

BRIAN ROSS: PORTRAIT OF AN ANTLER COLLECTOR

With 76 entries and counting, Brian Ross has the largest collection of whitetails belonging to any individual in the Boone and Crockett records.



The Trapline Buck, taken by Flora Campbell in 1953.

Brian Ross started collecting antlers in 1983 when he was 10 years old. He still has his first set, an eight-point whitetail with a broken brow tine that sits over his bed in his Maine home. He got his first bow a couple of years later and remains a hardcore bowhunter. As a kid, he would “go around banging on doors” to find antlers. Now 50, Ross has been collecting for so long that people know who he is, and the days of banging on doors in search of antlers are over.

Ross never intended to be in the records at all. For 30 years, he never entered a deer in the books. In 2021, he entered 47 whitetails. In 2022, he entered 17. “I’m entering them now because the collection I’ve put together is very special, and I’m getting older,” he says. “I want to have some type of record and share them with my fellow hunters. It’s been a good portion of my life’s work to acquire and preserve these world-class whitetails. If I die before they’re entered, decades of my research and history on these deer will be lost.”

IF MOUNTS COULD TALK

A score sheet adds up points, but it doesn’t tell a story, which is part of the reason Ross is entering his collection now. He wants to make sure the story goes with the antlers. Stories like the one that follows the Flora Campbell buck. Some call it the Trapline Buck.

Ross first read about this buck as a kid in the early 1980s in the pages of *North American Whitetail* magazine. In 1953, Flora Campbell and her husband were hunting their trapline around Cherryfield, Maine. This particular buck was entirely consumed by a hot doe, and Flora dropped it. For more than 40 years, Flora’s buck was the highest-scoring whitetail killed by a woman in the U.S. Today, it ranks sixth in Maine for non-typical whitetails.

NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER

ABNORMAL	
Points	Line
7	6
1.3	1.6
8.4	6.3
1.6	1.2
5.7	7.2
2.5	1.7
2.7	
Totals	30
TO E	24.4

DEC 14 1970

DETAIL OF POINT MEASUREMENT

Supplemental Data	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4
A. Number of Points on Each Antler	11	10		
B. Tip to Tip Spread	11.1			

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“That’s one of the most important sets of antlers to me,” Ross says. “Reading the story over and over throughout my childhood and dreaming about hunting and trapping the wilds of Maine and chasing giant-racked deer like that fueled my passion to collect and preserve our hunting heritage by collecting antlers. Flora’s deer is just a beautiful, heavy specimen from Downeast Maine that was taken nearly 70 years ago. There hasn’t been a bigger one submitted into the records from that area since.”

Ross met the legendary antler collector Fred Goodwin when he was in his teens. He calls Goodwin one of the pioneers of antler collecting who began saving not just trophy deer antlers in the 1920s but the stories behind them.

Ross remembers picking up issues of *North American Whitetail*, which featured giant whitetails like the Hole in the Horn Buck, currently the second-biggest whitetail in the records. In the early 1980s, Goodwin sold his antler collection to Dick Idol, who co-founded *North American Whitetail*. Since then, Ross has spent years searching for and acquiring many of the biggest heads that were part of Goodwin’s collection, including the Father Maney Buck—one of the oldest trophies in the Boone and Crockett records.

Father Maney was a priest who lived in Danforth, Maine, in the mid- to



Ross also owns the legendary Silver Ridge Buck taken by Fred Goodwin in 1949 in Silver Ridge, Maine. With a 225-6/8-inch typical frame and a 36-inch spread, it is considered one of the very biggest-looking deer in the world, Ross says. This photo of Fred with the buck in the back of his old truck is one of the most historical photos of a giant whitetail there is, he adds.

late-1800s. He killed a 30-inch wide buck prior to the Civil War. In 1934, Goodwin wanted to buy the rack, and he tracked down a relative of Father Maney who still had it. He bought the rack for five dollars. Eight decades later, Ross added the deer to his own collection. “It doesn’t have a big score. It barely makes the book,” Ross says. “But there’s Maine deer hunting history there, and it’s not going to repeat itself. I don’t chase down yesterday’s big buck. I try to acquire historic trophy deer killed decades ago because I love the history of deer hunting.”

