

Trapping BEAVERS on Weyerhaeuser Timberlands

By Kris Pope, Marketing Area Manager

iSTOCK

In today's world, animal trapping is unfamiliar to many people and often misunderstood. Non-hunters may think of the old movie *Jeremiah Johnson* or the huge, toothed contraptions Wile E. Coyote sets to try to capture the Road Runner.

Neither comes close, and believe it or not, trapping as a hunting technique is alive and well, although perhaps not for the reasons anyone would expect.

IT'S A BIT IRONIC, but trapping in the twenty-first century is more often a response to nuisance wildlife than as part of the once-booming fur industry. Species like the beaver, once trapped to the brink of extinction in North America, are now often considered a nuisance species, with no closed season or bag limit in many southern states. The population's recovery is a great story that speaks to the success of the North American model of wildlife conservation.

The beaver's penchant for habitat modification—specifically dam building—makes it a keystone species because its activity

increases biodiversity and supports an entire ecological community. On the other hand, beavers have very few natural predators, and minimal demand for southern beaver fur keeps hunter interest in harvesting beavers low.

Unfortunately, when wildlife populations are left unchecked, problems often arise, and southern beavers are a prime example. The biggest problem they create is dammed-up waterways, and as they expand into new areas and look for easy places to build dams and back up water, they often choose harmful places—such as culvert pipes.

Culverts are beaver magnets
Simply put, culverts are beaver magnets. Frequently the narrowest

spots in a waterway, they require the least amount of work to dam, but the backup of water they create is powerful and destructive. Even slow-moving or perfectly still water that can't get through the culvert designed for its passage can cause extensive damage or erosion.

For starters, water may flood areas not intended to be underwater, killing

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valuable timber worth tens of thousands of dollars in just one stand. High water also stresses infrastructure, potentially

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eroding culvert surroundings or washing out roads and requiring expensive repairs. Most importantly, this type of damage can cause serious safety risks. People driving on a lease don't usually expect standing water in a roadway, which can hide submerged but significant damage to the road that can result in an accident. In particular, disrupted drainages can cause weak spots alongside a culvert so that it suddenly collapses under a load.

This is why it's important for land managers to monitor and control beaver populations, and trapping is the most effective way to control them.



The beaver's population growth is a story of both success and destruction.

COMMON BEAVER TRAP STYLES

Some hunt club members enjoy trapping, so any sign of beavers becomes a cue to put on waders and set some traps. In other areas owned by Weyerhaeuser, the company may hire trappers to control beaver populations. These trappers commonly use four types of traps, with the choice regulated by state and local laws. The most common is probably the Conibear trap, which you may have seen in a local hardware store. These large, square traps are designed to close as the beaver swims through, quickly dispatching the beaver.

Another common type of trap is the snare, which is simply a length of cable with a loop and a lock on the end. The loop closes around the body of the beaver, restraining it until the trapper arrives.

Next is a foothold trap. Beavers have quite large back feet, so foothold traps used for beavers may span up to 8" across. Usually, these are set in the water on the edge of the bank and catch a beaver's foot as it is exiting the water.

Finally, cage traps can be used to catch beavers. These large traps are quite expensive, so they are not often used on large rural properties like hunting lease land.

Be alert for trap hazards

Because beavers can grow to exceed 50 pounds, beaver traps can be large, but in general, they don't pose much threat to people. They're rarely set in areas with a high likelihood of human contact. However, trappers naturally target sites in and around beaver dams, dens, or lodges—which is why these areas should be avoided. If you do visit nearby, take extra care.

Of course, when it comes to catching untargeted species, the biggest concern is for dogs. If you

take your family or hunting dogs to the woods, definitely stay away from beaver dams and lodges, and make sure Fido does, too. Trappers generally try to avoid high-risk areas frequented by other people and dogs, but if you know trapping activity is taking place on your lease, be extra cautious and keep your dog away from waterways in general.

Finally, if you happen to find a trap, PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH IT. Move away immediately and warn other club members of its presence.

Help us prevent beaver damage

No matter where you hunt and whether or not dogs accompany you, if you notice water where there usually isn't any, see sticks blocking a culvert, or spot an actual beaver lodge, please notify your lease manager using the road maintenance form in your online account. We appreciate your help preventing beaver damage to keep your lease areas healthy and accessible.



