



Yuma Valley Rod & Gun Club

"Conserving Arizona's Land and Wildlife Since 1936"

Monthly Newsletter

March
2007



There are no excuses great enough to not renew your \$20 annual membership!! Get them in!

March Events:

- Alamo Lake Clean-Up
March 3-4, 2007
- Open Bass Derby
March 11, 2007

**Next Club Meeting:
March 7**

VISIT US ONLINE:
YVRGC.COM



~Congratulations to Chase Mitchell for his javelina taken in Unit 22. The impressive animal was shot with a .223, the same gun that Chase won at the Dove Hunter's Barbeque. If you ask me, that sounds like a good reason to attend the meetings and events!!

Website:

~Are there any members who would like to renew their memberships online with just a credit card? I'm running a survey to find out and thought we, as a club, should at least offer what many other clubs do. Besides, who doesn't use a computer now days!!?? Bad question, probably 50% don't.....

~There is a \$99 carryover from the capsule draw, Ralph Ogden's name was drawn but was not present.

~The fair booth tickets have arrived! With a \$15,000 payout, they're sure to go fast. 1st Prize \$10,000, 2nd Prize \$3,000, 3rd Prize \$2,000. Only 1250 tickets printed. Each ticket is a \$20 donation. Winners need not be present. The drawing will be held at 7:00P.M., Sunday April 8, 2007 at our fair booth. People wanting to buy tickets or help sell tickets need to contact Paul Williams at 928-343-9099. Those who have taken on the responsibility to sell these tickets need to communicate with Paul on the status. No Excuses....

KOFA Lion Update:

~Ron Thompson arrived Feb 8 and searched for sign for a hound capture attempt beginning on Feb 9. He found old tracks of a female. The 9th and 10th we searched the KOFA mountains with the hounds and found no fresh sign - only 1 several day old scat and 2-4 day old tracks of the female. An abbreviated hound search was made on the 11th to check if the female had come through areas already searched but still no fresh sign. We found no new carcasses or cache sites, and no sign of any males. Ron then started setting snares the afternoon of the 11th. He will be snaring

Club Funds

~Have you ever given any thought about the source of funds generated by the club? I'm sure if you have, you didn't take much time out of your schedule. What I mean is the deficiency of fund raisers. Surviving off the income from the fair booth and dove hunter's bbq isn't enough. The more money the club makes, the more the members will benefit. More raffle prizes, larger budgets, etc....Put your two cents in at the next club meeting and step up to the plate!

continuously through the end of the month, with hound efforts on the weekends. Lindsay Smythe Wildlife Biologist Kofa National Wildlife Refuge



~Do you know what the above picture represents?? Times Up. It was the last picture my game camera took 2 weeks ago when I dressed it up like a sheep and set it in the Squaw Peak / Burro Canyon area. You thought I would give you the exact place? I'll give you a hint, it was right next to Budweiser Spring!!!

~Do you want to know how important it is to have good commissioners? The U.S. Fish and Wildlife does have different goals than the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. Everyone should know the difference between being proactive and reactive. The full story is on page 3!

~There are many individuals that do not understand the impact "anti-hunters" have against our efforts and beliefs. I recently came upon a previous case. Google Chilton Ranch online and view the lawsuit. The only reason the Chilton's won

the case was their lack of tolerance for such ridiculous accusations. This coupled with their commitment of funds got the court to side in favor of the Chilton's Ranch. I believe if more clubs and organizations had the money the "anti's" do, there would be many more cases like the Chilton's.

~Kirk, representing the NRA will be at the next club meeting to inform members of the latest efforts to disrupt our rights as gun owners. Particularly Senate Bills 1251 & 1629. More information at the meeting.

~Don't forget about the raffle for signing up the most "new" members for 2007. I would like to see the President fork out his personal money for this!! I've already have six give me their money!!

Local Candidates:

~Phil Townsend and Robby Woodhouse have attended their interviews in Phoenix by the Governors Office to fill Joe Melton's position on the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. Hopefully the decision will be favorable to one of candidates. Good Luck!



