.

181 Pipeline Goose Field - All hunting will be from 2-6 person goose pits. Pit on the east side and Pit on the west side of the property.

209 Cottonwood Club - Goose Hunting will be from 2-6 person goose pits. Pit A on the North side and Pit B on the south side of the property, follow map.

210 Hazard NE - Goose pit B is closed; open field shooting allowed.

The Spy Rock Challenge

By Dave Hodtwalker

Starting out, my goal was to return to the field after a couple years of recovery from illness. I have been a member of WU since the beginning and have enjoyed many, many hunts on Spyrock and other club ranches over the last 30 years. I am currently inactive but I plan to reactivate very soon. Rick Copeland generously invited me as his "plus" member for a Spyrock hunt. I had been planning it since Rick was drawn for Spyrock for the last week of B season.

Monday, 5AM. Finally the day arrived. Dennis Corvello and Rick hitched up Rick's jeep to Dennis's truck and off we went at 8 AM, me following in my Landcruiser. Then, my Landcruiser alternator went out. Making it to Santa Rosa, luckily, we got that fixed in about 2-3 hours.

12 noon, back on the road. Finally we arrived at Spyrock camp at 5PM. Rick and I immediately hit the road while Dennis set up camp. We spotted game including a nice forked horn buck but failed to connect on him. Buck fever or surprise, I don't know which. Tuesday, 6AM. We were joined by The Wild Guy, George Visger, and Serge Engurasoff, both had got last second calls from the office for standby reservations (the system does work). The plan was to separate with one group working downhill to rendezvous with me. I worked around the bottom until about 9AM and then set up where I had seen some deer earlier. Right away I spotted 3 does and a nice forked horn buck, though at some distance. Ranging them, I tried to steady the wobbling crosshairs in my scope and pulled the trigger. I thought he went down, then he stood up and disappeared over the ridge. Not knowing if he was really hit, I waited an hour and then got in above him. Rick, George, and Dennis arrived and made a plan to push out the canyon while I stayed on point in case he came out. George got down to the spot where I had last seen the buck and had a hilarious time deciphering my hand waving but did eventually find him. I had made the shot! I had hit the buck at 317 yards. My longest shot ever! I clambered down to tag him while George and Dennis field dressed him and dragged him up the steep side of the canyon. I can't express my thanks enough for the help these members gave me. Serge had also harvested a buck that morning. Deer heart and liver cooked by Rick that night never tasted better! I still had a pig tag and a bear tag and had called in and was able to extend my reservation a couple of days per WU's new policy (new to me).

David Hodtwalker

Next day we were joined by Gil Laredo and we did several hunts, hiking, spot and stalk, and stand hunting. Again game was spotted. Dennis and Rick both had opportunities. George called in a coyote and smacked him with his recurve bow. That evening, returning to camp, we slid one rear wheel of the truck off the road on a tight turn and had to find a way to get it out. We retrieved my LC, which has a winch, and got the truck out with Gil's help. We continued to spot game the rest of the trip but I was unable to connect. The buck was still the icing on the cake for me. My first deer since before getting sick.

Again, many thanks to Rick, Dennis, George and Gil for all their help. It was a very successful and enjoyable hunt and yes, I met my goal! I'm looking forward to many more successful hunts with WU.

Editor's Notes: Read George Visger's account of this trip, it's different. (pg 24) Update, Dave has re-activated his membership – Welcome back!

WU California Elk Hunt

By Pete Janovich

While reading the WU flyer for spring 2015, I came across an article by Rick Copeland. In it he wrote about the Mendocino Elk hunts for fall of 2015. These two hunts were on private land, and WU had thousands of acres available for this hunt. One hunt was for bulls with two tags, the other for cows again for two tags. I checked the CDFW website to see the drawing odds for the bull hunt and they were very good for max points, which I had.

Having hunted Rocky Mountain Elk on WU properties in Central Oregon on two occasions and taking 6 x 6 bulls both times I figured what the heck and applied for the Mendocino bull hunt. A couple weeks later I checked the CDFW website, and sure enough I had drawn the tag. I called the WU office and was referred to Rick, who was very helpful and must say instrumental in putting this hunt together.

Spring Valley had Tule Elk and the Lost Coast area, which includes Big Timber, Rockport and Juan Creek had Roosevelt Elk. I decided to scout both areas and make a decision after based upon the scouting results. We did two scouting trips, one with our son Jacob and the other with my wife Lorin. We observed nine different mature bulls along with several rag horns and several spikes. The highlight of our scouting was with two aggressive bulls that chased Lorin and me off an old logging road on Usal Creek. Conversations with Larry Martin, a patrolman at Spring Valley, Don Powers at CDFW warden in the Lost Creek area, and state park rangers provided a wealth of information regarding elk habits and hunting locations. WU member's photos of elk sightings revealed several bulls that we had not seen on our scouting trips.

The hunt would start on the Wednesday after the close of the A Zone Rifle deer season. My usual hunting companions were unable to accompany me; my two sons Jacob and Zachary are both in the USMC. Jacob is now in college and Zachary is on active duty. Lorin had previous plans for a trip to the east coast. I asked Rick if he would like to join me and he accepted. His company was greatly appreciated and added much to the hunt.

What a dilemma, do I try for a Tule or Roosevelt Elk first? Roosevelt are the biggest body of the three elk species, Tule Elk are the smallest in both stature and rack size. They're also the rarest, basically a once in a lifetime hunt. The decision was easy, it would be Tule Elk first.

We arrived at Spring Valley Tuesday afternoon, set up camp and looked around. There was elk sign everywhere, but no elk. The alfalfa fields where the elk were usually seen in the mornings and evenings were empty. Wednesday morning (opening day) at first light we climbed up the hills that over looked the fields. Nothing in the fields, but bulls started to bugle on the ridge behind us and the hunt was on.

Over the next three days we had several encounters with bulls. On one occasion, I cow called a mature bull within thirty feet, but unfortunately he had broken off several points. On another occasion Rick and I had about sixty head pass within one hundred yards. We passed on several bulls in this group including a 6 x 6 that wasn't very heavy. In those first three days we had opportunities to take at least eight different bulls, but they were either too small or had points broken off.

Rick had to leave on Friday afternoon so I was on my own for Saturday. Early that morning I had Elk run through camp so I knew they were in the area. At light I walked the road towards the front of the ranch. As I started up the ridge a bull ran out in front of me. He was heavy horned with good fronts. I laid down, set up my bipod, aimed for the middle of his chest and fired! The distinct thud sound after the shot told me I had hit him. He disappeared over the rise, so I waited several minutes before walking up the hill. As I went over the rise there he was, a nice six point lying motionless; he had not gone thirty yards.

The silence was broken by the sound of a bugling bull. As I looked out toward the field below there was at least forty elk leaving the field and coming up in my direction. While taking pictures and field dressing the bull, elk passed all around; some within fifty yards.

What an awesome hunt! I quartered the bull, took him off the hill, broke camp and was on the road home by twelve noon. I had the meat processed at Los Gatos Meats and it's absolutely wonderful. Kerwin Schetter at Mounts Unlimited Taxidermy is doing a European Mount for me.

Being a member for nearly 30 years has been extremely rewarding. I have raised my family hunting WU and, as mentioned above bagged other nice elk on WU lands as well as pigs, blacktails etc. This Tule elk tops the charts.

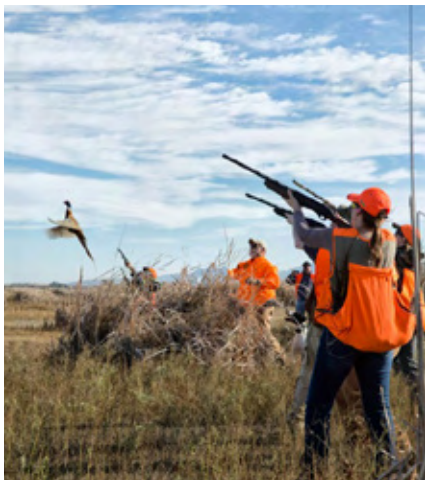
I would like to thank the WU staff for making this hunt possible, especially Rick Copeland whose help and companionship made this trip even more special.

My First Buck!

