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Texas Bowhunters' Journal  
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# TEXAS BOWHUNTERS' JOURNAL

## TBJ Goes International

The Texas Bowhunters' Journal has been more successful than I could have ever imagined. The response has been great. Our subscription list is now over 100 names. We have developed a nice "staff" of writers whom have consistently submitted stories, pictures and articles. J.P. Davidsson, Dennis Mulder, Glenn Lemke and Bobby Davis have each submitted multiple items for your reading enjoyment and several others have contributed various interesting stories and how-to's.

Each month I look forward to the articles that are submitted. I immediately check my e-mail each day in anticipation of new reading. I'm actually disappointed now on those days that I don't get anything! But when I see new mail coming through, I can't print it out and read it fast enough!

I appreciate the kind words that many of you have sent regarding the newsletter. Knowing that people appreciate the journal makes it more than worth the effort that is put into publishing it each month.

The journal has even ventured outside of Texas, and outside the United States, for that matter. When a gentleman from Australia, Pete Hodge, requested stories and pictures from American bowhunters on **The Bowsite**, I sent him the first two issues of the journal. He responded by sending a picture of a boar that he killed recently, which I have included in this issue. Thanks, Pete!

Keep the stories coming as the success rates increase during the December rut. I encourage you to write the details of your hunt not only for my benefit or the

benefit of our readers, but most importantly for your future reflection as you look back on your hunts in the years to come.

Thanks again, and enjoy this month's Texas Bowhunters' Journal!

## DOES: Any Less a TROPHY?

*Anachoia Mt Man*

How many times have you heard the comment; "Oh I just got a doe." For those of us that have gun hunted that comment is pretty common because of the fact that the whitetail doe is indeed, at times, a very easy animal to kill. Especially when we take advantage of firearms, distance factors and feeders. On the other hand, the taking of a doe with a bow can be a very exciting and challenging endeavor. I have personally taken a large number of does over the past ten years. I have made it a goal to take all of my does each season with my bow. I work very hard at taking my single buck with my bow, but because I hunt on a trophy ranch it is not always possible to fill my tag by the end of December and I have at times regressed by picking up my rifle and taking that elusive buck that always shows up on the far side of some deep draw.

As I stated, taking a doe with a bow can be a real challenge. I'd like to share a couple of those "hard" hunts. During the 1996 season I had set up a tree stand in an area we call the mott. This area is a large stand of oaks on a dry creek bed. The oaks grow against the face of a cliff to the south and border a mesquite flat to the north, with a ranch road running east and west through the oaks. We have a feeder in the flat, and corn the road. There are lots of animals that use this

area and it would appear to be an easy place to ambush a buck or doe. During that 1996 season the oaks had a tremendous number of acorns on them which added to the drawing card. The one factor that can be a killer here, is the wind. With the mountain at your back, the up and down drafts tend to be constantly causing the winds to shift. I had been seeing several fair bucks in the area and there were a number of fresh scrapes and rubs. I had already taken a doe here earlier in a very easy sequence where everything had worked perfectly. That doe just walked down the road at around 7:30, stopped to eat and I arrowed her. But this particular morning started a series of hunts that left me wondering if I would be able to take another doe.

The morning of this hunt found me with deer feeding not only on corn in the road, but on the acorns all around my tree. The only problem was that it was still very dark. By shooting light every deer had vanished. No problem, I still had a feeder that was set to go off shortly after sunrise. The feeder did its part and the does started to drift back, but I hadn't figured on the several bucks that decided to claim the feeder. Each time a doe came within bow range they would be chased away by the bucks. This went on until all the corn under the feeder was gone and the deer started to move back to the acorns. By midmorning the temperature had risen and the winds had started to do their thing. The does were already jumpy because of the bucks. Add in the scent factor and you have a very hard hunting situation. This same scenario played out for the next several days. I tried not corning the road, turning off the feeder, and relocating my stand. The relocation would have worked, but the does immediately sensed something new and shied away. I finally decided to give up the area and try another site. This paid off. Several weeks later I hunted the mott again, the bucks were gone, the acorns had all but disappeared, and the does were now accustomed to my new stand. I killed two does there and a buddy took a third.