~Thanks to those who helped in the construction of the Stewart Vincent Wolfe Creative Playground. Coupled with the funds donated at the last meeting that supplied volunteers with food to eat. This gave the club great publicity!

Our Mission includes, but is not limited to:

The conservation of wildlife, habitat and natural resources. Education of the public to include conservation issues and firearm safety. To support and defend the second amendment of the United States Constitution. Provide recreation and organized activities to members and the public and participate in charitable and other community service activities especially those related to conservation and sportsmanship.

Even if you don't live in Arizona where SB1629 applies, the rest of the info is for all Americans. Government has gotten too big and only we the people can reverse this disastrous trend towards socialism. Please read our Constitution and Bill Of Rights. We are all so concerned about our personal comforts, luxuries, cheap gas and cheap lettuce - that we forget to have the courage to stand up for our rights. When the politicians take them away you will suddenly realize where the real value was..... and it's not cheap gas and lettuce.

SB 1251

Strengthens the "public establishment or event" storage requirements:

- Defines "secure storage" and "readily accessible."
- Prohibits recording information about the weapon or individual.
- If "operator" doesn't comply, they can't prohibit weapons.
- Exempts CCW permit holders from carry prohibitions except in court houses, etc.

Since the new law became effective on 9/21/06, many of you have shared anecdotal stories about storage lockers not being available; data being recorded about you and your weapon; guns being tossed into boxes or bags; and downright refusal to store your weapon. It's time to go on record to emphasize the need for SB 1251. Due to objections from law enforcement, NRA, and others, we are expecting an amendment to be offered in committee to remove the permit holder exemption, and make a few other changes. We will monitor these changes, and inform you if they turn the bill into something bad for gun owners.

SB 1629

If you are not committing, or attempting to commit, a serious or violent crime, SB 1629 reclassifies carrying a concealed weapon without a permit as a petty offense. Here is the exact wording of the proposed new language for ARS 13-3102.K:
"Misconduct involving weapons under subsection A, paragraph 1 or 2 of this section is a petty offense unless the violation occurs in the commission or attempted commission of a serious offense as defined in section 13-604 or a violent crime as defined in section 13-604.04, in which case the offense is a class 1 misdemeanor."

Under current law, if you have not been issued a concealed weapons (CCW) permit, it is a class 1 misdemeanor to carry a concealed weapon. Everyone is treated like a hardened criminal. Sadly, because of a couple of 1994 Appellate Court decisions:

- If a casual observer cannot easily see your firearm, you are carrying concealed and could be arrested.
- Wearing a gun in a vehicle = concealed carry. Without a permit you are subject to arrest.
- Having a CCW permit and wearing a gun in a vehicle puts your non-CCW permit passengers at risk for being arrested for carrying concealed without a permit.
- There is no clear objective standard in statute that you can rely on to avoid violating the law.

SB 1629 separates the innocent mistake by otherwise law-abiding citizens from the cold-blooded actions of hardcore criminals. SB 1629 even adds the "attempted commission of a serious offense" language to the law, to assist law enforcement in determining who the bad guys are.

Yuma Women's Reel & Rifle Club Know Any Females who Fish, Hunt, Target Shoot???

Members of the Yuma Women's Reel & Rifle Club (YWRRC) ask if you know of any women (young and old, all ages welcome!) that might be interested in the YWRRC???? This historic club is filled with wonderful ladies who value the outdoors, enjoy fishing and hunting, and have fun throughout the year. If your wife, sister, female cousins and friends like to fish and hunt, this is the Club for them. Your daughters are also welcome and encouraged to join (those under 18 need a sponsorship from an active YWRRC member). Please have them contact President, June Wolfe (210-7770) or Vice-President, Julie Foster (376-0974) for information on this historic and FUN club. **59th Year is here!**

Scholarship - If you know of a female pursuing an education at AWC in the field of natural resources, environmental science, wildlife & habitat related studies, please encourage them to contact Jean Wilson (928-726-0953) or June Wolfe (928-210-7770) to apply for a 2007-2008 scholarship (value \$600 for tuition/books). Deadline for applying is March 9th.