By Talowa Huffman

My mom, dad and I woke up early Saturday morning to begin my hunt. It was pouring rain so we drove around looking for game until the rain stopped. Then we walked a couple of miles and found some big, fresh buck tracks. It was fun tracking him but I could not find the buck that made them. It started to rain again so we headed back to the truck. We drove up a main road and a big black bear ran across where we had just been following the buck tracks. We went into the woods to look for the bear but never saw it again. We drove around some more and came to a fork in the road and took the left road. This road went to a place where we liked to walk, and it had just stopped raining again. We drove around a corner and my dad spotted a buck on the hillside. He whispered, "buck".

I carefully got out of the truck. The buck started to head up the hill but I stopped it by making a doe bleat noise. The buck turned perfectly broadside at about 40 yards and I calmly took the shot. It dropped in its tracks and I was so shocked. I heard my mom excitedly say "You got it!" and mom and dad got out of the truck. We waited a minute and went up to it. I was so excited to get my first buck that the first thing I said when I saw it up close was "Can we get it mounted?" It was a really big 3 X 3! My dad danced around with happiness and my mom just could not believe I got such a big buck. My parents said they were proud of me because they said I did exactly what I was supposed to do and they did not have to tell me anything. We said thank you to God and had a big family group hug. Even though it was a short drag downhill, we could barely move it. It weighed 120 pounds dressed out. The horns were wide and thick and curved forward. He had really cool eye guards and one hooked over. He had a torn and ragged ear. He was huge and beautiful and I am so happy that my mom and dad are getting it mounted for me. It's a memory I'll never forget and it's all thanks to Wilderness Unlimited! Thank you WU for your wonderful hunting properties!



Pheasant Hunt

Frank Alcantar

Tony Pickett

A Beautiful Bear

By Felipe Castaneda

It was our second weekend as new WU members. We had just finished our morning glassing and were heading back to camp after not having much success. At this point, I was thinking that the drought had really impacted the herds and maybe we would be better off coming back after some rains or later in the season. Suddenly, from the corner of my eye, I saw a nice black bear walking alongside a creek bed, about 300 yards away. I positioned myself downwind slowly making my way towards him. After getting into good shooting range, I took a shot and watched him tumble down into the brush, out of sight. I approached slowly to look for a blood trail and came upon the bear lying in the brush. As I got within 20 yards, he saw me and attempted to move back up the bank, when I fired a final shot. We walked up to him and marveled at the power and beauty of this creature. After a couple pictures we field dressed, skinned and quartered him so he was on ice within an hour.

As we were headed out to get more ice for the ride home, we met Serge Ruiz, one of the very helpful staff in our club. He informed us that the bears had been a problem to the livestock on the ranch, and I'm sure they also impact the deer. Upon hearing this, my mind went to the prior weekend when we had seen two bears at first light, at which point I felt glad to have been helpful to the rancher.

My wife, Jessica, and I are very thankful for all the great service received from the staff and we're looking forward to many more adventures with WU. The only thing left for now is to get my wife a bear tag!

Cheyanne Bradford shot her first ducks and two honkers, one banded, after passing her hunters safety at WU two weeks before the hunt. Cheyanne is 11 and hunted with her Mom, Ann, who also shot her first two geese.

At Dusk

By Andrew Dourgarian

My wife, Sarah, and I headed down from the Bay Area to Willow Creek. We were looking for a short(er) drive to camp and try to fill my A tag. I'm also carrying pig and bear tags, always keeping our fingers crossed. Two or so weeks ago prior we were at a property in Willits and it was a very long drive. A lot of sign but didn't see much of anything.

We had seen some deer on our way in, just a spike and a few doe. Sarah is a great camper, but this is only her 2nd hunting trip (the 1st being the one we were skunked in Willits). I got her a pair of binoculars after we set up camp and, sure enough, we spotted about 4 deer. We were hopeful and excited.

After a pretty chilly first night, we got up around dawn and hiked up the ridge behind camp, primarily taking deer trails, seeing plenty of fresh sign and scat. Loose dirt made for some interesting side hilling and I also ended up having enough sage brush in my face and down my shirt to fill a pillow case, I think. Just about to the top my wife exclaims, "Oh no! My phone fell out." She had put it in her front sweatshirt pocket and we thought it was a lost cause to go back and look for it then (and I had the first morning fever pretty good too at this point) we decided to press on and save the looking for later. Note, no cell service to speak of on this camp at all. We ended up hunting the ridge road and other game trails but saw no game the first full day there on Saturday.

Sunday morning started off a bit warmer, thankfully. We decided to try, or retry, our hike from the morning before and pray we find the phone. We tracked back up the hill and find it face up, dead, but unscathed in the brush...I thought for sure our luck was turning! We continued up the hill and almost walked into two spikes and two does, which was great! Back to camp for breakfast and then mid-day we hiked down the first canyon in the heart of the ranch. We didn't take our SUV down for fear of not being able to turn around. It's a long way down, but not that difficult and the road is fine, too. Half way down I started to pray I didn't see a deer because I couldn't figure how I would get it back to the truck. We hiked along the dry creek bed at the bottom and saw absolutely nothing.

After lunch we headed toward Pinnacles National Park about 9 miles away, dropped off our trash near a general store and picked up a few things and headed back. We got to the place we wanted to hunt around 4 pm, glassed and spotted a few does, we were in the front side of the ranch looking towards La Gloria, and around 6 pm headed back to camp. Many of the roads, especially the Ridge Road, seemed freshly bull dozed, which was great, but a couple of spots are pretty steep making you hold your breath. It was one of those spots, right at dusk, when I said to myself, "It would be my luck I'd see a buck right now and have to make a split second decision on a steep decline"... sure enough, that's what I had to do.

He was a good sized body deer, not too tall or too wide, just a nice forked horn. He had his tail to me and was looking back at me, not the best shot. The wind was in our favor and the sun was blinding on my windshield so I'm fairly sure he didn't see me that well either. I pulled up, took aim at as much chest as I could and pulled the trigger. He went right down, maybe 60 to 70 yards off the road, extra lucky because it was all flat, too. Field dressed him, with Sarah's help, and we took him back to camp for the rest of the work.

I had asked for some advice on our WU Facebook about this ranch and responses were aplenty, thankfully! Some said hunt the back part of the ranch but I took mine in the front. A lot of people said roads weren't very good and I might well come out with some 'Texas Pin Stripes' but the roads were in great shape and seemed freshly dozed (especially since we were in Sarah's Navigator). Members thought stock ponds might be empty and poison oak plentiful, but all the ponds were full and running and there was hardly any poison to speak of where we hiked, almost 20 miles over those two days.

Ultimately I suppose the lucky charm was my Sarah's phone. Without it we saw nothing, with it we harvested my first buck in probably 10 years and the first one she had ever been a part of, period. We had planned on staying Sunday night through Monday (with Labor Day the weekend was available Monday where it's usually not) but Sarah asked, "Can we just throw everything in the truck and go home now? A hot shower and a warm bed sound pretty good."

Sounded pretty good to me to me, too...harvest at 6:00 pm on the road by 9:30 pm and home by midnight...all amounted to a pretty good Labor Day Weekend!

An Experience I'll Never Forget

By Jack Blackburn

My trip began Wednesday when I got out of class early so we could make the 4 hour drive and we arrived at the ranch with just enough time to set up camp. Bob Neighbors, my hunting partner and mentor the last few trips, arrived with his family later and we all went to bed for an early wake up.

Morning came and we got a late start but plenty of good hunting time left. We hunted 3-4 hours and didn't see a single deer. On top of that we talked to some guys who hadn't seen a buck for two days. Disheartening, to say the least. We had lunch and a little down time and then back out. We hunted 3 more hours, checking and double checking spots. About an hour before end of shoot time I told Bob that if he wanted to go back to camp and start dinner that was fine since we hadn't seen any deer.

His response was something like "once you start hunting you don't stop until shoot time ends no matter the conditions." So we continued, heading in the direction of camp. All of a sudden Bob slams on the breaks and says, "DEER". He looks through his binos, only to find the ever so common "stump buck" sitting in place of what he thought was a buck. Continuing back to camp I see a doe jump out. I point it out to Bob and we both start glassing and find two more deer to her left. At first they both look like does but at roughly 200 yards everything looks like a doe to the naked eye. Bob says the magic words I've been waiting for: "The one on the left is a buck."

