

## Game Warden Field Notes

The following items are compiled from recent Texas Parks and Wildlife Department law enforcement reports.

- **Sleepy Hollow-like**

Two Van Zandt County game wardens received a tip about three individuals who had killed two large white-tailed bucks, still in velvet, at night with a spotlight. After interviewing the subjects, the wardens found out the two bucks were shot at night with a .22 rifle and their heads had been removed. Numerous cases against those involved are pending.

- **Plan B**

While patrolling Lake Fork during early teal season, two Van Zandt County game wardens saw two boats with hunters shooting shore birds. Unable to make contact with the groups in the water, the wardens notified a Wood County game warden who was in the area in his Go-Devil boat. However, the Wood County warden's boat had developed mechanical problems earlier that morning, so he improvised and created another plan. After finding a willing duck hunter with a mud motor who gladly volunteered to take him to the group, multiple shore birds and one hen wood duck were recovered, and multiple cases were filed.

- **Two-fer**

A Cherokee County game warden responded to a call regarding spotlighting and shots fired west of Maydelle. Recognizing the vehicle description, the warden found the vehicle, which was still in the area. After a brief interview of the two subjects in the vehicle, individuals the warden had previously filed on twice each for hunting violations, they admitted to shooting at a hog from the county road. Cases pending.

- **Hunting in the Wrong Place**

A game warden from Dallam and Hartley counties and a Lubbock County game warden lieutenant received a call opening morning of pronghorn season about a hunter who shot pronghorn on their property in eastern Dallam County. After a short investigation, the hunter was located hunting two miles north of the property he had permission to hunt on. The pronghorn was seized and charges were filed.

- **Trouble with the Swerve**

A Hunt County game warden was patrolling for night hunters around midnight near a deer breeding facility when he saw a vehicle stop on the highway not far from him. The warden investigated further and saw the vehicle turn down a dirt road and begin driving along the high fence belonging to a ranch. He continued to follow the vehicle and saw that it was being driven all over the roadway. A traffic stop was made and the warden found that the driver was intoxicated. He was unable to complete any sobriety exercises. At the jail, the driver blew a .175 on the Intoxilyzer. Case pending.

- **Oh deer...**

After receiving several calls from dispatch about "peppering" from dove hunters, a Gillespie County game warden met with the hunters, one of whom led him to his residence where his hunting license was stored. While checking the license, the warden noticed a cage in the man's backyard with a fawn inside. The man said he found the fawn "abandoned" on the

side of the road and brought it home a few months back. Case pending.

- **Underage and Under the Influence**

While patrolling for dove hunting violations, two Starr County game wardens saw a pickup truck leaving a ranch with two unrestrained juveniles riding in the bed. After contact was made, one of the wardens saw two open alcoholic containers in the cab of the truck, and detected a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage. After interviewing the driver and performing standardized field sobriety tests, the driver was placed under arrest for DWI with a child passenger under 15 years old (state jail felony) and was transported to the Starr County Jail.

- **Hidden in Plain Sight**

After spending the morning checking fisherman on the Coletto Creek Reservoir, two Goliad County game wardens were headed to the field to check dove hunters in the area. The wardens found a newer model crew cab truck stashed suspiciously in the brush. A check of the vehicle identification number showed the truck to be stolen out of Houston. The case was turned over to the Goliad County Sheriff's Department.

- **Caught in the Act**

A Brooks County game warden and a Kleberg County game warden returned to a large ranch in southern Brooks County to locate a group of dove hunters the wardens believed to be in violation of the law. The wardens eventually found the hunters and observed them from the brush as they enjoyed their dove hunt past legal shooting time and with plenty of bird action. The wardens rushed in soon after and were running over chicken scratch to get to them. Once contact was made and everything was checked out, multiple citations were issued, including: baiting migratory birds; hunting with unplugged shotgun, no hunting licenses, hunter education; and waste of game of a javelina. Cases pending.

- **Work in Progress**

Bexar County game wardens were asked to assist Terrell County game wardens on a hunting without landowner's consent case involving two aoudad rams that were taken by four suspects caught on a game camera and the subsequent posting of their illegal hunt on Facebook. Terrell County arrest warrants were issued, and to date, three suspects have been arrested in Bexar County and a search warrant of one of the suspect's residence yielded an aoudad ram skull. Bexar County game wardens are continuing to search for the fourth suspect in the case.