During the Thanksgiving break this year, I found myself working hard to take a doe. I had seen several really good bucks at various sites on the ranch, but they had all been at rifle range. By the end of the week I was determined to bag a doe for meat. All of our stands are fixed and hunting various stands is determined by the wind. The wind was very unpredictable with several changes during each day. We have a large oats field that has a tall tower stand on it, but no bow stands. The ranch owner had hunted this field for several days and had counted upwards of forty deer in it each time he had sat there. There were also several shooter bucks in the group, with one 150 class 10 pointer. I decided on Friday that I would set up a portable tent blind that I had purchased from Cabela's. This particular blind was not an expensive model and is made out of nylon. It is quite roomy, but somewhat transparent. I set up my stand off to one side of the oats field about 15 yards off of a trail that contained several good scrapes. I covered the blind with white brush and cut mesquite. I had a single shooting lane out of the small window in front. It looked good to the human eye. I chose not to hunt it that afternoon as the owner wanted to hunt his tower again. Later that night we talked about the area and he related how curious the does were about the "new" thing in their field. Saturday morning found me ready to hunt this new blind. Shortly after it was light enough to see I had a number of does and bucks milling around and feeding near by. I figured that this was going to be easy. Wrong! Almost immediately the mature does in the group started eyeing the stand. They knew something was there that had not been there before. They were keenly aware of every sound and movement I made. Even though I had full camo on, they were able to detect my slightest movement. I tried drawing a number of times only to have them spook. At one point I drew on a good size doe that was looking straight at my shooting lane. My arm ever so lightly scraped against the back of the blind and in a split second that doe was gone. I had two eight pointers within easy range, but they paid zero attention to me as they were interested only in the corn on the ground.

The does on the other hand were constantly trying to get my scent and stomping the ground in protest of something they were not sure of.

For the afternoon hunt I placed more cover around the blind and had placed a piece of burlap over the back door in order to break up my outline. I also put my archer's jacket on the inside so that my arm would not make noise against the backside as I drew. My few changes worked like a charm as not more than fifteen minutes into my afternoon hunt I arrowed a good doe at fifteen yards. The remainder of the day was spent watching approximately forty deer move back and forth around this stand. I practiced drawing on several different bucks and does without spooking a single animal. So it goes.

The taking of a doe can be simple or quite complex. They have the same identical survival instincts as that 150 class buck and I think at times they are much smarter. Like during the rut! So the next time someone asked you what you killed say with pride "Oh! I killed a smart old doe that had ears like a mule!"

Good Huntin'

### Bowhunting Hot Links

[www.bowsite.com/lbsa](http://www.bowsite.com/lbsa) – The official site of the Lone Star Bowhunters Association

Keep an eye out for "[Cagle's Creek & Timber](#)", the best resource for fishing and hunting supplies on the internet! J.P. Davidsson and Shannon Cagle are working overtime to finalize the construction of the Creek & Timber web site! More details to come!

[www.yoursite.com](http://www.yoursite.com) – Advertise your web-page here! Send your web address and details to [txbow@dialaccess.com](mailto:txbow@dialaccess.com).

Coming Soon! Our next goal is to publish Texas Bowhunters' Journal on the net. Stay tuned!

## *It Just Don't Get Any Better Than This*

By Dennis Mulder

Well as the old saying goes, it just don't get any better than this. This year so far, has been a really good year for me and from the reports I'm getting it's been good to a lot of other bowhunters as well!

For me it started two weeks before archery season started here in Texas. Because that's the day my new Tomcat longbow arrived. It was just like Christmas to me. We really don't change much from when we were kids, it's just our toys that change. My Tomcat longbow built by Tom Morriss in Arizona, is 64" long and 55# @ 30". Tom did a jam up job with my new bow, made of Rosewood and Curlymaple. Not only is it beautiful but it's smooth and fast. This longbow is one of few that doesn't stack up on you and has no hand-shock.

But with only two weeks till season opens, I had a lot of practicing to do. The two weeks went by pretty fast and my confidence in my longbow was pretty good. So come opening weekend I headed out to the Bug Scuffle Ranch to help the Keelings with their hunters. I've been guiding on the ranch now for four seasons and I felt this was going to be the best year of them all.

