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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

OH DEER!

Some days, I look out my window and see deer, lots of deer. They wander next to the chicken coop, staring down the hens who dare them to come closer. Other times, does and fawns are bedded down in the yard, chewing with sleepy eyes. On my drive into Club headquarters during the fall, I need at least one cup of coffee in my veins to stay alert for any rut-crazed bucks hopping fences, chasing whitetail. If you haven't guessed, Montana is crawling with deer. And we're not the only state with an abundance of venison.

There are roughly 35 million deer (give or take) in the U.S. today. Compare that figure to the 300,000 deer estimated to roam the States in the early 1900s. That's one heck of a conservation success story, and the Club played a major role in those early conservation efforts by ending market hunting and setting bag limits on big game.

Today, we reap the benefits of the Club's forward-thinking founders as we take to the forests and

fields every fall to fill the freezer with delicious deer meat. If lucky, we might even come across a "Booner" for the wall. Deer hunting is a celebrated pastime in North America, so we have dedicated this issue of *Fair Chase* to all things deer.

As for deer hunting stories, we've got a great line-up, including an adventurous Sitka blacktail bowhunt from record-book frequent flyer Allen Bolen. We've also got the lowdown on a 32nd whitetail whopper called the Huff Buck—the biggest U.S. typical and second only to the Hansen buck. In addition, we've got a very special package of two stories about the same hunt. One is written from Dad's perspective, the other by his daughter who killed a magnificent record-book whitetail in South Dakota.

On the conservation side, we reached out to our partners at the Mule Deer Foundation, who provided an update on some of their current projects. Writer Everett Headley penned a story on axis deer in Hawaii and how locals may have

found a solution before the deer eat themselves out of a home. And you'll also find plenty of regular departments and columns with their own spin on deer.

We also hope you notice a few changes as you flip through the pages. I'm a designer at heart, and we are slowly integrating new looks into *Fair Chase*. It's a new year, so why not? Speaking of new, I'd like to introduce and welcome our new Boone and Crockett Club President, Tony Caligiuri. Be sure to read his column if you haven't already. We're excited about what 2025 has in store.

This spring, as the snow begins to thaw and you head into the hills in search of antler gold, we hope that you toss this issue of *Fair Chase* in the truck and bring it with you. Or better yet, pass it along to a friend once you're done reading. Happy spring and happy reading. ■



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