Meeting – Ladies of all ages welcome!

March meeting will be held on Thursday, March 22nd, 6:30pm at the American Legion Post #19, 2575 Virginia Drive (Ladies Auxiliary Room). Exciting discussion about upcoming derbies & plans for the Yuma County Fair booth, door prizes galore, much fun! Outdoor Expo in Phoenix – March 31st- April 1st and Fair April 3rd-April 8th.

Join - - - Annual dues \$20 (adults), \$10 (juniors/guppies) - - - Enjoy fishing, hunting, target shooting and competing with women of all ages! Share stories, get involved in the community and habitat conservation & build memories. Send dues to PO Box 1621, Yuma AZ 85366 or come to the meeting!

Contests Underway & Derby Coming:

January 1st brought the beginning of the Bass, Catfish & Striped Bass Contests that are progressive throughout the year. Catfish Board has Julie Foster with a 4 lb 5 oz beauty on it! **DERBY:** Women's Open Bass and Catfish Derby (March 2nd–4th) for ANY FEMALES (All ages) - compete for cash prizes and awards.

Hunting Tournaments & Shooting Events

Gale Edwards took 1st Place in the 2006 Deer Tournament with her 1st deer – 124 lbs (18.5 inches in width). The 2006 Dove Tournament ended with two winners – Emily Whiteford took 1st Place with her 13 doves and Gale Edwards took 2nd Place with 5 doves. The 2006-2007 Quail Tournament was won by Gale Edwards taking 1st Place with her 2 quails. 2007 Tournaments will run during legal seasons. Some members are pig hunting in February with high hopes for getting a ham! Target shooting events also to be planned!

Interested in support of habitat and wildlife locally? Consider your individual or group involvement in the Southwest Arizona Habitat Partnership Committee (HPC). For more information, contact June or Jean.

Stewart Vincent Wolfe Creative Playground Build – Feb 8th-19th Members of the YWRRC baked cookies for the opening ceremony and volunteered during the Yuma West Wetlands community build of the 17,000 square ft playground designed by local school children. Jean Wilson, super member extraordinaire either had a paint brush in her hand or a drill as often as she could! YWRRC also bought a commemorative brick for lasting honor in the walkway up to the playground. On behalf of the community, President, June Wolfe would like to thank Yuma Valley Rod & Gun Club members who supported the build through serving as a Construction Captain who "drove" the skilled & unskilled workers and truly made the project happen, or simply volunteering time on the build, doing whatever job assigned, or donating \$\$\$, or loaning tools!!!! And special acknowledgement to Dave Garrison, a.k.a. "The Tool Nazi" for managing the tool crib and wearing multiple hats.....And also to everyone who made the dinner on Friday the 16th happen - - - THANK YOU TO ALL!



Tucson Weekly: Species Spat
SPECIES SPAT (02-08-2007)
Are agency turf battles hurting wildlife?
By Tim Vanderpool

As we humans crowd Arizona, we're crowding wildlife out. It does not take a rocket scientist to fathom how dwindling rivers, razed deserts and oceans of fresh concrete might just push many species--from pygmy owls and garter snakes to wee top minnows--to the razor's edge of extinction. But pell-mell growth isn't the only threat. According to biologists and conservationists, turf battles between state and federal wildlife officials are also taking a toll. In particular, critics contend that the Arizona Game and Fish Department has devolved from a conservation champion into a conservative hotbed, steeped in resentment of federal oversight and grudging to embrace the Endangered Species Act. As it happens, the ESA is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. And that's what sticks in the state's craw, say critics. For evidence, they point to Arizona's enthusiasm for removing the Southwestern bald eagle from endangered-species status, or often-floundering efforts at recovering the Mexican gray wolf.

