

Schwemms Offer Hunting Accommodations

The Sportsman's Hunting Lodge is located 1-1/2 miles north of Eagle Lake, "The Goose Hunting Capital of the World."

Quietly tucked away off Farm Road 102, you're sure to fall asleep to the sound of geese singing, wake up to a beautiful sunrise and more geese.

The Lodge is nestled on six

acres of country land so you can even see birds before your first cup of coffee.

After a long day's hunt, come back and relax on one of the comfortable couches and watch your favorite football game. Or, if you prefer, there are card tables for that late night poker game.

"Mama" likes to hunt, too, so

she added a mud room for your convenience. This way, she can enjoy squeezing the trigger of a 12 gauge instead of a 409 bottle.

Enjoy the viewing porch and shooting area. There's even a dog kennel and plenty of storage space for all your huntin' gear.

The lodge sleeps ten comfortably with air conditioning and heat-

ing units. Check in time is 3 p.m.; check out at 12 noon.

If you're too tired to cook for yourself, let Janie and Doug do it for you. Award-winning Sportsman's Restaurant is near downtown Eagle Lake, right next to Johnny's Sport Shop. Opening at 4 a.m. and serving breakfast, lunch and dinner daily,

you're sure to never go hungry before or after a hunt.

With over 40 years of combined dedicated to food and hospitality, the Schwemms guarantee you a true Sportsman's experience in Eagle Lake.

Call Doug or Janie at 979-234-3071 for reservations.

2009-2010 Deer Outlook

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ers spend a lot of time in the field throughout the hunting season, not just during the peak of the rut.

Hunters and ranchers often encourage Texas Parks and Wildlife to move the season later to give deer a chance to breed.

The study showed that no matter when the rut occurred, the vast majority of does were bred. Individual ranch and deer herd management are much more important than timing of the hunting season.

The data will assist TPWD in determining whether the number of bucks in an area has an effect on breeding season length and success. There are many interacting factors which affect breeding.

The breeding study involved the examination of 2,436 does, the largest number of deer ever utilized in a Texas breeding study. The date of conception can be determined by looking at fetus length.

An average of 200 days from conception was used to determine fawning dates. Biologists got as much information as they could from the does collected. They looked at the timing of the rut and at breeding success on 16 study areas throughout Texas for three years.

All years were combined to produce the graphs that show the rut timing. In most areas the rut varied very little from year to year. You can use the map and graphs to determine the timing of the rut in your area of interest. Will the information help with the planning of your hunt? You be the judge.

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Breeding Success and Fawn Survival

In some Texas circles, you still hear people talk about the "old barren doe" that lives in a certain pasture. This train of thought blames poor fawn production on the idea that many older does do not

get pregnant. In reality, if the doe isn't bred during the first estrous period, she will be receptive again in 28 days.

This explains the high breeding success in white-tailed deer even when bucks are scarce. We found that on the average, 92 of every 100 does sampled in the state were pregnant.

The western part of the state was in a drought during much of the study. In the Trans-Pecos the number of bred does was the lowest. There the breeding rate dropped to only 81 percent (81 of 100).

White-tailed deer are known for producing twins. Statewide, over half of the does examined had twins. Triplets were not common, and the occurrence of triplets was less than two percent. Quadruplets didn't show up in the study. There were more male fetuses than female fetuses. Males represented 56 percent of the unborn fawns over the three years of the study.

An average sample of ten does had 15 fawns, or 1.5 fetuses per doe. In some parts of the state, though, deer numbers build up slowly. Failure to breed is not a problem, so where do the fawns go?

Life is full of dangers for a fawn, and food and cover (the fawning habitat) is the difference in living and dying for fawns. In many parts of the state, predation is severe unless there is adequate hiding cover for young fawns.

Imported fire-ants are a problem for fawns in heavily infested areas,

but their impact can often mask the real problem. Adequate nutrition is often limiting, and if fawns make it past fire-ants and predators to weaning, they still face the challenge of finding food and cover.

Fawn survival depends primarily on habitat quality. Malnutrition and associated problems are probably responsible for poor fawn survival in much of the state.

Dry conditions aggravate the problem of inadequate food. "Empty belly disease" is the most limiting factor on whitetails in Texas. Delayed breeding could cause fawns to be born late, which would be a disadvantage on ranges where food is scarce.

The Early and Late Ruts

What about the early and late ruts? Hunters and outdoor writers often talk about the rut being early or late. In Texas, at least, the breeding season for white-tailed deer is fairly predictable from year to year. Within a specific area, habitat conditions not only affect fawn survival, but can affect the timing of breeding.

A doe in poor condition or a young doe may not breed until late in the season. A doe may be attractive to bucks for about five days, but may be willing to breed for a period of only 24 hours.

If the doe is not bred during her first cycle, she will generally come into heat again about 28 days later.

In areas where there are few
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Prairie Edge Offers Glimpse Of The Past

The Prairie Edge Museum (PEM), located on the corner of East Main and N. Lake Avenue in Eagle Lake, is open daily until noon and 2 to 5 p.m. each Saturday and Sunday.

Prairie Edge offers many interesting items depicting the history of Eagle Lake and the surrounding area. The Museum also offers souvenirs as well as packages of

wildflower seeds at the gift shop.

The Thrift Shop is open two Saturday mornings each month. Located on the Lake Ave. side of the building, sale dates are posted next to the Thrift Shop entrance. Stop by and browse!

Make plans to visit the Museum while you're in town and take a tour of yesteryear.



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