Beaver dams can divert waterways, leading to the death of valuable timber and washed-out roads.

“ Stay away from beaver dams and lodges, and make sure Fido does, too. ”

FOREST WORK, FOREST PLAY, FOREST PEACE

ONE HUNTER'S VARIED PERSPECTIVES

By Jerre Creighton, Watson Hunt Club, Virginia

Photos courtesy Virginia Dept. of Wildlife Resources

I'm a member of a small, two-person hunt club in Buckingham County, VA. My connection to the property we hunt on, which is less than 200 acres, spans three decades and four different industrial forest owners.

Whether through this history, my forestry profession, the hobbies I enjoy, or the family traditions I grew up with, I feel connected to and thus appreciative of the opportunity to lease this property. That connection goes far beyond hunting.

I first saw the property in the late 1980s, when I was a newly hired research forester with the company that owned it at the time. They used it as an area headquarters, equipment shop, and Virginia Pine seed orchard. Over the 10 years I worked in that role I visited many times, but as a scientist only, never as a hunter.

When I changed jobs in 1997, I didn't expect to see it again. But it's indeed a small world, and when I returned to Virginia in 2005, I joined the hunt club that leased it.

Witnessing the forest over time

Ever since my first forestry experience in 1984—as a research associate at Auburn University—I have been a forester specializing in growing pine trees, working initially with Weyerhaeuser scientists in New Bern, NC, Columbus, MS,

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I feel like the forests on the lease are my responsibility, and I enjoy watching them grow.

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and Hot Springs, AR. So the various stands on my hunting lease have offered me a rewarding opportunity to witness how the practices I've studied over 34 years bear fruit. That includes the positive effects of weed control, protection from damaging insects, improved planting practices, tree genetics, and harvesting strategies. I've watched stands get planted, grow, be harvested, and be replanted again. I keep an eye out, looking for pests, pathogens, invasive weeds, or freeze damage. In a way, I feel like the forests on the lease are my responsibility, and I enjoy watching them grow.

Industrial forest management usually leads to diverse habitats ideal for game and non-game wildlife. The tract we lease is no exception. The hunting for our target species, deer and turkey, is excellent. Over the years I've kept my freezer full of protein whose source and handling I know, which is particularly valuable to me.

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The author on a successful hunt.



JERRE CREIGHTON

FOREST PEACE_{continued}

In addition, our small club has long participated in the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources' Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP). We help collect data on the age and health of all deer harvested on the property each year. This valuable information allows resource professionals to track changes in the local herd. As I've hunted here, deer numbers have remained stable while their condition (indicated primarily by weight) has improved.

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Magic moments on the land

As with any hunting lease, there's plenty of opportunity to stay busy between seasons. Over the years, I've spent more days than I can count working on stand locations or clearing foot paths through the thick cover. Scouting for deer or turkey has brought encounters with other game species we don't hunt, including black bear, dove, rabbit, squirrel, bobcat, and coyote. We've had as many as three coveys of quail in the diverse stands and habitat edges along roads.



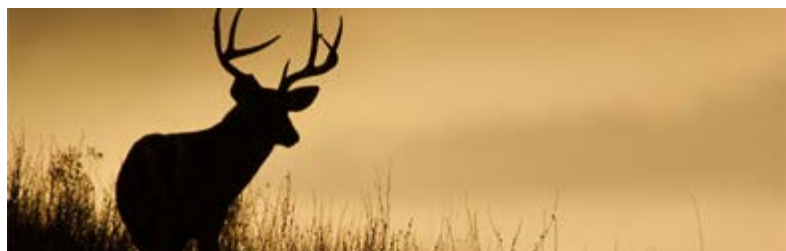
The day wakes from the morning stand.

JERRE CREIGHTON

One afternoon while I sat in a tree stand, a red-tailed hawk flew directly at me from over 200 yards away. It landed on a branch next to me. Another day, I watched a northern harrier float a few feet over the broomsedge in a young pine stand—hunting, I assume. While walking through the protected forest buffer on one of the property's three small streams, I once saw two otters. (I had to look several times as I couldn't believe it!) On a different occasion, trying to use a stream to approach a strutting turkey, I was surprised to see a large snapping turtle peering up at me from just below the water surface as I bent to move under a fallen branch.