The acorn crop was poor this year and that really helps on deer movement. So I was hoping to have a great year.

Opening weekend we had a full booking and we stayed pretty busy, but on Sunday evening I did manage to slip away to my stand. I was hoping maybe a nice fat doe might give me a chance to try out my new longbow.

Well, at about 7:25 or so I caught movement to the left of my stand. As I looked through the brush the first thing I could see was legs of a deer. Then I could tell there were two deer! As they started towards my shooting lane I seen they were both bucks! The first one was

a shooter, the second one looked to be a young eight pointer. Well they took their own sweet time in getting into my shooting lane. This always seems to be the case for some reason! Maybe to see if I will fall out due to cardiac arrest or hyper ventalating. But the first buck did move into my shooting lane. As he entered just slightly quartering away I begin to draw my Tomcat longbow and when he was there so was my arrow! The shot was a little far back but I felt good about the hit sense he was quartering away.



I returned to camp and told Bryan what had taken place and we decided to wait and give him plenty of time. After picking up hunters and doing a couple of tracking jobs for them, we returned to look for mine. He traveled farther than expected but we found him dead, laying under a cedar tree facing back on his trail. It was good we waited! We were all excited upon the finding of my buck, a nice ten pointer with a inside spread of 15 3/8" and outside spread of 17". He weighed 160 lbs. live weight and 130 lbs. field dressed. That's not to shabby for a hill country deer.

Well that was great, my new bow and a nice ten pointer to start the season off with. Later towards the end of October, I also harvested a nice doe from the same stand with my Palmer recurve, she only traveled forty yards.

I think I'm going to name my longbow "Bo Derek" because I think it's a perfect "10" also. Hope you all are having as much fun as I am.

May Your Arrows Fly True.  
Dennis Mulder  
**TBJ**

## Camphouse Fixin's

### Masterful Mustard Ribs

1/3 cup sugar  
2/3 cup white vinegar  
2 tsp pepper  
1/2 cup chopped onion  
2 tsp paprika  
1/3 cup spicy brown mustard  
1 tsp curry powder  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1/2 tsp salt  
3 tbsps. Honey  
1 cup packed brown sugar  
2 tsp. Liquid smoke  
1/4 tsp celery seed

In a small bowl combine the sugar, pepper, paprika, curry powder and salt. Rub over ribs, coating well. Place ribs in shallow pan. Cover and chill for 2-6 hours.

In a covered grill, arrange medium coals around a drip pan. Test for medium-low heat above pan. Place ribs, fat side up, on grill rack over drip pan, but not over coals. Lower grill hood. Grill about 1 1/4 hours or until tender, turning once, and adding more coals as needed.

Meanwhile, for sauce, in a medium saucepan combine brown sugar, vinegar, onion, mustard, garlic, honey, liquid smoke and celery seed. Bring to boiling, reduce heat. Cook, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes or till slightly thickened, stirring occasionally. Brush sauce over ribs occasionally during last 10 to 15 minutes of grilling. Heat any remaining sauce till bubbly and pass with ribs. Makes 8 servings.

*Editor's Note: This is not exactly a wild game recipe, but if you have time to prepare it, it makes a great camphouse meal!*

# *How to field dress deer, hog, and other similar animals:*

By Kevin Johnson

There are many ways to process an animal, but I do it the same way that it is done in the meat processing industry.

My favorite way:

This way should be used if you are in an area in which you can get the deer back to camp before field dressing.

1. Hang the deer up by the rear legs.
2. Carefully cut the skin around the anus (if a doe include the female genital organs). Tie off anus with string (I use a wire tie). Then pull out on the anus and cut around the edges of the pelvic canal (careful not to puncture the anal canal) until the anus pulls out about 4-6".
- 2a. If it is a buck you will need to cut off the testicles and scrotum. Then remove the penis and flesh it back to where it exits the body near the anus.
3. From here cut the skin (only the skin) down the belly all the way to the neck and up the insides of the rear legs to the hock. Cut a ring in the skin at the hock level (careful not to touch the tarsal glands with either your hands or knife).
4. Pull and gently cut the skin off the rear legs (careful not to touch the tarsal glands with either your hands or knife). Once the skin is off the rear legs pull and cut the skin off the body. Once you get to the shoulders continue to pull and cut the skin off. Pull the

skin off the front legs like you would peel off a pair of socks and then cut off the feet at the wrist with either your knife or a saw. Keep peeling/cutting until you get to the skull, then cut the head off with either a saw or knife.