Top Arizona Game and Fish officials contend that federal programs only make their jobs harder. When The Arizona Republic ran a story about the eagle in January, for example, Game and Fish Director Duane Shroufe even complained that "the Endangered Species Act gets in our way of managing species." Such chatter irks Daniel Patterson, Southwest director of Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility. "The anti-ESA viewpoint is strong within the Arizona Department of Game and Fish," he says. "If Director Shroufe is going to continue with that aggressive, outdated view, he should probably be replaced." Shroufe argues that his Arizona Republic statement was misconstrued. Still, he does have a bone to pick. "Many times, administration of the ESA has gotten in our way," he says. "I think the Endangered Species Act is a great thing, but if you look at what Congress intended years ago (in creating the act), and how it's turned out, I think there's been some real problems that get in the way of successfully recovering species." He cites the cactus ferruginous pygmy owl--recently and controversially pulled from the endangered-species list--as a case in point. When the embattled owls were still listed, "we got down to the point where we knew there were only a handful left. But it took us several years to get (federal) permission to put transmitters on them so we knew what was going on."

The long-struggling Sonoran pronghorn are another symbol of federal hurdles, he says. "That population nearly winked out before we finally could do something. We had a (Fish and Wildlife) regional director who was able to give us permission under ESA to do some work on collaring and transmitting, so we could learn where those (pronghorns) needed to go." But initially, such permission had been denied. "We had a (federal) individual making decisions that we couldn't do something, because the pronghorn is listed as endangered," he says. "Then ... we get another person in administration saying we can do something. And those two answers...one keeps you from actively managing a species that may go into extinction. And the other one lets you--hopefully successfully--work on active management of the species."

The real answer, says Shroufe, is making Arizona an equal partner with the feds. And already he touts progress: "We're the only state in the nation that's able to have an (agreement) with the Fish and Wildlife Service to convey some of those authorities over to my agency. For example, I now sign off on all plans for species recovery." A call to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service spokeswoman Elizabeth Slown was not returned.

But others contend that Shroufe is blowing smoke, especially since his department has long signed off on such recovery plans--and even helped design a few. Instead, they see anti-federal ideology at work. "Arizona is one of the states quite involved in the states-rights movement for fish and wildlife," says biologist Sally Stefferud, who spent 20 years with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "In public statements, they call federal listings a detriment, because it causes too much controversy and causes people to oppose the species. But I think that's just rhetoric." So does Kieran Suckling, policy director at Tucson's Center for Biological Diversity. State officials "believe they have the God-given right to be the manager of species," he says. "But in the typical instance, they are opposing conservation. They opposed the listing of the Mexican spotted owl; they opposed the listing of the pygmy owl; they are pushing to get the bald eagle and the Apache trout off the (endangered-species) list. So their interest is always in less conservation, not more conservation."

Arizona Game and Fish's support for de-listing the bald eagle is perfect example, says Suckling. While Arizona argues that it can protect eagles better than the feds, "when you look at the state's strategy for eagle recovery, there's nothing there. How many eagles should there be for recovery? Undetermined. What is their target for the number of nesting sites? Undetermined. How much habitat protection is needed? Undetermined." Suckling calls the Mexican gray wolf another symbol of the agency's rightward drift. He says Arizona Game and Fish championed wolf recovery when it began in the 1990s. But conservative governors then began stacking the department's governing commission with pro-hunting, pro-ranching members who were hostile to wildlife in general, and to the wolf in particular. "And as the years progressed, the anti-wolf mentality seeped further and further into the department's administration," he says. "It's to the point that Game and Fish is part of a state junta--along with New Mexico--that's pushing to kill wolves that go near cows. You will find them advocating for the ranchers' side and not the wolves' side." But to Shroufe, that's just part of a delicate balancing act. "We're using adaptive management," he says, "to determine how we're going to most successfully have a wolf population that's permanent in Arizona. That may have a lot to do with cooperating with the ranchers more, and it may have a lot to do with taking (out) problem wolves." Still, he calls the program a success. "There are 59 wolves that we can account for. It's not a recovery goal--we don't have a recovery goal yet--but the reintroduction (goal) was 100 wolves. We get a (good) whelping season this spring, and we may have 100 wolves." That doesn't convince critics such as Suckling.

"The old Game and Fish would have cried foul over the wolf situation," he says. "In the late '80s and early '90s, they were looked upon as one of the most progressive leaders among the Western states. "But today, Arizona Game and Fish always wants less protection for wildlife, not more. And they never come forward with any scientific arguments or better management plans. That's why other states don't look to us for leadership anymore."