My heart starts pumping and I look through the scope and see antlers. We both confirm it's a legal buck and Bob gives me the go ahead to take the shot. "This is it, the moment you have been waiting for!"... Two long years and it all comes down to this, is the thought rushing through my head as I rest the crosshairs slightly behind his front shoulder. I flip the safety off, heart beating out of my chest, deep breath and slowly pull the trigger. "I think I got him!" Bob flinched as I shot so he lost sight as well. We scope back and see him down but still moving so we grab our headlamps; I had shot with 10 minutes left until shoot time was over.

The buck wasn't there ... "He couldn't have gone far, we never saw him run away", I reassure myself as we keep looking. About to give up we hear a crash in the bushes about 20 yards below us. It's the buck! Still alive because the shot was slightly high and paralyzed him. I load another round and finish him off. We hi five each other and snap a quick picture and start to drag him away. He was a lot heavier than I thought and I was dragging him downhill! I was shown how to properly gut, Cape and bone out a deer so I am prepared for next time.

The next day I called the the office and was able to switch to a bear reservation, allowing me to stay the full duration I had planned on for the hunt. The rest of the trip was spent trying to get his wife, Deanne, a buck or a bear for me or Bob. Unfortunately, I was the only one with luck on that trip but I can't thank Bob enough for what he has done for me and not letting me give up. No matter how slow the hunt is going, don't give up because you don't know when it can all change. Thank you WU. I can't wait to return next season and try to find his big brother.

A Successful Hunt

By Alejandro Baltezar

We really worked during our trip to Big River. We enjoyed walking and hiking this beautiful property to get us a buck. My son Miguel and I, as well as our friend Oscar, like the higher elevations to look for deer. On the second day we parked the truck and walked for about 2 miles. I came around the bend in the road and heard what sounded like a buck running/ jumping. I could hear the leaves cracking and the branches breaking but I didn't have a good line of vision so I signaled Oscar and my son to see if they could get a shot. Miguel was able to back track about ten yards and got a clear shot on a nice 2x2. As a member of WU, I enjoy meeting new people and exchanging stories and knowledge with them. We met Bill Lawson and his daughters who were great people. This is why my son and I enjoy going on these hunts. We all come from different walks of life and different backgrounds but we all have one thing in common, the adventure of hunting. On Saturday we were lucky enough to harvest another buck by Oscar which was another 2x2. Then Sunday morning I was able to fill my tag with another 2x2. As hunters and friends we try to keep a positive attitude. We try to make sure that other hunters also maintain a positive outlook. Sometimes hunting gets frustrating but if you stay positive and keep going at it you will be successful. Anytime you are out for a hunt, coming home in one piece and healthy should be considered a successful hunt. Our trip was fun and adventurous, I can't wait for our next adventure with WU.

Alfredo Rivera

Braulio Rivera

Glad to be Back

By Joe Bartolo

I harvested this buck at Juan Creek; it was my first time visiting the ranch. The terrain is steep and has thick brush and timber. I spent some time trying to find a vantage point to use my binoculars and ended up walking abandoned logging roads and driving on others looking for sign.

In the area near camp called Boot Hill I saw many does with their yearlings in tow. Some tracks that were larger made me suspect a buck in the area but, after hunting several hours on Friday, Saturday morning I decided to move to the northern portion of the ranch.

After passing through Lynch Gap I took a fork in the road to the right, as it appeared nobody had travelled it since the rain earlier in the week. Starting up the road I saw fresh tracks. I parked the truck and walked. It got hot and so I rested in the shade with a view near a log landing. I stayed put for almost 3 hours, nodding in and out, fighting off various creepy crawlers. Getting restless, I stood up to go back.

At that instant, a doe came out of the brush about 60 yards from me. I grabbed my rifle and put a round in the chamber. She heard the action close and stopped, looking in my direction. After a few seconds she continued on and didn't seem alarmed. I waited to see if she might have a friend with some head gear. Sure enough, movement behind her and this nice buck was following her path. I waited for him to clear some brush. He stopped in the exact spot she did. I fired, hit him in the neck and he dropped.

I was very excited about harvesting this buck. It has been several years of tag soup in California and I'm glad to be back with WU.

Chris Roemer

Scott Gilligan

Andy Strand

I Did It!

By Gigi Sola

For years my husband and sons hunted for deer. I never went with them. I always stayed home. But, this year for some reason I decided to give it a try. Thinking to myself I can do this? Shoot a buck? So I went ahead and took a hunter safety class and got my license. So the trip begins... We start driving up to the ranch, the whole time I'm thinking to myself, I can do this, right? I was so nervous. I had no idea what the ranch looked like or what I was getting myself into.

We got to the ranch Tuesday afternoon. Mike Herrman, the patrolman there, was going to post some signs and asked if we wanted to come? We said sure. I'm thinking, "Yea, I get to check out the ranch a bit and see what I'm getting myself into... HaHa." He posted the signs and I was just amazed by all of the views and the beautiful property. After posting, he said, "Let's go up this road a bit. I've seen some bucks up in this area." Lo and behold, he saw one and shot it. Mind you, this is my first time coming and seeing the whole process. Shooting, cleaning and hanging the buck. I must say it wasn't that bad. It was very interesting, actually. Honestly not sure if I can clean the buck though.

The next morning Troy (husband) and I get up early, packed a few waters and snacks and were off on our adventure. Several hours of looking and looking for bear and deer. Listening, seeing the beautiful scenery, the ocean, trees, canyons and creeks. We saw a few does and fawns. Oh, and a couple of cute cottontail rabbits and lots of birds. Just that alone was amazing!

We were coming to an area where my son and Troy got bucks. Troy was telling me all about the

Gigi's First Buck

big buck in the draw we were coming up to. It was his biggest one, a 4x4. Then we looked up the draw and there standing was a buck just looking right down at us. Troy told me to get out, slowly grab your rifle. I got out quietly, loaded it and got into position. Nervous, I looked through the scope and the way the buck was standing I couldn't tell if it was a forked horn or not. So I asked Troy. He looked through the binoculars and said it was okay to shoot.

So I stood there, took a deep breath and shot it. Saw the buck drop. Immediately I put my safety on and unloaded the rifle. Then I was all excited, jumping up and down. Yelling, "I did it, I did it." Troy was so excited and happy for me. I couldn't wait to tell the patrolman, Mike, my family and friends. Of course we saw Mike on our way back to camp and he was so happy for me.

I'm still excited and telling people about my story. I would have to say this is one of the best vacations I have ever been on. Not just because I got a buck. But the ranch was amazing. Everyone there was also very nice. Can't wait for next year.

Roy Emeterio

Wayne Luna

Cliff Hammond

First Bow, First Buck

By Jason Kuhns

Back story on my hunt is as follows. I got my WU membership February 2015. I figured I would try archery this year for the first time. Figured it would both increase my season and increase the ranches I could hunt. I got a bow in May or June of 2015, did some self-teaching on YouTube, lol. Archery season started, I had a few missed opportunities the first few trips. But, I figured being my first time I was still doing good. Made a trip the closing weekend of archery and walked up on three (3) bucks sitting under a tree. It took me about 30 minutes to get up close without scaring the deer. As the three (3) bucks got up to move, I pulled off a 50 yard shot. The deer ran about 150 yards and fell over. Thanks WU for a great hunt.

Scott Differt

Jeff Ansley

Shannon Ranch

Got One!

By Walker Starr

On the wrong side of the fence

Not long after leaving the campground on the second morning of my first ever WU deer hunt, I noticed the guys in the white Ford ahead of me had stopped. I had met them the day before, spoken to them briefly as they went by this morning but, unfortunately, hadn't gotten their names. They were WU guys; deer hunters knowledgeable about this property. They weren't jumping out of the truck and the engine was still running. I moved a little forward at slow idle, keeping distance for the sake of courtesy and stopping.

They were watching two legal bucks, a forked horn with fairly deep forks and a slightly wider 2x3 with decent eye guards. Both were grazing on the hillside 70 yards from them but on the wrong side of the fence on a neighboring ranch that WU can't hunt. I took a few pictures with my Nikon in case they wanted them. Commonsense hunter etiquette dictated it wouldn't be my shot even if they were on our side of the fence. Safe on the other side of the fence...what torture for a hunter.