5. Wash your hands and knives right now!!!!
6. Now that the animal is skinned go to where the belly joins the body in the groin area. Cut the abdominal muscles at their attachment to the pelvic bone. Place your hand inside the body cavity and pull out as you carefully cut down the middle of the belly (do not cut into the guts). Once you reach the ribcage use your knife and cut through the cartilage that attaches the ribs to the sternum. Continue cutting until you cut through the last rib.
7. Now grab the anus (and genital organs if a doe) from the inside and pull through. Gently cut any attachments that are still holding it. At this point all the abdominal organs will peel out with gentle pressure. Cut any attachments if necessary. Cut the diaphragm out and continue peeling. The heart and lungs will come out as well and once all organs are out, cut the trachea and esophagus. Then remove the trachea and esophagus from the throat by cutting the throat muscles and peeling them out.

8. Wash the carcass out and butcher.

## *In the Field*

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9. Wash the carcass out and butcher.

Hope this helps!

## *The Rifle Fine!*

By Bobby Davis

Late November in Texas. There should be plenty of venison in the freezer by now, right? That could very well be the case if I hadn't taken up this crazy new hobby of hunting with a bow and a few arrows. I have blown several opportunities at filling my tag this year for reasons that I am not used to, like spooking the deer while trying to draw, can't pull the bow back because I am shaking so hard, having the misfortune of smelling like a human, and a myriad of other ailments. Heck, when a member of our bowhunting only lease suggested that we relax the rules and break out the guns, I lobbied for the idea hard and heavy. I decided, however, not give up on the whole bowhunting philosophy just yet. I thought I needed to at least give it until late December. By that time a lack of fresh venison might dictate paying our "rifle fine" so the year would not be a bust. As they say, patience pays off...

Thanksgiving week was to be a short one anyway, so I decided to take the entire week off and spend a few extra days afield. The lease would be deserted, so I invited my Dad to go along and enjoy a little fishing while I hunted. By the time we arrived and set up camp, it was time to go set on a stand and see what would show up. About the time I got comfortable, a spike and a doe came in. We have seen these two all season long and one of my fellow hunters nicknamed them Tweedledee and Tweedledum. He should have called them Hoover and Kirby because of the amount of corn that they can suck up in an afternoon. I had decided to take the doe, and checked back over my shoulder one last time before I attempted my draw. I could not believe my eyes. A very nice buck was walking down the fence-row, trailing the doe that was now standing broadside at 13 yards begging to be shot. As he made his way into range I could see that he had eight nice points and was a mature West Texas deer. He walked to a point that I had stepped off to be 15 yards and stopped broadside. I was struggling to control two things, breathing and trembling. Somehow I managed to raise my Hoyt and come to full draw. Wait, this can't be right, I am at full draw and the

deer are still here! I've never been this far before but the next step came naturally, just aim and shoot. I placed my pin on right behind the big buck's shoulder and squeezed my release. The arrow flew just over his back and stuck into the ground on the other side. I had just missed my first shot at a deer with a bow. The funny part is, I was not mad, I was not disappointed (OK, maybe a little), but I was still very excited. The amazing thing is, the deer did not run off. He stepped out of site and spent the next ten or fifteen minutes blowing and snorting at some unseen danger. He slowly walked off and I watched him until he disappeared into the brush. As things settled down, the spike came back in to finish his dinner that I had so rudely interrupted. I was watching him and pondering what had just taken place. I had my chance and missed, but I would set here a little longer just to watch the spike eat. Life really couldn't get any better than this, or so I thought. I noticed that the shadow of a tree that I had been staring at was moving. That can't be a tree I thought to myself and slowly looked back over my shoulder. For the second time in thirty minutes I couldn't believe my eyes. A bigger eight point was making way into my bow range. This was a very nice buck, thick base, long tines and a 17-18 inch spread. His path was leading him right under my stand. When he disappeared behind a bush I drew back and waited. For some reason he stopped and turned slightly to the right and kept walking. I was holding at full draw, and would probably start to shake if he made me wait much longer. He didn't. When he was about twenty yards away he stopped and gave me my chance. Again, I took careful aim and ever so gently squeezed my release. Another important lesson learned. Make sure your bow limbs have **NO OBSTRUCTIONS** when they begin to straighten. My upper limb struck the top doorjamb of the blind. The arrow flew harmlessly away and stuck into the ground nowhere near the deer. It did make a lot of noise however, which caused the biggest deer I have ever shot at, bow or gun, to take his leave of the area. After I calmed down again, I shot a few arrows to make sure my bow wasn't damaged, then climbed down and returned to camp. The only thing I could think about is that if had been hunting with a gun I would have shot the doe as soon as she