Going home to nature

But the most important reason I appreciate the opportunity to lease this property may also be the hardest to explain. I grew up in the 1960s in rural south-central Pennsylvania, a time and place where access to land for hunting was easy and free. My family had a small farm similar in size to our lease. On that



land and the neighboring farms and forests, we managed to harvest enough game to feed us all through the year. Over the years I have transitioned from living in the wide-open spaces of that farm to a tiny lot in a subdivision. Meanwhile, it's gotten much harder to find quality places for solitude and silence.

That's why, every time I visit the hunting lease land, a part of me feels like I'm going home, staying connected in some way to my family heritage. When I pass the graveyard where some of the property's earlier owners now rest, I think of my ancestors' graveyard on a hill not far from that farmhouse in Pennsylvania, and I remember my dad. When I used to ask him what he wanted for his birthday or some holiday, he would always reply, "Peace and quiet."

Maybe that's the most important thing our Weyerhaeuser lease land gives me today—an escape to a place where peace and quiet abound.

Finish the Hunt RESPONSIBLY:

Follow your state's carcass disposal GUIDELINES

By John Drake, Recreational Lease Manager

A successful hunt doesn't end with the harvest of the game animal.

It also requires proper handling of the carcass and associated parts, and adequate disposal of animal remains protects the sensitivity of our neighbors while considering the environment, public health, and the risk of disease transmission.



Weyerhaeuser encourages all hunters to properly dispose of carcasses from harvested animals. But as you probably know, the definition of "proper" can vary. Hunters should always research their state's game and fish regulations regarding the recommended disposal methods.

Two potentially appropriate methods

For instance, many states recommend burying the remains in shallow holes. If this is the proper disposal method for your club and state, remember to cover the hole immediately. Holes left open are prohibited on Weyerhaeuser property because they invite tripping or falling, which can lead to serious injury.

Other states suggest scattering carcass remains, being careful not to spread them near sources of water, public roads, or neighbors' boundaries. (Note that "scattering" does not mean leaving large, concentrated piles.) When done properly, this approach lets nature take its course, with insects or scavengers finding the remains and decomposing them over time. This disposal method is popular as an environmentally responsible way to recycle wildlife parts back into the ecosystem.

Dispose where you harvest

Whatever method you use, always bury or scatter harvest remains on the property where the animal was taken. Never dispose of remains anywhere else, except perhaps at a state-approved landfill in states where that is allowed.

Another consideration is Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). Many states publish specific CWD guidelines, which are extremely important to mitigate the spread of this deer disease in states where it already occurs and to prevent cases in states that are still CWD-free.

Please take the time to understand the best practices recommended for your state and locale. Their goal is to ensure carcass materials are disposed in a clean, safe manner that protects human, animal, and environmental health, and Weyerhaeuser supports the guidelines and recommendations for each state.

Conservation practices like these make our land a great place to hunt, and hunters are vital to keeping it that way. Just remember that your lease is part of a working forest frequented by many other people. We appreciate you considering the safety of our foresters and contractors as they work alongside or in the wake of recreation customers like you.



REGARDLESS OF YOUR ROLE IN YOUR HUNTING CLUB, be sure you're providing and getting the information everyone needs for safe and enjoyable times on your Weyerhaeuser lease land.

Club contacts

Only you can make updates to the club's membership list in your online account, so please do that, and keep it complete. We receive many calls throughout the year from club members asking questions they could easily find answers for themselves if each member's name, address, phone number, and most importantly, email address were included on the club's membership list.

An accurate, up-to-date member list helps ensure all members:

- Are considered for insurance purposes.
- Understand the terms and conditions of the contract.
- Can view aerial maps so they stay within the lease boundaries.
- Know what areas are scheduled for forestry operations and when.
- Receive announcements and publications, including this newsletter.

Members are counting on you to keep them informed, so please take the time to gather all their contact information and include it in your online roster. Let us know if you have difficulties we can help with.

Club members

If you have not already done so, create an online account to take advantage of your hunting lease benefits.

1. Visit www.wyrecreation.com and click "Log In" near the upper right.
2. Enter your email and a password—that's it!

Log in to see all the details for your club, including the member list, contract, and maps. If you log in but don't see anything, either your name or your correct email is not on the formal membership list. Ask your club contact to add your current email address, or contact us directly to do so. Then you can enjoy all the online benefits of being a club member.



