



FAIR CHASE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB



WHITETAIL DEER

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Top 2 Typical Whitetails

206-1/8 ▲ North American White-tailed Deer Museum
Burnett County, Wisconsin

205 ▲ Missouri Show-Me Big Bucks Club
Randolph County, Missouri

Top 2 Non-Typical

333-7/8 ▲ Missouri Dept. of Conservation
St. Louis County, Missouri

328-2/8 ▲ North American White-tailed Deer Museum
Portage County, Ohio

Characteristics

The whitetail deer is a moderately large deer. The average full-grown buck weighs about 150 pounds and a large buck can weigh up to 200 pounds. Does usually weigh around 100 pounds.

The antlers, which are usually shed during the first part of the new year, are low, compact and well suited for undergrowth of deciduous woodland.

Unlike the bighorn sheep, elk, moose, and caribou that emigrated to America via the land bridge that once existed between Asia and Alaska, the whitetail deer is of New World origin. It was derived from a primitive cervid stock that existed in North America between ten and twenty million years ago. Modern whitetail, much the same as the animals we see today populated this continent a million years ago.

The overall geographical range of the whitetail extends from Nova Scotia and the southern tip of Hudson Bay across Canada to British Columbia, south through the United States, Mexico, Central America to Columbia in South America and some of the adjacent islands, but not Vancouver or Newfoundland.

The shy, elusive, whitetail is a browsing animal and feeds on the trees green leaves and twigs of shrubs and the lower branches of trees.

Of the 35 tabulated categories listed in the Records of North American Big Game, 10th Edition, the whitetail deer "typical" category leads the numbers game by a wide margin. The non-typical category follows. There are 1450 typicals and 1011 non-typicals.

It doesn't take much savvy to understand why. The range of the whitetail deer far exceeds that of any other North American big game animal. The numbers of whitetail hunters far exceed all others. Consequently the whitetail deer is the most popular big game animal in North America. Until one hunts this wary critter as a mature, trophy class animal, the full extent of its backwoods mastery may not display itself. Those 5-1/2 to 7-1/2 year old whitetails are the toughest customers of all.

Minimum Scores Typical

Awards Records Book- 160

All-Time Records -170

Non-Typical

Awards Records Book- 185

All-Time Records -195

Currently there are actually 30 races of the whitetail deer in North America. They range from the Coiba Island whitetail in Panama to the Northern Woodland whitetail, Columbian whitetail, and the Northwest whitetail in Canada. The Boone and Crockett Records Program tabulates but one classification of whitetail with the exception of the Coues' whitetail which has a much lower minimum score than the main class.

Across the expanse of whitetail terrain, more hunters experience the thrills and chills of harvesting a qualified Boone and Crockett specimen than any other species. Living in Texas it is quite easy to understand why I am in contact with many more whitetail hunters and their trophies than any other big game animal. I score many bonafide "All-

Time" and "Awards Book" whitetails every year.

It is pleasing to note the elation beaming from the eyes of most hunters when that final score is tabulated. The entire account leading to the moment of truth is often described to me in great detail. A true trophy hunter can identify and more easily understand the nervous excitement ensued by another just as de-



TOP: OFFICIAL MEASURER, JOHN STEIN, KEEPS BUSY WITH THE ABUNDANCE OF TROPHY WHITETAIL IN TEXAS.

RIGHT: FRANCES WEIL, EIGHT-YEARS OLD WITH HER WHITETAIL TAKEN IN JIM HOGG COUNTY, TEXAS, THAT SCORES 170-1/8 POINTS.



The rewards of securing a record book whitetail is not as limited to serious sportsmen as it may be when we speak of North American wild sheep for example. The numbers game once again comes into play. When so many hunters take to the field in pursuit of the whitetail, there is bound to be a mixture of success.

For example, women and children harvest record book whitetails yearly. In 1992, two women took trophy whitetails in Texas alone that surpass the minimums for entry into the Boone and Crockett All-Time Records Book. Last season in Texas, three youngsters cashed in on "book" scoring bucks. One was an 8-year old girl, and two were boys of 12 and 13.

voted individual. Often times a duration of dedicated hunts has led to the grand finale of that distinguished "once-in-a-lifetime" trophy. More often than not the camaraderie shared by fellow hunters within the same pasture is an important effect to the experience as a whole. In many cases this involves family members on their own private land holdings.

The most gratification I perceive radiates from the hard earned animal that took so much to acquire or the one that was not quite in range but finally did reappear within a safe distance to facilitate a benevolent attempt. When one has braved the elements and hunted weeks on end in pursuit of that singular buck spotted days before the season, I know that sportsman will always remember and feel the tranquillity associated with that hunt.

All three were escorted by their fathers. This makes the moment that much more special.

Let no one be misled, the future hunters are the children of today. Fewer young hunters is unfortunately the trend. Do your duty next season, introduce a child into the enchanting world of hunting.

If you are fortunate enough to enter the backwoods this coming whitetail season, do it with respect and some serious strategy. The most popular of all trophies is at your doorstep...somewhere in that thicket!

When game laws are adhered to and the knowledge that your trophy is free ranging and fairly competing with other specimens within the vast stretch of whitetail existence, you can be proud of taking that super trophy in fair chase.