came into range and missed out on what has been the best evening of hunting I have ever had, bar none. And...tomorrow is a new day.

I hardly slept that night for two reasons, neither of which was my dad's snoring. First, I had seen two great bucks, and second I gotten to full draw with several deer in range. When I could stand it no longer I got dressed and headed out to my stand a little early. Not wanting to hunt the same stand two times in a row, I went to a different one and got settled in. I knocked and arrow and waited for the sun to make an appearance on the eastern horizon. While it was still dark I decided to move to position that would give me a better shot. I leaned me bow and arrow against the doorjamb and started to reposition my chair. Yep, you guessed it; I nudged my bow and out of the door it went. It fell fifteen feet to the ground, hitting every branch it could on the way down. I just stood there in disbelief. This can't be happening! I climbed down and to inspect the damage. Every thing looked fine, so I shot a quick test arrow and it hit exactly where I was aiming. Try that with an MQ1. (just kidding Mathews guys!) I climbed back up for a settled in for a second time that morning. Just about the time it got good and light, two does appeared out of nowhere. Oblivious to my presence, they milled around with their heads down offering me a clear shot. I slowly drew, and as I came to full draw one spotted my movement, stepped just out of range and watched me very carefully. No problem, I slowly put the sight pin on the other one and once again let the arrow fly. This time the arrow flew true. The doe jumped and ran out of sight, but I heard her go down. I closed my eyes and said a quiet prayer of thanks, and tried to wait before I began to trail her. After the longest twenty minutes on my life, I got down and went back to camp. I recruited Dad and his good color vision (unlike mine) to help me follow the blood trail. We found the arrow covered with frothy blood about twenty yards away. Another fifty yards from that spot lay my first bow killed deer. What a feeling. I had done it, I had killed a deer with a bow and arrow.

Hmmmm....I think the "rifle fine" just went up!

# Picture This!

By Michael Middleton

My heart was pounding with anticipation as the wide racked, eight-pointer eased from the brush toward the corn I had scattered in front of my tripod stand. I readied myself as he disappeared behind a small mesquite, waiting for him to reappear on the opposite side. Cautious, he stopped momentarily behind the tree, sniffing the air, looking and listening for danger before proceeding. Satisfied that no danger was imminent, the buck slowly worked his way into the shooting lane. My precautions to remain scent-free had paid off. The air was still, and the combination of carefully washing my clothes in baking powder and applying a modest amount of cover scent had fooled the buck's keen sense of smell. The buck was now fully into the shooting lane, munching on the corn, checking periodically for anything that might be out of place. With a flick of his tail, I could tell that the buck was relaxed. As the golden, morning sun glistened on his antlers, I knew that this was my opportunity for the perfect shot. The buck was standing broadside with his head down at twenty-five yards. As I focused in for the shot, the buck raised his head and looked in my direction. I slowly squeezed the release and took the shot. I got him! What a shot! The buck just stood there. He dropped his head for another bite of the sweet, tasty corn. I slowly reloaded for another shot. Again, I squeezed the release and shot again. Still, the buck remained motionless. My excitement level grew. Once more, I reloaded. In my enthusiasm, I became somewhat more careless and my elbow hit the railing on the tripod stand. The buck, startled at first, stared squarely at me. It was too late for him, though. I already had him framed in my sight window, and again I took another shot! Once more, a picture-perfect shot! This time, the buck became nervous and scampered back into the brush. As he stopped in the thick brush, he glanced back for one last look. Although I could only see his head and antlers sticking out above the brush, I had to take one last shot. Even though he was now over sixty yards from me, I felt confident that

I could make a good shot. As I pressed the release one final time, the deer disappeared into the brush.