UNLOCK A GOOD TIME IN THE WOODS

AVOID GATE ACCESS ISSUES WITH THREE EASY STEPS

Many of you have already painted your hunt club locks with blaze orange paint so forest crews can identify them. Thank you! This practice helps us make sure your lock doesn't get cut or locked out of sequence.

If you have not painted your locks orange yet, please do this season. After that, remember these two additional suggestions to help reduce common lock problems:

- Never remove any gate locks other than the specific orange lock used exclusively by your club. If you have questions about other locks on the gate, take a photo and contact your lease manager.
- If your gate uses a chain mechanism rather than a lockbox, always position your lock in the linkage as far away as possible from other locks. This reduces the likelihood of someone accidentally bypassing your lock.



Thank you for helping us improve gate security; we appreciate your efforts.

BRUINS in the PINES



Black bear hunting on Weyerhaeuser land

By Reed Sheffield, a member of several North Carolina hunt clubs

The American black bear population is so widespread and robust throughout the United States that more than half of the states have a legal bear hunting season. Their wide range overlaps a large portion of Weyerhaeuser timberlands.

That makes bear hunting popular there, where it's permitted.

(Editor's note: *That includes the majority of our southern Gulf and Atlantic states from Oklahoma to Virginia and West Virginia.*)

Black bears particularly thrive in the thick pine forests of the southeastern region that I call home. They love the dense cover some Weyerhaeuser land provides, and they feast on the berries—often locally known as briar berries—that grow in many pine plantations throughout the summer. Here in the Southeast, bears enjoy a predictable biological cycle of rutting and mating in early summer, followed by a long gestation period. Mothers bear cubs (pun fully intended) in the winter months of January and February.

Meanwhile, bears start bedding down for winter in late December. Southern bears don't fully hibernate, but they are undoubtedly less active in the cold months, and they don't fully emerge until the warmth of the spring around mid-April. At that time their first forage will be green grasses, nourishment after several months of inactivity and dormancy. It's when they emerge in the spring that many turkey hunters see them out foraging.

Many Weyerhaeuser hunting clubs focus their efforts on black bear hunting. The most common methods use hounds or still-hunting from stands. For the hound hunters, spring and summer are optimal times to use Weyerhaeuser land and the healthy bear populations to train young dogs to bear scent and trails, get experienced hounds in shape after the winter, scout locations, and survey the bear population for the fall hunting season to come. Many hunters spend more time on the land in this pre-season period, enjoying their passion for the outdoors in deep camaraderie with friends and family, than they do actually hunting.

Finally, as the respective bear hunting season arrives in each state, bear hunters come together with hopes of success. Old and young alike hit the woods as communities come together; it's a deep-rooted tradition. For many, it's less about personally harvesting a bear than the desire to see a loved one, a first timer, or an elderly club member succeed. Success requires hard work, patience, and a cohesive team effort. Groups of hound hunters have successfully hosted terminally ill children or wounded veterans on bear hunts under the auspices of organizations such as the Outdoor Dreams Foundation and the Wounded Warrior and Patriot Hunt programs. Strong commitments to community and sportsmanship surround the sport of bear hunting.

Bear hunting club members also aid state wildlife agencies in gathering crucial biological data. For example, in North Carolina, teeth provided from harvested bears help biologists age the population, while harvest numbers reported by hunters give insight into population dynamics. Such information aids regulators in determining appropriate season dates, lengths, and limits.

Bear hunting that takes place on Weyerhaeuser land often involves surrounding private and public lands, too. Nevertheless, allowing the use of its forest tracts for recreational bear hunting provides a great opportunity for people to enjoy the outdoors and its natural resources while supporting effective management of local bear populations.

As with sustainably managed timber, the same land can provide a myriad of benefits, and the partnerships between Weyerhaeuser and wildlife agencies allow many outdoors enthusiasts like me to continue our pursuit of the bruins in the pines.

Be Our Eyes and Ears

Report your sightings of elusive wildlife on our lands!

By Daniel Greene, Wildlife Scientist

As part of our biodiversity monitoring program, Weyerhaeuser's environmental team is tracking various wildlife species and we need your help! Please send your observations and photos, especially for the species listed below, to us at wildlife@weyerhaeuser.com.