Ross has a soft spot for Maine whitetails, which is related to his love of the Maine woods and the rich sporting history of the Big Woods. He’s collected a



Father Maney’s buck was harvested in Aroostook Co., Maine, some time in the mid-1800s.



The Gould Buck, which has a B&C score of 259 points, still carries one of the highest, if not the highest, amount of mass measurements for a wild whitetail in the records today.

number of state records, including Maine's jaw-dropping number one non-typical, the Hill Gould buck.

Gould was a Maine guide in the early 1900s. He carved out a day to hunt for himself, and this monster appeared out of the alders. Hill shot it, dressed out the deer, and brought the heart and liver back to the hunting shack. After tossing the organs on the table, his buddies couldn't believe they came from a deer; their best guess was a moose. The antlers are pretty big, too, with 31 scorable points and circumference measurements totaling more than 70 points. The Gould Buck still carries one of the highest, if not the highest, amount of mass measurements for a wild whitetail in the records today.

HE'S NOT DONE

When Ross decided to record his collection in the Boone and Crockett records, he contacted a Boone and Crockett Official Measurer who spent three solid days measuring 47 whitetails, 43 of which made the All-time book. Ross' current record-book count sits at 76 entries, but he's not done. Over the next few years, he hopes to enter a few dozen more.

"What I want people to see is that the passion for acquiring and collecting trophy deer and recording them is the same as those who hunt them," Ross says. "This is not just the history of antlers but the history of white-tail deer and deer hunting in North America." ■



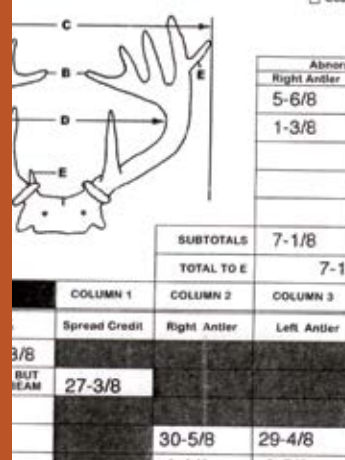
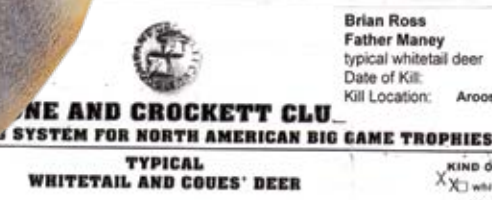
Species	Final Score	All-Time Rank	Sex	Location	State/Year
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	260	1	♂		Brown Co. MS
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	256	68	♂		Hillsborough Co. NH
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	245 5/8	125	♂		Felkir Co. GA
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	222 7/8	748	♂		Grafton Co. NH
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	207 3/8	2673	♂		Argentwell Co. QC
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	248 5/8	142	♂	Unknown	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	275 1/8	28	♂	Picked up	Brian Ross
TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	199 1/8	28	♂	Unknown	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	247	152	♂	Danny Gallagher	Brian Ross
TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	194 2/8	89	♂	D. Evans & S. Walker	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	233 3/8	376	♂	Reynold A. Vokovac	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	233 1/8	384	♂	Don McDonald	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	264	48	♂	Sam Michael	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	229 7/8	562	♂	Flora Campbell	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	295 6/8	1767	♂	Unknown	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	245 5/8	168	♂	Flora	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	218 2/8	1915	♂	Flora	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	220	900	♂	Flora	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	281 7/8	3062	♂	Flora	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	232	413	♂	Flora	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	215 3/8	942	♂	Flora	Brian Ross
NON-TYPICAL WHITETAIL DEER	198 2/8	1715	♂	Flora	Brian Ross



BIG GAME RECORDS LIVE

Every big game animal entered and accepted into the Club's Records Program from 1830 to present are available through this searchable database. Whether you are looking for a particular entry or doing your homework to find out which areas are producing trophy-class game you will find this database easy to navigate and loaded with options to find exactly the information you are looking for.

Search by species, score, rank, location, date, range of dates, specific measurements, hunters name - this list of query questions is endless. Big Game Records - LIVE also includes links to thousands of field photos, portrait photos, and vintage images from B&C's Archives. New photos are added on a regular basis.



VIEW THE SCORE CHARTS

Scan the QR code and log in to see Flora's, Father Maney's, and Gould's score charts.