SONORAN PRONGHORN MONTHLY UPDATE

February 20, 2007

Captive Breeding:

North Half: All the animals are doing well and all the adult females appear very pregnant. We haven't seen any fawns yet, but expect some any day now. The pen monitors are irrigating daily, and the pronghorn are feeding heavily on alfalfa. We caught, radio colored, and released the other 2 male yearlings from the pen on January 24th. Both of them have remained together and on the east side of Charlie Bell pass. The first two released yearlings were seen with a group of 19 pronghorn on the west side of the Growler Mountains, just east of South Tac. We also moved 1 male fawn from the north half into the southeast quarter in January. We moved 2 other male fawns from the north half to the southeast quarter on February 14th. This leaves only one male fawn in this half, which should cut down on the harassment of the females and new fawns. We also moved one of the adult bucks from the north half to the southwest quarter.

Southwest Quarter: All the animals in the south half are doing well also. We have noticed that one adult female from Mexico (Teal) does not appear to be pregnant and is in poorer condition than all the other animals. The other 4 adult females in this quarter all appear to be pregnant. In January, we captured and moved 2 male fawns from this quarter to the southeast quarter. This leaves only one male fawn in this section also. While the veterinarian was here in February, we darted the Teal female, and took some blood and cultures to do some tests to see if anything is wrong with her.

Southeast Quarter: This quarter is now made up of 5 male fawns from last year. They have all grouped up, although one is often off by himself, and appear to be doing well. We will hold them in this section until they are old enough to be released, probably this fall.

Water Projects: During the February 4th telemetry flight, we found a group of 9 pronghorn about a mile from the new Devil's Hills water on the Marine Range. This water has not filled with water so we took 350 gallons of water to this site, and plugged and filled the trough.

We expanded 2 of the three Sierra Pinta waters February 16-18. We added 1320 gallons of storage to Sierra Pinta #1, making it a total of 3310 gallons, and added a new dam to help collect water. We added 1875 gallons of storage to Sierra Pinta #2, making it a total of 3750 gallons, and made some changes to the collection dams at that site also. These projects involved having personnel and materials flown in by helicopter, and hand digging the trenches for the underground storage pipes, as they were in wilderness. We accomplished both these large projects with help from several Region 4 personnel (Troy Smith, Lin Piest, Scott Fischer, Dan Urquidez, Jodi Niccum, and Allen Zufelt), Fish and Wildlife Service personnel, 4 Fish and Wildlife Service volunteers, and members of the Yuma Valley Rod and Gun Club. We also flew in 850 gallons of water to SP #1.

We are still planning to expand the 1 remaining Sierra Pinta water and the Granite Mountains water in April. We flew to the Granite Mountain site to determine what materials are needed, and saw 2 pronghorn in the area, and noticed fresh sign at the water, which was still $\frac{1}{4}$ full.

Forage Enhancements: Nothing new to report.

Other Projects: We located the radio collared pronghorn in Sonora, Mexico. Five GPS radio collars were put on in January 2006. We couldn't find the signal for one of them. Another one was dead, but we were able to download the data from the collar. We also found and downloaded the other 3 collars, which were all alive.

Dan Nelson and Loeta Clifford (pen monitors) assisted Gary Hovatter and Cabeza Prieta personnel with a Natural History Workshop for teachers, at the pen and Charlie Bell forage site in February.

Wild Pronghorn: We did a telemetry flight on February 4th. We tried to download the 5 GPS collars, but none of them would download. We are working to determine what the problem is with those. We found a group of 19 pronghorn near South Tac, with 2 of the released juveniles, and a radio collared female. A radio collared adult buck was also nearby. We also found a group of 11 (with 3 radio collared females) on the east side of the Sierra Pintas, and a radio collared buck alone several miles south of there. The other radio collared female was with 8 other pronghorn in the Mohawk Valley. This female had been radio-collared in December 27 miles southeast of where she is now.



Part of the North Herd, photo by Loeta Clifford.