

The history of the Boone and Crockett Club is a tale of over 127 years of measured and thoughtful commitment to conservation. It is a commitment that balances human needs with wildlife needs.

We will be celebrating the anniversaries of the passage of laws, the establishment of institutions, and the designation of wildlands, which exist today in large part because of the extensive efforts of the Club and its dedicated membership.

## Migratory Bird Treaty Centennial

One of the seven principles of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation is that wildlife is to be considered an international resource. One of the first steps that led to this principle becoming law was the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1916. The year marks the centennial of the Convention between the United States and Great Britain (acting on behalf of Canada) for the Protection of Migratory Birds (also called the Migratory Bird Treaty), signed on Aug. 16, 1916. That Migratory Bird Treaty and three others that followed—with Mexico, Japan, and Russia—form the cornerstones of efforts to conserve birds that migrate across international borders.

Concern to protect what was left of dwindling migratory bird populations began several years earlier in 1904 led by Boone and Crockett Club member George Shiras III, a congressman from Pennsylvania. It took until 1913 for the Club to assemble enough political support to place migratory birds under Federal jurisdiction. The first piece of legislation was the Weeks-McLean Act of 1913. The Weeks-McLean Act was designed as the first attempt to stop commercial market hunting and the illegal shipment of migratory birds from one state to another. Pushed through Congress with the help of Congressman and Club member John W. Weeks, the Weeks-McLean Act rested on weak constitutional grounds, having been passed as a rider to an appropriations bill for the Department of Agriculture.

It was soon replaced by the

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, which decreed that all migratory birds and their parts (including eggs, nests, and feathers) were fully protected. The law prohibited the spring hunting and marketing of migratory birds and the importation of wild bird feathers for women's fashion ending what was called "millinery murder." Also instrumental in initiating this included Club members Congressman George Shiras III, John Bird Burnham, Edward William Nelson, T. S. Palmer, William T. Hornaday, Madison Grant, Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn, T. Gilbert Pearson, George Bird Grinnell, Charles S. Davidson, and Elihu Root. ■



## 110th Anniversary of B&C Score

Boone and Crockett Club's involvement with keeping records goes all the way back to its very roots. Theodore Roosevelt, George Bird Grinnell, and Archibald Rogers, all founding fathers of B&C, served as Competition Judges for the first-ever Sportsman's Exposition held at Madison Square Garden in 1895, which became an annual event. In 1902, Roosevelt, Rogers, and Caspar Whitney were appointed to a committee assigned the task of creating a standard scoring procedure for native North American big game. In 1906 the Boone and Crockett Club published the first book on the

subject in North America, titled *Game Book of the Boone and Crockett Club*. The purpose of this book was to put into practice a uniform standard of measurements of the large game species of North America.

B&C published its first records book, which was edited by Prentiss N. Gray, in 1932 titled, *Records of North American Big Game*. Included were relatively few specimens that were listed by simple criteria of length and spread of horns, antlers, or skulls. This volume was followed by a second edition in 1939. The latter edition is especially notable for a chapter authored by Grancel Fitz on his ideas for a complex, objective system of measurements, which would result in a numerical score that would naturally rank trophies. This chapter furnished an excellent counterpoint to a rival system being used by Dr. James L. Clark, a noted taxidermist and longtime Club member, for his personal Big Game Competitions.

Both systems had serious flaws but were superior to the measurement system devised by TR's committee in 1902. In 1947, the Club began annual Big Game Competitions, with winners being determined by a Judges Panel. While these proved popular, they also highlighted the subjective nature of awards based entirely upon the opinions of a group of judges, no matter how well qualified. There was an obvious need for an objective system that could be applied by sportsmen to their own best trophies. In 1949, Samuel B. Webb, well known to Club members and a close friend of both Fitz and Clark, was chosen to chair a special committee of the Club to devise an equitable, objective measurement system for native North American big game.

The fruits of their yearlong labor resulted in a more equitable scoring

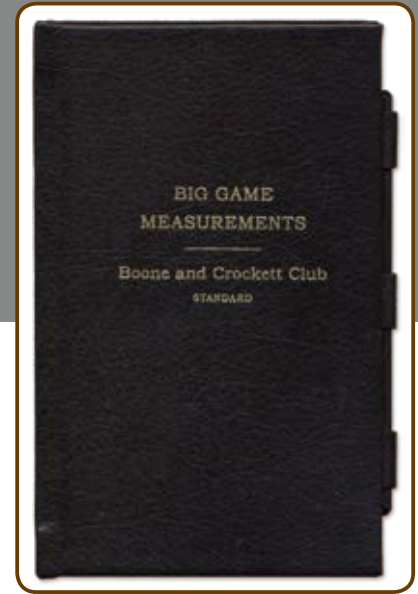
## OWN A PART OF HISTORY

1906 Reprint - Big Game Measurements - Boone and Crockett Club Standard

The Club is pleased to offer this limited edition reprint of the first scoring manual published by the Boone and Crockett Club. *Game Book of the Boone and Crockett Club* was originally published by Club member James Hathaway Kidder in 1906. There are only four known copies of the 1906 edition in existence today.

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system adopted by B&C in 1950. Prior to publication, it was circulated to 250 sportsmen, biologists, and other interested parties for their comments. Once adopted, the system, which B&C still uses today, quickly became established as the universally accepted standard for measuring native North American big game. B&C's scoring system depends upon carefully taken measurements of the horns, antlers, etc., to arrive at a numerical final score that provides instant ranking for all trophies of a category. Unlike all other systems, B&C's system places heavy emphasis on symmetry, penalizing those portions of the measured material that are non-symmetrical. This results in even, well-matched trophies scoring better and placing higher in the rankings than

equally developed but mismatched trophies, a result that most people readily accept. Non-typical categories were established for those antlered trophies with unusual amounts of abnormal point material to give them recognition, as they would be unduly penalized in the typical categories. This scoring system will be used to determine the final scores of the trophies accepted for this year's 29th Big Game Awards Banquet. ■

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