Much to my amazement, the first-arriving hunters slowly left the scene! The white Ford had quietly crept around the visible bend in the road. I wondered if they had figured it wasn't worth waiting around, maybe looking for a big boy this year. I pulled up and off the road, carefully positioning my truck so that a large oak tree was between the bucks and me. I watch in agony as the two posed - broadside, of course - and continued feeding.

My heartbeat doubled when I realized both bucks were now slowly moving toward the fence. A few bites, then step forward; take a few bites, then step forward. 49 yards ... 41 yards ... I wanted the 2x3 which would make an Olympian addition to my wall of forked horns, both archery and rifle-taken antler mounts. I could have hit him with a whiffle ball, but he was not yet on WU soil. My heart began pumping more adrenaline than blood.

It was the forked horn who gave the fence a sniff, planted his back feet and hopped over. The 5-foot tall wire fence seemed little trouble for him as he landed gracefully on the WU side. As I frantically drew my compound bow through, he caught on to me and spooked a little, trotting a few steps up the fence line and stopping with his rump to me. Okay, no problems; 30 yards ...ish. I've got a 30 yard pin. Wait for it...he turned coolly to his right, giving me the perfect quartering-away shot we all hope for and looked right at me. I released. The arrow flew straight into the buck's right side, just a couple inches behind the rib cage, midway between his back and chest. YES! YES! GOT ONE! He darted across the road and leapt sloppily over a fence used for controlling cattle on this WU ranch. Catching the top of the fence, bumping his chin and chest on the ground but recovered and ran hard downhill out of sight crashing through thin brush and fallen oak branches until out of sight and I could no longer hear him.

Having lost bucks before, one stands out that I had apparently pursued too soon, despite waiting a full hour and having a generous blood trail. With this sickening memory haunting me, I waited a solid two hours and, as it happened, with little blood to follow, found him a little over 100 yards from where I shot him. After I tagged and dressed him, the caretaker helped me load the stout forked horn into my truck. After another hour of lively conversation with him, I proudly reported my success on the WU checkout card. I need to come back here for a larger buck next year, if the guys in the white Ford don't get him first.

B Zone Hunt

By Dan Ryan

The sprint was on!

I decided to walk from camp in the morning and hike to a portion of the ranch that I knew had some deer. About 30 minutes into my hike I cut a set of large pig tracks. I decided, well I'm after deer but if it's a nice enough pig, I'll take it.

I tracked the pig for a good 1/4 mile before I caught sight of him. He was making his way down into the nasty canyon and he was making a good pace. I raised up my Alpen binoculars and immediately saw the boar's teeth...decision made. I was pig hunting.

As soon as the pig was out of sight I made a dead sprint at him. I crested a small rise to see him at about 60 yards, working his way down the canyon. There was another rise that he was headed over, so I waited for him to get out of sight again and the sprint was on! This time when I came over the next rise he was 40 yards. I did this two more times until I was within 30 yards. I drew back and snorted at the boar. He stopped dead in his tracks and I sent an Ulmer Edge broadhead (yes, these mechanicals work on big pigs) into the boiler room. The hog went 50 yards and tipped over.

I spent the next hour and a half boning him out for the steep climb back to camp. The guys and I had an amazing rest of our trip, all being able to take animals. J.P. got a nice meat boar, his plus, Dalyn, was able to take his first buck and I took my largest boar. It's experiences like this that makes me wonder why people wouldn't want to be part of this Club. Dalyn, who was the Plus member, is now hooked on WU and what it has to offer and plans on signing up for an interview to be a member for next season.

First Buck!

By Manny Padilla

Here are the photos of my 1st Buck taken. I'm so grateful for the hard work of WU to keep the club going for families like mine to make long lasting memories.

So here's my story...I was married into a family of hunters and I had never hunted as a kid. I've been hunting for about 5 years and never taken Big Game, only waterfowl and squirrels. When my kids took interest in hunting I decided to give them opportunities to pique their interest and keep them involved. I decided on WU, which my father-in-law had been a member.

I hunted this property and saw this buck around 8 am. He was about 500 yards away and had no idea he'd been spotted. With little experience I let him be because I didn't want to run him out of the area and wasn't sure how to approach because he was at the top of another ridge.

I came home disappointed I didn't try harder. My hunting partner Jorge Jovel gave me some pointers. I booked another day hunt for the following week and brought my buddy with me so failure wasn't an option. We put ourselves in the same area I had seen the buck the week before and glassed the canyons for a couple hours. We decided to take a break and headed for the jeep and get a sandwich. I spotted the same buck about 300 yards out coming back from a drink of water. This was my chance. I took a shot with my Weatherby .270 Mag. He only walked about 10 yards off the road into the brush where he finally laid.

This answered all the unknowns for me - am I a good shot, do I have what it takes to be a good hunter and bring home food for my family? I continue to be a sponge and learn from my family and friends so I can be a successful, ethical hunter and teach my kids to be the same.

Thanks WU for the experience. You've earned a life long partner!

Takes A Lickin' and Keeps On Tickin'

By George Visger

My WU experience began over three decades, hundreds of waterfowl limits, and numerous archery deer, hogs, and trout ago. Scattered throughout those years were the occasional pheasant, dove, quail, and even a few coyotes. But during that time frame I've probably had a lot more empty handed, unsuccessful adventures than I'd like to remember.

But do you need to fill your tag to have a successful hunt?

During the last week of rifle deer season in B-1, I had the privilege of hunting our Spy Rock Ranch out of Covelo with several members. For those who have never treated yourself to a B-1 hunt you don't know what you're missing. The wide open, majestic, rugged Middle Eel River drainage near the Yolla Bolla Wilderness area is a sight to behold. Yolla Bolla is a sloppy way of speaking Wintun Indian dialect, in which "Yo-la" means "snow covered", and "Bo-li" means "high peak." Not so much during this drought, but in normal years you'll find both of these habitats in abundance. Unfortunately, the drought seems not to have impacted the peaks much, as my tired legs can attest.

There were several members in camp during the four days I hunted. I hooked up with, Rick Copeland, Dennis, Serge, Gil, and David Hodtwalker. In gangland slang, OG is a term of endearment for Old Gangster. Dave is what I tagged on the hunt as an OM for Old Member. His member number is one of the few members I've met with a smaller number than mine, by 8. Not only has he been a longtime, original WU member, he's pushing 69 years young, and one of the toughest guys I've ever met. And you'll read why I say that.

My first morning out, I drove an hour to the far side of the ranch, parked and began still hunting through the oaks. Fog blanketed the valley floor, as I crept along with my old recurve just above the fog line. About an hour into my hunt, I glassed up 14 hogs rooting under an oak about 250 yards away. I put a stalk on the hogs and proceeded to miss two separate 100 – 120 pounders within a 5 minute span. One at 35 yards and the second at 45.

Teaches me right for not finding the time to practice this year like I should have.
As I scrounged around, looking for one of my arrows, I jumped the third covey of quail I'd seen in 40 minutes. It seemed all I heard that morning was *chi-Ca-go.*

On the second morning, Serge took a buck in a drainage about a 45 minute drive out of camp. It was in the same general area three separate bears had been sighted the prior day, and Serge watched a 300 pounder moments before taking his buck. With an unused bear tag in my pocket and an archery bear on my bucket list, and a pile of bear vitals waiting for Ol *Ursus,* I thought it might be a good idea to check the gut pile the next day.

That afternoon, Rick, Dennis and I hunted across the canyon by the corrals and broke down on the way back to camp. Spy Rock Adventure.

After about a 50 minute hike in the dark, Serge and Gil picked us up on their way in and hauled us all back to camp. In the morning we drove back to the ridge above where Serge had taken his buck the day before.

When we jumped out of the truck, the sun was creeping above the eastern horizon and we could hear ravens squawking several hundred yards below us. Perfect light for shooting, though the thermals were still oozing downhill like thick syrup. I was hopeful, they'd swap directions before we got too far downhill as the sun heated the slope we were on. We strapped on our day packs and I hung my ancient Circe *3 in 1* predator call around my neck while grabbing my trusty recurve. I have used the same exact call since my first archery deer hunt on Hart Mountain in Southern Oregon, in 1982. I called in and took my first coyote a couple days prior to my first deer on that trip.

After proceeding down the ridge a couple hundred yards the ravens really began raising hell. It wasn't hard to figure out where the gut pile was, and I was hopeful they were telling the world a bear was stealing their breakfast.