Your reports about specific wildlife spotted on your lease lands can help us and our agency and environmental partners to plug gaps in our information about where these species occur and guide the ways our forest management practices contribute to conserving biodiversity.



Even the wildlife are getting used to virtual appearances these days.

What are we particularly looking for?

It varies somewhat by state:

Anywhere in the southern US

- Striped skunks, spotted skunks, long-tailed weasels, bobcats, fox squirrels, and eastern diamondback rattlesnakes

West Virginia

- Ruffed grouse as well as those mentioned above.

Oklahoma, Alabama, and Mississippi

- Black bears as well as those mentioned above. (While bear sightings have increased in some areas, we lack good records in these states.)

We know most of these species live on our timberlands, but they are often very difficult to find because they occur in low numbers, have patchy distributions, and may be active only at night.

Know Your Forest Neighbors

Visit these sites for information about these interesting species.

- [Black bears](#)
- [Skunks](#) and [more skunks](#)
- [Long-tailed weasels](#) and [more weasels](#)
- [Snakes](#), including the [eastern diamondback rattlesnake](#)

PHOTOS WANTED

As leaseholders, you are the primary eyes and ears for what happens behind our locked gates, and photographs from your game cameras are one of the most reliable ways to confirm the presence of wildlife. We know you capture some interesting and unusual photos, and it's always exciting to share those. We'd like to print some in future newsletters, too.

If you happen to capture any of these species with your cameras or otherwise, please send us your observations and photos at wildlife@weyerhaeuser.com.

Thank you for your help!



D. HORNSBY

WEYERHAEUSER

Who's That Stranger?

Getting along with forestry workers

By Carol Smith, Marketing Lease Specialist

No matter what time of year you visit your lease, you may encounter Weyerhaeuser employees or contractors performing work on the property. Forest management is a year-round job, with many seasonal activities occurring during fall and winter.

To minimize interruptions to your hunting season, we instruct our contractors to complete their work safely but promptly—so in general, please refrain from approaching any forestry workers. Instead, if you have any questions about their activities, have your club contact reach out to your recreation lease manager. Chances are that your club contact has already received advance notice about our activities, and the contact can pass helpful information on to you.



Of course, you may occasionally come across someone who you're not sure has a legitimate purpose on the property. Certain forest management tasks do not involve large crews or machinery, only

individuals with hand tools and a single pickup truck parked onsite. Such workers can easily be mistaken for trespassers, especially if your lease has a history of such problems.

The best bet: report concerns through your club contact

If you have the urge to investigate any visitor, please remember to be very calm, courteous, and composed as you approach and throughout the entire discussion. Weyerhaeuser employees and contractors will gladly identify themselves and explain their reasons for being there. But keep in mind they may not be familiar with your recreational lease contract and may wonder the same thing about you. We've all heard stories about unexpected encounters becoming tense, hostile, or even worse—violent. We are concerned for your safety as well as that of our contractors and employees. So we have zero tolerance for aggressive confrontations, whether verbal or physical.

If there's no particular reason for concern, please simply let them go about their work and direct any questions to your lease manager instead. In particular, if you have problems with gates, locks, roads, or the like to report, don't discuss them with forestry workers. It is best—and will most quickly resolve the issue—to have the club contact log in to the club's online account and properly report those issues for action.

Thank you for helping us maintain a peaceful and productive environment for everyone involved.

WHAT REALLY MATTERS

By Donald Wood, Senior Lease Manager

Every once in a while, something comes along to change our lives. Whether at a personal, local, or national level, such events are significant enough to make us stop, assess what's important, and restructure our priorities.

The Great Recession, which officially began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009, was one of those events. For some people, its devastation continued well after its official end. But virtually everyone tightened their financial belts, saved more, and became more judicious about what they spent. Some of those lessons still affect decisions today.

More recently, the coronavirus has caused us all to reflect on what we value and prioritize. I vividly remember a February 2020 business meeting where everyone was optimistic for what the year would bring. In just three short weeks, coronavirus exploded across the national consciousness to dominate our lives for the next 18 months . . . and counting.

Recession hunting

In conversations with friends during the recession, we shared ideas on how to reduce expenses, including in my business, recreation. "Staycations" became the norm, with extended travel greatly reduced. Yet, most friends who were hunters commented, "I'm reducing spending in other areas so I can continue to enjoy hunting with family."