I remained motionless for a couple of minutes as I tried to regain my composure. My heart was still racing. What a morning! As I lowered my bow and pack from the tripod, I reflected on the events of the morning. I got a doe and her two yearlings, a small spike, a cottontail rabbit and two quail! What better way to top off the morning than to get a solid buck? At about 115 inches, he was not Pope and Young class, but still not bad. I've done worse on opening morning! As I climbed from the stand and walked around the bank of the pond near my stand, a flight of Teal circled above. I immediately knelt down and froze. I fumbled through my pack to get my camera back out! As the ducks lit on the water, I snapped one more frame. That was it. No more film left.

I took home a nice doe that weekend for the freezer, but the memories I captured with my Minolta X-700 can now be shared any time of the year by friends and family simply by pulling out the photo album. The eight-pointer is now a beautifully framed 12 x 18 hanging on my wall!

The entire hunting experience can be enhanced significantly by carrying a camera in your daypack. Because my primary goal for that weekend hunt was to bag a Pope and Young class buck, I chose not to arrow several bucks that would have been short of qualifying. However, I still had a successful hunt that I could share with others because I took my camera with me in the field. Getting a nice picture of a buck can be almost as fulfilling as shooting one with a bow. And even in the event that you do arrow a deer, having a camera on hand to capture the emotions and facial expressions of the hunter as he first discovers his fallen quarry is something that can never be duplicated even by snapping a few pictures back at camp or when you get home. So on your next hunt, carry two weapons to the stand. I guarantee you'll improve your success rate exponentially. Say cheese!

TBJ

## Tips for Better Pictures

You don't have to be a professional photographer to capture quality images on film. There are, however, a few details that can dramatically improve your results with a camera.

1. **Use a "real" camera** - There are many types and varieties of cameras that are suitable for carrying in your daypack while hunting, whether an inexpensive compact or top-of-the-line SLR. However, for better quality photos, avoid "throw away" type cameras!
2. **Set up your shot** - Take a little extra time to set up your subject before taking the picture. Check for unsightly objects in the background. For natural photos in the wild, use basic bowhunting techniques (well placed corn, decoys, stand placement, etc.) to position your subject for the best angles.
3. **Avoid guts and tongue!** - This goes along with setting up the shot, but I separate it for emphasis. Don't take a picture of a dead deer with his tongue hanging out. Also avoid exposed cavity for field dressed animals. Where possible, take the picture before field dressing.
4. **Natural setting** - Pictures of your animal taken in its natural setting are generally more pleasing than those taken on the tailgate of a pickup or hanging from a meat-rack.
5. **Use quality film!** - Don't use cheap store brand or generic film to capture your most priceless memories! There is a difference. Spend a little extra on quality film (Wal Mart sells 4 pack Kodak 100 for \$7.96!) Also avoid hyper-speed film, which can result in grainy pictures. Stick with ASA 400 or less. I prefer 100 or 200.
6. **Use a good photo lab** - Most people don't realize that where they process their film makes a huge difference in good photos and bad ones. A washed out picture that you assume to be overexposed may actually be the result of poor developing!
7. **Use a fill-flash** - Even in daylight.
8. **Take plenty of candid!** - In the years to come, you'll want to remember your hunts for who was there as much as what you shot. Take people pictures!
9. **Keep on snapping!** - Take a lot of pictures. Don't take the chance that one shot will be a good one.
10. **Label your pictures!** - Take time to label and index your prints with names and dates. Your future descendants will thank you!

# The Last Shot

By J.P.Davidsson

About ten years ago I started hunting on a ranch in the heart of south Texas about fifty miles outside of Laredo. I had been hunting with a bow for a couple of years and most of my practical experience in the woods had come from the beautiful rolling hills around Llano and Mason counties. The terrain of south Texas was completely different and so were the hunting methods. I almost felt like a deer hunting Yankee down there. To put it mildly, I was generally referred to as "the crazy bowhunter". I'm sure there were also many other descriptions, but I always seemed to be just out of earshot and never fortunate enough to hear any of those. That was alright, I now had a mission in life. I was determined to take a trophy whitetail from the 875 acres of open senderos and unbelievably thick brush country that lacked one single tree tall enough to put a tree stand in. Unfortunately I have yet to accomplish this feat so my title remains intact to this day.