On our way down, we were forced to cross a couple small drainages as we dropped down toward the kill site. About hundred yards above the raven racket, we hunkered down to quietly discuss our final game plan. I glassed down the hill through the oaks and caught occasional glimpses of what looked like large black leaves swirling around with an occasional raven thrown in the mix. I glassed more intently as I wanted to make sure I knew exactly where the gut pile was. I didn't want to come in on the wrong side and have my stalk blown by some fickle wisp of a breeze. Soon I picked out what proved to be the lungs hung on a low branch.

Locating the gut pile exactly was crucial in planning my stalk. Weaving my way downhill towards the kill, I knocked an arrow when I was about 30 yards from the top of the drop off. Suddenly the wind shifted. I paused knowing my stalk was blown. About that time two beautiful coated, mature coyotes came boiling out of the cut below. I grabbed my old Circe from around my neck, immediately knelt down, and began squalling like a pig dipped in hot oil. In all my years of calling predators, I have never called a coyote back in

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after spooking it, but I've never professed to be intelligent so I cut loose. A moment later, both yotes appeared about 200 yards below loping across a small opening at a pretty good clip when I hit them with another chorus of *someone put me out of my misery.* The bitch never looked back. The last I saw of her she was well on her way to Oregon, but the dog must have liked what he heard. He slammed on the brakes and swung his boxy head back up hill trying to locate whoever was in trouble. I gave him one short squall. He laid his ears back and here he comes on a dead run. I watched him sprint back towards me for about fifty yards before my view was obscured by the topography.

On both knees, my back muscles tensed as I tightened up the tension on my bow string while focusing on a large rock about 35 yards out that I thought he'd pop out by. A moment later he came loping around the rock as if I choreographed it. As he came into view I drew the Ol Bishasaurus and kissed the tip of my finger while I completely focused on a small tuft of hair on the song dog's shoulder.

He instantly saw the movement when I drew and slammed on the brakes broadside at 30 yards, lazering me with his yellow green eyes. But it was too late. In an instant my 580 grain, Zwickee Black Diamond tipped shaft flicked through the air taking out both shoulders and dropped him in his tracks. Gil was positioned about 80 yards behind and above me and witnessed the entire show. With fall fast approaching, despite the warm dry weather, the dog's winter coat had already come through, so we skinned him out and headed back to camp.

An hour before sunup the next morning three of us headed to the far south end of the ranch and hunted separate ridges down to the Eel River. All we located were a few does, a golden eagle and several coveys of quail. We hunted back up separate ridges to hunt our way to the truck. I was the first one on top and worked my way out west knowing the truck would pick me up on the way to camp. At around 11:30 I heard the truck coming from across the canyon and climbed back up to the road for my pick up. We were about 20 minutes into our 75 minute 4 wheel drive trip back to camp when Dave contacted Copeland on the radio. He said he thought he had hit a buck, and lined us out on where he was parked.

Dave has been a lifelong outdoorsman, hunting and fishing since he was a kid. In 1994 he fell off a roof and suffered a severe spinal cord injury which required 4 vertebrae to be fused during 6 spinal surgeries. During an early surgery they installed a metal cage around the crushed vertebrae in an effort to hold all the pieces together. When that didn't work, they went back in with plastic and bone glue. The following year, Dave was hit by a Cadillac while crossing in a cross walk and refractured a couple of the vertebrae. In 2012 he underwent another vertebrae fusion after suffering a spinal cord injury which left him with paralysis of the thigh and buttock muscle. He was told he'd never walk again, but by then he'd heard enough naysayers in his life and set out to prove them wrong again. While recovering from that surgery and learning to walk, he was diagnosed with tongue and neck cancer and began an aggressive treatment regime which included 35 radiation treatments plus chemotherapy. The treatments killed his salivary glands and he couldn't eat or swallow and was on a feeding tube till last year.

But Dave is tough. In 2015 he kicked cancer right in the butt and beat it.

Dave had to place his membership on inactive for a couple of years. Many might have just dropped out of the outdoors altogether. Copeland had offered to take Dave out with him on his "plus" in 2014 but Dave wasn't quite ready. For 2015, Dennis, Dave and Rick put in their selection forms for a one week trip. Where to? One of the most physically demanding ranches we have. On this morning, Dave heads out by himself, drives to the back of the ranch, hikes into a good looking area and shoots a very nice buck at 317 yards.

We drove another 25 minutes or so and saw Dave's truck and parked next to it. The three of us (Copeland, Dennis and I), hiked out a short ridge and found Dave glassing a meadow 300 – 400 yards below. He pointed out a large boulder on the far slope where he first saw the buck, and a grove of trees about 300 yards to the left where he said he shot from. Just beyond the boulder was a short saddle where the buck stood when he shot. He was sure he missed the first and third shots, but was fairly confident he'd connected with his second, even though the buck showed no sign of being hit and calmly walked over the saddle. We told Dave to sit tight and watch the hill. I hiked over the saddle and down the steep draw while Copeland and Corvelo came down and in from the sides in case the deer had been crippled.

I slipped and slid and fell about 250 yards down the hill without cutting any blood so I started to pull myself back up the slope. It was grab a limb, pull while taking a couple steps, and repeat. When I was about 100 yards from the top of the saddle I glassed up the slope for the twentieth time when I spied what looked like a shiny, round rock lodged up against the trunk of a small oak. The rock looked out of place and I thought, maybe, just maybe it was the ribcage of the buck. It took me a bit to pull myself up to it and Bingo. Dave scored. The buck was wedged in tight to the tree and the slope was so steep, that it took me several minutes to get the buck worked into position and tied off so I could even begin to gut it. Dennis showed up as I was finishing the dissection and helped me haul it out. Dennis would climb above me holding the antlers and pull while I pushed the buck up. He'd dig his heels in and hang onto the buck while I'd climb above him and repeat the drill. Once we got the buck out of the drainage, we tied the antlers to Dave's walking stick and drug it out to the next hillside.

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The Fine Art of Waterfowl Shooting

By Ed Migale, with Compliments to the late Bob Brister

I am borrowing the title of this issue's column from – out of respect for and admiration of – the late, great Bob Brister, former shooting editor at *Field & Stream* magazine. Brister's all-time classic book *Shotgunning: The Art & Science* should be required reading of everyone who goes afield for any type of winged quarry, especially waterfowl. From this perspective, here's why:

"The fine art of waterfowl shooting is a fading one, and most of the old masters are gone. We may never see such artists with duck guns again, because any art is perfected with practice and modern laws do not permit such feats (on wild birds) as those of market hunter Fred Kimble, who in 17 days of hunting in 1872 took 1,365 ducks and 5 brant.

"There were many more masters of the waterfowl gun …. As a boy, I was privileged to hunt with two such men, both getting on in years but still capable of remarkable skill at taking waterfowl. Fortunately they were also full of tales of earlier days, complete with lessons for a wide-eyed youngster who preferred their lessons to algebra class on a good duck morning." – Bob Brister, opening paragraphs in chapter 19, "The Fine Art of Waterfowl Shooting" in *Shotgunning: The Art & Science.*

Like Brister, I, too, as a boy, was privileged and blessed to hunt with old-timers who had hunted wildfowl for the market. Oh the stories! Like Brister, I couldn't get enough.

Interestingly, their lessons on duck shooting (ducks, not geese, were the preferred quarry of these men as the restaurants of the day paid top dollar for canvasbacks and pintails) had little to do about the fundamentals of shotgun shooting, i.e., swing, lead, etc.

No, the lessons I learned from these men can be summed up in one word: **strategy.**

The Set-Up

A successful waterfowl hunt starts with your set-up, and being in a place the ducks or geese want to be is "numero uno". Back when I made regular ventures to prairie Canada in early fall for field hunting of geese and ducks, I would drive 30 to 70 miles per afternoon, looking for concentrations of feeding birds. Once I received permission to hunt the field, I would use optics to watch the birds, determining the exact center of their activity so that come morning, I could set my decoys to replicate where they fed the afternoon prior.

While hunting here in California's Central Valley rarely allows that type of freedom of reconnaissance, I always go the extra mile to make sure my blind is camouflaged perfectly and blends *into* its immediate surroundings. And that my decoys are set in a welcoming, enticing way that says to approaching birds, "Hey! Everything's just fine here. Come on down and join the party!"