PANDEMIC HUNTING CHALLENGES

In addition to welcoming new members, clubs should also realize that pandemic tailwinds can also pose challenges. First, too many new members can change the club's dynamics and put harvest pressure on the wildlife. Club officers should make sure membership levels do not overwhelm the resource.

Second, getting bigger often is not the best option. If your club is facing stronger than normal demand for memberships, use the opportunity to be selective instead of maximizing membership and then looking for additional lands that simply may not be available.

Finally, realize that some of the recent uptick in demand from lapsed hunters who returned to the ranks may evaporate again in the next few years. Don't expand membership and add many more acres, only to see members leave again, leaving the club struggling to drop acres or otherwise maintain the lease.

In fact, most southern state wildlife agencies saw a slight increase in hunting license sales and tremendous increases in hunting on state wildlife management areas or other public land. The reasons included both lapsed hunters who returned and new hunters attempting to reduce food costs. Plus lower employment levels meant more free time, and hunting—particularly on public land—is relatively inexpensive compared to other recreational pursuits.

Even demand for hunting leases on private land such as Weyerhaeuser's was only slightly depressed, with near full occupancy. It seemed hunting and leasing was nearly recession-proof.

Pandemic hunting

The current "pandemic economy" has different economic underpinnings. A healthy economy was brought to a near-stop by the disease, but widespread federal stimulus efforts put money in nearly everyone's pockets, regardless of whether their jobs suffered. Many workers were temporarily unemployed but buoyed by federal assistance, with time on their hands. With most other forms of recreation closed, interest in outdoor recreation exploded. RV sales soared.

In addition, new stories in 2020 included meat shortages, which increased interest in self-sufficiency. Agency biologists suggest a 6 to 12% increase in the number of hunters over the last 18 months. More hunters, who had more time on their hands, resulted in a large increase in hunter days afield. Many states experienced record turkey harvests in Spring 2020. That meant fewer birds in the woods in 2021. Deer harvests that fall rose in most states, too, with food for the table a primary motivation.

Although hunting lease demand was slightly constrained during the recession, it has increased sharply during the pandemic. Fewer clubs turned over their leases, and the available leases Weyerhaeuser could offer in 2021 was about half our long-term average. The majority were scooped up in record time.

That makes this a "best of times" for many hunt clubs. Existing members are benefitting from economic stimulus, and more want to join. Many clubs interested in expanding their acreage have taken advantage of the priority opportunities we offer existing leaseholders first. We hope you're among the many hunters who've already realized that time in the woods can be a balm through difficult times like those we're living through now.

A Personal Take on Hunting Amid a PANDEMIC

By Donald Wood, Senior Lease Manager

During my career, I've experienced a few disruptions to the economy, from the Internet stock bubble burst in 2000 to today's pandemic. Through every one, hunting activity stayed high and often increased.

I think that's because the overwhelming majority of hunters don't consider hunting a "spending category" or activity to be reduced so much as a lifestyle and core value that defines us. Many of us may also enjoy professional

My daughter stole away from college to hunt with Dad a few times. I remember the report of her rifle, her quick "it's a buck" text, and clicking multiple photos of the happy hunter with her quarry until we got the one picture she approved as "just right." I also spent time with my son, prepping stands, trimming shooting lanes, and receiving his text one cold November morning after he shot to say, "Hey, Dad, it's a good one."

Similarly, I held various hunting strategy or stand selection conversations with my wife and recounted the highlights of each hunt, including those rare times last season when we hunted as a couple. With the kids at school, the hunt could be about us. Finally, I remember still, quiet moments in the woods. Alone, in the moment. Sometimes reflecting on the most important things in my life. Sometimes just breathing, in awe of Creation.

I hope a benefit we can take from COVID-19 is greater awareness of and appreciation for things that truly matter. That's something to reflect on while you wait for dawn to break on your hunting spot.



Emma Wood with her eight-point buck.

sporting events or trips to the beach, but if those events don't happen, we shrug and move on. Not so with hunting, which we make time for and prioritize.

Plus, shocks or life disruptions nudge us toward things that provide comfort or return us to core values. Why do hunters return to the sport or tend to hunt more during hardship or social upheaval? I think it's because hunting helps us find our center and provides solace.

Finally, in a world where partisanship seems to invade every dimension of life, turning everything into a debate, hunting is a refuge where we can be alone, breathe, reflect, and just...be.

