

BOONE AND CROCKETT CLUB LIBRARY

It is known that the Club's interest in big-game records keeping goes back to its very roots and its founding fathers Theodore Roosevelt, George Bird Grinnell, and Archibald Rogers. In 1895, these three members served as big game judges for the first-ever Sportsman's Exposition held at Madison Square Garden in New York City. In 1902, the Club's Executive Committee assigned Roosevelt, Rogers, and Caspar Whitney to a special subcommittee with a goal of creating a standard scoring procedure for native North American big game.

For decades, it was believed that the next significant event in the Club's records-keeping activities was publication of the Club's first record book, *Records of North American Big Game*, in 1932. However, the discovery of an extremely rare copy of *Big Game Measurements* rewrote that history. It was edited by B&C Club member James H. Kidder and published in 1906 by Grinnell's Forest and Stream Publishing Company. It was the culmination of the work performed by Roosevelt's subcommittee.

For Boone and Crockett Club book collectors *Big Game Measurements* really is the "Holy Grail." Only two copies of the original edition of this extremely rare B&C publication are known to exist. The first one, with a much deteriorated cover, sold on eBay in 2005 to a private

individual. The second copy, which is in very good condition considering the age and the leather binding, was purchased by B&C in 2008 for the Club's library from a private individual. It is believed that less than 100 copies were printed in 1906 and sold to Club members.

The scoring system detailed in *Big Game Measurements* was very different from the Club's current scoring system adopted in 1950. For example, no skull measurements were taken of bears. Instead, eleven different physical body measurements, such as standing height at the shoulders and gross weight, were recorded. Measurements recorded for sheep included only the length of horn, circumference of base, and the tip-to-tip spread. These are the actual measurements that were included in the first edition of *Records of North American Big Game*.

In 1932 the Club established the second uniform measuring system for all native North American big game trophies. This was initiated by Club members Prentiss N. Gray, Carl Rungius, James L. Clark, Samuel B. Webb, and Dr. Harold E. Anthony. The Club published its first edition of the record book, *Records of North American Big Game*, under the auspices of the National Collection of Heads and Horns at the New York Zoological Society after scouring museums of the world and sport hunters' trophy

collections for specimens. Trophies were ranked by simple measurements such as length of longer antler or horn.

In 1950 the Club adopted a more comprehensive and universally-accepted method for measuring big game trophies and gathering data to now evaluate population health and habitat quality, which leads to improved state and federal wildlife policy and management. The new measuring system was created and tested by Grancel Fitz, and Club members Samuel B. Webb, James L. Clark, Milford Baker, Frederick K. Barbour, and Dr. Harold E. Anthony from the American Museum of Natural History.

The first B&C record book, *Records of North American Big Game*, using the Club's copyrighted scoring system adopted in 1950 was the third edition published in 1952. It was followed by 11 subsequent editions over the years, with the next edition scheduled for 2023.

The Club added a new type of record book to its publications repertoire in 1984. *Boone and Crockett Club's 18th Big Game*



TOP: The first edition of *Records of North American Big Game* published in 1932.
BOTTOM: One of two known copies of the original *Big Game Measurements*, published in 1906.

Awards was the first of its kind and included only those trophies (950) accepted during the 18th Awards Program of 1980-1982.

Since then, Awards Program record books have been published every three years. *Boone and Crockett Club's 30th Big Game Awards*, published in 2019, lists and ranks over 4,400 trophies accepted from 2016 to 2018. This number of accepted entries for a three-year entry period is a reflection of what conservation-minded hunters have done for conservation and the effectiveness of the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation.

The All-time and Awards books differ in significant ways. The All-time

record book includes all trophies accepted since 1950, which surpass current All-time minimum entry scores. The Awards Program record book includes only those trophies accepted during the stated three-year Awards Program but at reduced minimum scores for many of the categories. The inclusion of hundreds of portrait and field photos, along with the hunting stories of the trophies receiving B&C Medallions and Certificates makes the Awards Program record book a uniquely enjoyable book for the trophy hunter, while the All-time record book provides the definitive answers to questions regarding statistics for native North American big game. ■

In 2010 the Boone and Crockett Club published a limited edition reprint of the 1906 *Big Game Measurements* book. Read more about the limited edition reprint, as well as the *Boone and Crockett Club's 30th Big Game Awards* on page 43.