Call First, Shoot Second

In addition to welcoming the birds visually, I am a devout convert of the "Call Them in Close" school of waterfowl hunting. In my opinion, duck and goose calls are essential, vital tools for hunting success. Not only to attract the birds, but as an aid in positioning them for a perfect shot. Expert callers routinely use their calls to emit certain sounds at precise moments to finely adjust the bird's final approach for the defining moment of the hunt. Yes, wildfowl can be "steered" into a preferred position.

Use The Wind

Like airplanes, ducks and geese take off and land while moving into the wind. When choosing your set-up, placing your decoys, and even in the timing of your calling sequences, pay strict attention to the direction and velocity of the wind. There will be times when the velocity and direction of the wind – in relation to your

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set-up and calling – can assist you with positioning the birds for the perfect shot.

Read the Birds

In order to call effectively, you must be able to watch every movement of and response to your calling by the ducks/geese. This is what is referred to as "reading the birds". To do so efficiently you must keep visual contact, but in so doing if you can see them, then they could see you, right? Well, "yes" … and "no". The "no" (translation: "good!") comes as a result of wearing face paint or a face mask to hide your face. You'll get teased by some at times, but it can make a world of difference. I wouldn't hunt waterfowl without wearing face paint.

Timing is Everything

OK, you've done everything right and the birds are on final approach, wing tips down, air speed slowed. In just a few short seconds it will be time to shoot, but the *exact* time to come up out of your blind is of critical importance.

Come up too soon, and the birds can react very quickly, flaring back and making for a tough, on-the-edge-of-being-out-of-range shot.

Come up too late, and they can be past your frontal landing zone, forcing you to swing around in a half circle; which is difficult to do in the confines of a permanent blind, extremely difficult if your feet are mired in the mud of a free-roam position, and impossible to do if you are laying down in a dry field, or shooting out of a coffin blind. Yeah, timing IS everything.

And shooting with a partner or two compounds the difficulty, as one of the shooters might possess quick reflexes, while other(s) might be slower on the draw. So whenever hunting with others, it is imperative that the group decides on someone being the "pit boss"; i.e. the person who calls the moment when everyone comes up to shoot. Agree on the key term (such as "take 'em" or "now") before the action starts, and for safety's sake, establish shooting lanes, and whether shooting will be from sitting or standing. Everyone MUST dance the same dance!

Being successful at waterfowl hunting requires being able to down moving targets with a shotgun. Practicing at skeet or sporting clays can prep you on the mechanics of this skill, but it is the hunter who understands and employs strategy in how he or she *hunts the birds* – rather than just showing up with the goal of *shooting at* them – who will be consistently successful over the long haul.

So always think strategy. And always think safety. Good luck!

About the writer: *Ed Migale has hunted ducks and geese for 44 years throughout California and southern Oregon, along with waterfowling adventures in 2 Canadian provinces, Argentina and New Zealand.*

Grilled Bacon Wrapped Dove with Cranberry Chili Spice Glaze

By Bobbie Wasilko

Makes 12
Other birds such as quail or duck can be substituted for this recipe.

12 Whole Skin-On Dove (or quail, or **duck)
12 Slices Applewood Smoked Bacon

Sauce/Glaze:
1 Bottle Heinz Chili Sauce
14 ounce can Whole Cranberry Sauce
4 Tbs. Honey
1 tsp. Cinnamon
1/2 tsp. Ground Allspice

Kosher Salt, to taste
Black Pepper, to taste
Onion Powder, to taste

24 hours ahead: Salt birds with kosher salt and refrigerate, overnight.

Bring the birds to room temperature by pulling them from the fridge one hour ahead of cooking.

In a small pot add the chili sauce, honey, and cranberry sauce, cinnamon, and allspice, mix and heat through for a minute.

Heat the grill to 400º.
Wrap one piece of bacon around a bird and secure with a toothpick, if necessary.

Once all the birds are wrapped with bacon, season with black pepper, and a little onion powder.

Grill the birds, breast side down first, for two minutes. Turn over and grill the other side, for 2 minutes. Turn off burners, and baste with the cranberry chili glaze, close the grill lid and continue to roast for an additional 3 minutes (**for duck roast for an additional 6-7 minutes). ***Serve with warm glaze.***

Alternative Cooking Method:
If it's too cold outside to grill,
pre-heat the oven to 350ºF.
Heat a cast iron pan (or oven safe pan) on medium-high heat.
Add a few tablespoons canola oil.
Add the dove and sear until brown on both sides.
Baste the birds with the sauce and place in the oven to roast for an additional 4 minutes (**for duck, roast an additional 6-7 minutes).
Remove and Serve.

Bobbie Jo Wasilko
www.hehuntsshecooks.com

1st Annual Wilderness Unlimited Foundation Charity Sporting Clays Shoot

HOSTED BY: The Wilderness Unlimited Foundation

& SHOOT FOR A CURE

Dear Friend,

You are cordially invited to participate in the 1st Annual Wilderness Unlimited Foundation Charity Sporting Clays Shoot to be held at **Stockton Trap & Skeet Club** in **Stockton, CA** on **February 13, 2016**. The Wilderness Unlimited Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit organization (Fed. Tax ID #86-1164319) dedicated to preserving our outdoor heritage by educating responsible outdoors people, nuturing a love of the outdoors in our youth and improving our forests and streams.

We ask that each organization participate by fielding a team of four shooters; individual shooters will be squadded. Awards will be given for the highest scoring teams (organizations) and for the top individual shooters (Lewis class). First time shooters are welcome and encouraged to participate; shotguns and instruction will be provided free of charge.

For NSCA shooters, these will be registered targets.

CONTRIBUTION LEVELS:

Diamond Sponsor:	**$3,000**	**(Two available)** Includes all Platinum sponsor benefits **PLUS** a VIP shooting clinic and dinner for 4 the day before the event.
Platinum Sponsor:	**$2,000**	Includes four shooters, **station** sponsor recognition, Platinum gift, plus ammunition, targets, hats, knife, lunch and raffle ticket package.
Gold Sponsor:	**$1,500**	Includes four shooters, **gold** sponsor recognition plus ammunition, targets, hats, knife, lunch and raffle ticket package.
Silver Sponsor:	**$1,000**	Includes four shooters, **silver** sponsor recognition plus ammunition, targets, hats, knife and lunch.
Station Sponsor:	**$500**	Sponsor sign recognition at a shooting station (no shooters).
Individual Shooter:	**$125**	Includes ammunition, targets, hat, knife and lunch.

All participants will receive a USA Made BUCK knife with their registration!

Additionally, any help you can provide for raffle prizes such as trips, golf foursomes, camping equipment, outdoor gear or other prizes will contribute to the success of this worthwhile cause. It is our hope to raise **$20,000** this year. We are looking forward to seeing you at this ***one-of-a-kind, unique event!*** Please **RSVP by February 5, 2016,** as this event will sell out.

JENNA PERRY
Field Director and Youth Programs,
Wilderness Unlimited Foundation
Event Co-Chair

MARK S. GAGLIARDI
CEO, National Events Director,
Shoot For A Cure
Event Co-Chair

For Your Holiday Gift List!

Items For Under The Tree This Christmas

When There is No Tree in the Right Spot

Trail cameras are usually mounted on a tree with a strap, but what if there is no tree where you need to mount your trail camera? The answer is the Cam Stick from Stealth Cam.The Cam Stick is a durable heavy-steel post which allows you to mount your trail camera at a height up to 34 inches. It has a three-prong-footstep ground stake. It comes in two easy pieces which screw together. Your trail camera is attached to the stake via the standard tripod camera-style adapter. Once attached, your trail camera can be rotated 360 degrees and has a 270-degree vertical tilt adjustment. MSRP for the Cam Stick is $24.99. For additional information and/or to order the Cam Stick from Stealth Cam, visit gsmoutdoors.com.

Don't Drop That Rifle

Crooked Horn has recently released a new product called the Gun Commander. We have all experienced our rifle sling slipping off our shoulder. The Gun Commander stops your rifle sling from slipping by using a Sling Manager which wraps around your backpack shoulder strap, and its rubberized hook holds your sling in place. At the same time, its Stock Holster attaches to your pack waist strap or regular belt. The molded foam retainer will secure your rifle stock to your side. When worn properly, this two-point system will keep your hands free to maneuver rough terrain and becomes a safe way to carry your rifle. MSRP $70.00. For more information or to order your Gun Commander, visit crookedhorn.com or call 1-877+ 722-5872.