In Fall 2020, with coronavirus in the news daily, hunting and time with family took on greater importance for me.



Garrett Wood with his 10-point buck.



POKEWEED

By Paul Durfield, Senior Lease Manager

Pokeweed (*Phytolacca Americana*) goes by many names—including pokeberry, poke salad, and inkberry—and has multiple wildlife benefits as well. It's a widespread and easily recognizable plant, its purple stem and dark purple berries standing out in recently disturbed forest openings and forest edges throughout the eastern United States. It's also common along fence rows, power or gas line rights-of-way, and pastures. Deer eat the leaves, which can have as high as 32% digestible protein, as a preferred late summer forage.

Pokeweed can grow to reach six to ten feet tall. Its pinkish-red stem is partially hollow. The dark purple berries, which appear in late summer, are favorites for many songbirds, such as mockingbirds,

A plant of many names and wildlife benefits

northern cardinals, and mourning doves. Even though deer, birds, and many small mammals are immune to its toxicity, the entire plant does contain toxins that can harm both humans and livestock.

Bowhunters should not overlook pokeweed growth. In states with earlier bow seasons, hunters can have good success around pokeweed. Weyerhaeuser lease manager Donnie Wood once harvested a deer during early bow season and, upon field dressing it, noticed the stomach had a purplish tinge. When he opened the rumen, he found the contents stained dark purple from the abundance of pokeweed berries. He also reports that some of his best dove hunts have been during the late dove season in recently harvested areas filled with a lot of pokeweed. Doves flock into these cuts to eat the seed, the berry having long ago decomposed.

So next time you notice this common forest plant, give it a nod of thanks for its role in healthy forests, including feeding game you may later harvest.



GAME ON!

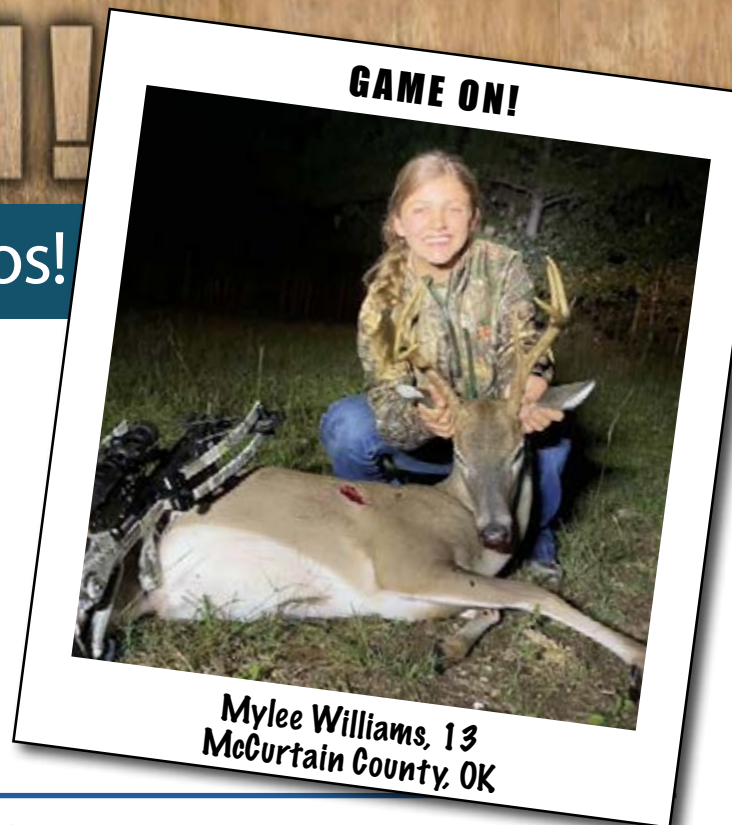
Send Us Your Hunting Photos!

Did you harvest the deer of a lifetime?
A turkey, quail, or woodcock?

We would like to share your success in an upcoming
Weyerhaeuser Outdoors.

Please email photos to

amy.james@weyerhaeuser.com, along with details surrounding
the hunt. Your photo may appear in a future issue!



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Do you have questions or concerns about hunting lease programs or any of the information in this publication? Find more information at www.wyrecreation.com or contact us on our telephone helpline at (855) 248-6872.