I knew there had to be other crazies like myself, however my first observations were that everyone in south Texas hunted with a rifle and usually from tall metal blinds bolted to the bed of a pick up truck. The most common hunting practice involved pouring about half a bag of corn down the length of a sendero, then parking the truck back in the brush about a hundred yards away and then waiting to see what came out. I was present for a few of these type hunts and started to notice that when a buck was taken, another difference became blatantly apparent. All bucks shot with a rifle suffered from a little know disease called antler-earth syndrome, or ground shrinkage as it is more commonly referred. While we were up high in the stand and the animal was sighted down range, it had at least two to four more points, at least six inches more antler spread and was officially

taped and scored before the trigger was ever pulled!

It was the strangest thing though, the very second the deer keeled over and the antlers made contact with the ground, some sort of chemical reaction would occur between the two substances and the entire rack would SHRINK! By the time we got to the deer, the effects of this devastating disease were very apparent. They told me that they were sure that if there had been some time-lapse photography equipment available, this phenomenon could easily have been documented, but no one had done it yet. It was just very, very odd that it happened every single time. Bowhunters never seem to have that problem; at twenty yards a buck is not going to get any smaller.

I also caught a little grief concerning my tiny, little obsession with being scent free and well camouflaged. I outscored everyone five to one (if not more) on the number of showers taken. Calculators were pulled out to figure out the total dollar amount I spent on my scent-free deodorant, toothpaste, laundry soap, shampoo and other miscellaneous scent eliminating products. I would step out of my bedroom smelling like nothing and have some sort of camo material covering every inch of skin on my body. My rifle hunting compadres had on blue jeans, white T-shirts and possibly a camo baseball cap. It just wasn't fair, but oh well we bowhunters are a special breed and proud of our obsessions!

Ten years later, I still catch grief but the score is still even. Not one of us has come back to camp with a record class buck. I hope some day that I will get the chance to rub a little salt in some very old wounds.

**TBJ**

## !Attention all hog hunters!

The Smith Ranch is very pleased to announce the final release of [www.hog hunting.com](http://www.hog hunting.com) . Please check out these new pages & additional info:

- An interactive sign post directory to send you to the new pages.
- A page dedicated to our Trophy Boar hunting.
- A recipes page where you can send us your favorites as well.
- Our photo album with a few more great pictures from the ranch.
- A links page to direct you to other great sites.
- A re-worked E-mail/contact form.

Please re-visit our site and if you haven't booked a hunt yet, the next few months are prime for hunting wild hogs. The cooler weather really gets the hogs moving & everywhere else the woods are packed with deer hunters (no mosquitos either). Just click on the 'E-mail the Smith Ranch' button to book a time to hunt with us.

P.S. A huge thank you to all of the hunters who have hunted with us & visited our site! We hope you had a great time & will see you again soon.

From Danny Smith, J.P.Davidsson,  
Jason Clayton.

# Bowhunters' Album



**Pete Hodge with a North Queensland Boar taken during the winter in Australia. The bow used was my trusty Martin Lynx purchased in 1987 (60lb @ 29inch with the great big golden cams) Arrow used: cedar wood with Davies Delta fixed 2 blade.**



**Above: My lovely bride, Jeanette Middleton proudly displays a snake caught by my brother, Martin. Although he insisted that it was some sort of “Rat Snake”, I am certain that it was, in fact, a genetically inferior Rattle Snake without the rattles! You won’t ever catch me picking one of those things up! It was over 6 feet long, and Martin released it behind our cabin.**



**Left: Pictures of the group from our Bugscuffle Hunt in November. Top row from the left are our gracious hosts, Bryan and Debbie Keeling, Martin Middleton and Michael Middleton. On the bottom from the left are Delton Weise, Glenn Lemke, Harold McCain, Greg Tate and Richard Dunkin.**