Don't Break Your Back

You've got the big buck, bear or hog on the ground. Now as you get your truck next to the animal you start thinking about how you will get it into the truck's bed. Even if there are two of you, this can be tough and backbreaking work. Viking Solutions LLC has just the answer for this lifting problem – it's their new Rack Jack Magnum. Its connection mount fits into a standard 2-inch hitch receiver and has two outboard legs to support the loading of up to 650 pounds. The heavy-duty, hand-crank winch is mounted to an offset boom, which is specially designed to facilitate loading straight into the bed of a truck. Set up time is less than 2 minutes. You can even use it with a UTV.

The Rack Jack Magnum breaks down for easy storage and transport. MSRP is $229. A smaller Rack Jack with 300-pound support is also available for $179.99. For more information on the Rack Jack Magnum, visit vikingsl.com.

A to Z Reloading DVD

Here is a "how-to," step-by-step course of instruction on the manufacture of superior ammunition. The American Gunsmithing Institute (AGI) is the producer of the new "Reloading from A to Z" DVD course. AGI believes people will be blown away by all the information in the course, which is intended for both gun guys and gunsmiths. Students will learn how to make hand-loaded ammunition tailored specifically to their needs. Any reloader – whether novice, intermediate or experienced – will benefit from this course and its clear explanations of the how's and why's of reloading. It will enable the student to make smart choices, both in purchasing tools and in using them to produce safe, quality ammunition. This is an AGI-certified course with testing and certification. The nonmember price is $497. The GCA Silver Price is $397.60. The pre-sale special price is $297. Call 1-800+797-0867 to order.

Extra Stocking Stuffers

New X-Bolt Varmint Stalker, Browning X-Bolt Varmint Rifles
Hornady Superformance Ammo -
SST bullets for out of state; GMX bullets for California
Nosler Trophy Grade Ammo -
AccuBond bullets for out of state;
E-Tip bullets for California
SD cards for trail cameras
2016 California Fishing License
Trekking Poles
Extra batteries for trail cameras and flashlights

Good Hunting and Fishing!
Jerry Springer, Editor • WesternHunter.com
Jerry@WesternHunter.com

Continued from page 25

Due to all the spinal surgeries Dave has endured, he is forced to walk hunched over and needs a walking stick to maintain his balance. But watching the guy hunt and cover ground, you'd never know what all he'd been through. He's as tough as anyone I've ever met.

Finally, we got the buck in the truck and headed back to camp. Everyone had a hand in it, especially Dave making an incredible shot (the buck only went 50 yards before piling up out of sight), and jumping in to skin with us. Once we got back to camp, we all jumped in and made quick work of skinning, and had it cooled down in less than two hours from when we found it.

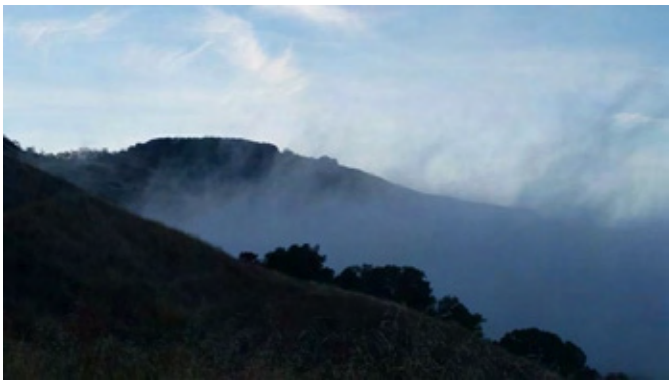
Besides making a quick, humane kill like Dave did, getting your game cooled down immediately is key to sweet tasting venison.

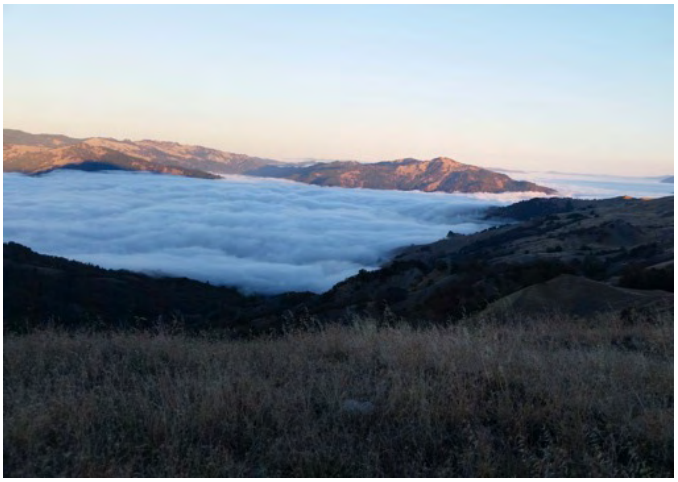
That night, after a typical gourmet meal by Copeland and Dennis which included salad, rice and bar b qued venison back strap and fresh heart and liver, Dave broke out his guitar and serenaded camp, as others couldn't help but gravitate to the sounds for a couple hours while the crew enjoyed cold beverages.

Dave stayed on with the group for a couple of more days. Good thing. On Wednesday evening a full size truck coming up the far side of the middle ranch road at dark slipped a tire off the road, with Dave in it. He calmly laid out that he needed two vehicles and at least one winch from different sides to ease the rig back on the road. Pays to have an engineer with you.

The comradery, *food*, stories, scenery and helping one another is what it's all about.

That's why I'm a lifelong member of WU.





Wilderness Unlimited Foundation Update

www.WUFound.org

2015 is coming to a close and we are looking towards 2016. It is shaping up to be a busy and exciting year for WUF, supporters and volunteers. We 'Thank You' for your support this year and look forward to seeing you at events in 2016.

Recap

Family Day on the Range - Shooting Clinic - We held a shooting clinic on November 7 at the WU property, Running Deer. It was a great turn out with over 40 shooters and a wonderful group of volunteers. Participants had the opportunity to practice their skills at trap, rifle and for the 18 and older, handgun. A BBQ lunch was provided and served overlooking Lake Berryessa. Stay tuned for more of these clinics at various locations coming in 2016!

Youth and Women's Pheasant Hunt – The 24th[h] Annual WUF Youth and Women's pheasant hunts were held the weekend of November 21. See article on page 35.

UPCOMING EVENTS

WUF Raffle is HERE! The WUF Raffle (Formally the WUF Winter Raffle) is kicking off **December 7, 2015**. Raffle items will include:
Remington VersaMax Shotgun • Weatherby V2 Camo 30-06 Rifle • Glock 19 - 9mm - Pistol • ATI Omni Hybrid (AR15) 223/556 - Rifle • Quest Bow Model AMP, 70#, LH or RH Realtree

NEW! Special Wood Duck Project gun! There will be a Wood Duck Project specific gun in the raffle this year. All tickets sold for this gun will directly fund our Wood Duck Project!

2016 Events

Ladies Waterfowl 2 Day Hunt - January 9-10, 2016
Space is Limited, Reservations required.

Beginning or not so new to hunting ladies are invited to hunt with a mentor as a group activity based out of the Sac Valley RV Camp on the weekend of January 9 & 10. The $50 fee includes dinner Friday night the 8th and, lunch and dinner on Saturday the 9th. Give it a try.

Sausage Making Class •

January 16, 2016

see page 5

Inernational Sportsman's Show is coming to Cal Expo – **January 21-24, 2016** (later in the month than it has the last few years). The Youth Fair is held Friday starting at 3:00 pm through Sunday 5:00 pm. Every year for 23 years, WUF and WU sponsor the famous "Lucy's Pond." This is a great opportunity for many kids to catch their first fish! It takes A LOT of volunteers to successfully run "Lucy." If you would like to volunteer please call the WU Hayward office. Also, for students that need volunteer credit, this counts!

Along with the pond, WUF will have a booth in the Youth Fair. Please make sure to stop by and say hello to WUF board members and volunteers and to try a fun activity! WUF Raffle tickets will also be sold at the WUF booth!

WUF and Shoot for a Cure Charity Sporting Clay Shoot, February 13, 2016 - We are so excited for the 1st Annual WUF Charity Sporting Clay Shoot, being held at the Stockton Trap & Skeet Club in Stockton, CA. WU Member and supporter of WUF, Mark Gagliargi came to us in mid 2015 and offered to host one of his amazing charity shoots to benefit the Foundation. Please see page 2 for the full event flyer. It is sure to be a great time! Don't miss out!

March 5, 2016 – The 21st Annual Wild Turkey Expo: Along with WU and the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), WUF will sponsor the 21st Annual Wild Turkey Hunting Expo at WU's Sacramento Valley RV Camp. This is the "Original Wild Turkey Expo". We expect the seminar to be lead by Ed Migale. The seminar will take place on Saturday, March 5 starting at 10 a.m. It's all part of the ongoing hunter education programs, sponsored by the Wilderness Unlimited Foundation (WUF). The seminar is open to the public, but, WU staff will be on hand to discuss WU ranches and reservations. A hot lunch will be served, courtesy of WUF and NWTF. A $15 lunch donation is suggested, ($10 for youth). Reservations Required.

WILD Dinner - April 23, 2016

Habitat and Wildlife Projects

Wood Duck Project –

2015 Wood Duck Project

WU started its wood duck nesting program 26 years ago. The program has grown to be perhaps the largest program in the state. This year Matt Meyer (coordinator) and Dennis Corvello had 23 different projects, over 300 deployed nesting boxes and at least 1320 confirmed hatchlings. They also banded 61 new hens and recaptured many more. To properly produce wood ducks, the boxes need to be maintained and physically checked routinely during the spring and early summer. Per Matt, " We finished the wood duck box checks for the season. The drought impacted the hatch. It is well known that many fields were not planted this year, left dry along with the adjacent ditches. Other fields were switched from rice to tomatoes or corn." The crew has the boxes cleaned and ready for 2016. If you can't physically help with the program, consider a donation to WUF in Diane Meyer's name for the continuance of this great program.

Thanks to Matt, Dennis and 2015 volunteer of the year, Kerwin Schetter.

WUF Supporter Events

Colusa Chapter Friends of the NRA Dinner, February 27, 2016 at 5:00PM. Please contact Karen Marks at karen95987@yahoo.com for details and tickets.

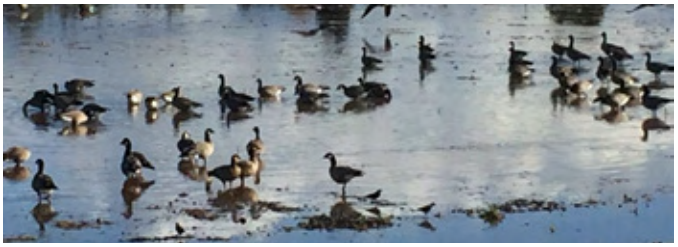
Drought and Hunting Terms

By Robert Moore

Drought conditions have affected hunting and fishing in many ways. Low water levels and water flows have resulted in the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) closing some waterways to angling. Fish have been moved from drying lakes and streams into other bodies of water. Even WU's Lake Margaret had a reduced season again this year. The fires over the last three years have major landscape changes. Fast moving fires seem to have done better by not sterilizing the ground but caught homes before fire fighters could save them. One downside is when the rains do make an appearance there is the potential of flash floods and slides. Be cautious hunting in these areas, a few hunters and hikers have been injured from falling trees.

Reports of game taken seem to have increased this year. This may be reality or with social media it's more visible. Shrinking water supplies and food sources tend to congregate game species and make them more susceptible to take. Regulations exist within CDFW related to hunting around certain water sources.

Reminder for Deer hunters this year, you are required to file/report your successful/unsuccessful deer tags or face a $20 dollar penalty the following year when you purchase a new license. You can either file/report online through DFW's website, go to a DFW office or mail back within 30 days after the close of the season. The $20 dollar fine is also applied to other tags or report cards not returned. A quick check on CDFW's website for the current count of reported bear take is up over the last couple of years since the closure of using dogs. Just over 1300 have been taken out of the 1700 quota with 8 weeks remaining of the season which closes December 27th. 2013 harvest records indicated 1073 bears were taken the first year after the dog closure, a 45% decrease from the 2012 season. Last year's take total was close to the 2013 records.



The California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) and the Wildlife Resources Committee (WRC) within the Commission have been discussing predator management. You know the story on bobcats, next discussion includes coyotes mainly but all other predators will be affected to some extent. The FGC is forming a tiered working group encompassing interested parties to meet and work out a plan within the WRC. FGC is taking applications at this writing but may have filled those positions by the time you get this article.

Several conservation groups including Safari Club, Boone & Crockett, Pope & Young etc. have had articles out in their publications discussing "Trophy Hunting" or 'Sport Hunting" since the incident in Zimbabwe. The term "trophy" or "sport" hunting has unfortunately created the illusion that hunters are only after the Horns, Antlers or a glorified picture. Certain organizations have capitalized on those terms in an attempt to sway the non-hunting public into that perception. Perception is viewed as Reality in today's social structure that includes all the internet media. "Trophy" that's in the eyes of the beholder, and has different meanings to each hunter, overall it means that the person has decided on that particular animal to pursue and take. "Sport" terminology in regards to hunting is a little more acceptable to the non-hunting public as they can somewhat relate to a sport they may participate in that doesn't have a trophy in the end per se. I've been asked many times why I hunt for sport or for a trophy, my reply is I don't do either one; hunting is a way of life to procure organic meat for food. I participate in the successful North American Wildlife Management model of maintaining healthy wildlife. Trophy, if I use it in any sense, may relate to a successful hunt that put meat in the freezer. There may have been antler, horn, hide or skull saved for my remembrance of that hunt for time, place and the challenged experienced.

Should the phrases "Trophy Hunting" and/or "Sport Hunting" be reduced or eliminated if that's not what we do? How about a new term "Management Hunting" or simply, "Hunting"?

Something to think about!

Junior/Women's Pheasant Hunt
November 21 and 22, 2015
By Doug Ridgway

This is the 24th year that I have been involved with Wilderness Unlimited's Annual Junior/Women's Pheasant Hunt. This year we started each session with the hunters warming up by shooting, at least, 5 clay pigeons. Dennis Corvelo helped them with their shooting and making sure they fit their guns. They used Wilderness Unlimited Foundation's (WUF) trap thrower. Over the last several years, WUF has helped to underwrite the annual pheasant hunts. This year they provided the clay pigeons and shells for the trap shooting.

As in the past several years, the hunters met at the RV Park's Club House before each hunt. In the morning they had the opportunity to enjoy gourmet pastries and coffee or hot chocolate before the hunt. After the morning hunt and before the afternoon hunt, the hunters were served hot dogs and Gene Bohner's World Famous Chili.

Like last year, the fields on the Bransford Club weren't available for us to use. Instead we went back to the Keeley Club. This was a different way of hunting than we are used to when we had rice fields to hunt in. Keeley has very low cover with thick tule patches scattered through it. Before each hunt, the fields were planted with 5 birds per gun.

On Saturday the Junior/Women's Hunt went off very well. All of the kids and women shot at least two birds and many with limits. Sunday was a repeat of Saturday! Everyone shot birds and several limited out. For both days, we had a 2.2 bird per gun average.

One of our volunteers was Cameron Cole. Cameron started participating in the Junior Hunts, got hooked on pheasant hunting and bought a pointer. After he turned 17 he couldn't participate in the Junior Hunts any longer. Instead he came down from Redding, on his own time, to help the other kids with their hunt. Cameron is now going to college in Klamath Falls, OR and he still took time, out of his busy schedule, to help us again this year. Last year he brought his fiancée to help us. They got married in September and this year he brought his wife to help us! Thank you Cameron and Morgan!

It takes many people to put on these hunts. Each and everyone deserve huge thanks for their efforts, year after year, to put these hunts on. I would like to start with Rick Copeland and his staff in the office for handling the reservations and publicity and for WUF helping to underwrite the costs of the hunts. For WU staff members John Wilhite and Jerry Delgado for getting the pheasants and helping the volunteers plant them. For the WU members, Dave Conrad, Larry Main, Dennis Corvelo, Ron Weaver, Gilbert Loredo, Steve Pate, Cameron and Morgan Cole who helped to plant the birds and for working with the women and juniors. Last but, by no means least, Mayor Gene Bohner for his help with getting everyone signed in and for the coffee and hot chocolate in the morning and the hot dogs and chili for lunch.

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