


A photograph of a bighorn sheep standing on a rocky, grassy hillside. The sheep is facing the camera, looking slightly to the right. It has large, thick, curved horns. The background shows a steep, rocky slope with some green shrubs and dry grass. The sky is clear and blue.

The Bighorn

FALL 2018

>>> PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS BIGHORN SOCIETY

Restoring Bighorn Sheep to their Native Ranges in Texas, and Ensuring the Viability of their Habitat



Balcones Cement
2580 Wald Road
New Braunfels, TX 78132

Building the future™



**EL CARMEN LAND & CONSERVATION CO. LLC
CEMEX USA & JOSIAH AUSTIN RANCHES**

**A WORKING PARTNER WITH THE TEXAS BIGHORN SOCIETY TO INSURE THE FUTURE OF
THE DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP IN WEST TEXAS**

BIGHORN

The official magazine of the Texas Bighorn Society
Advertising Rates Effective 1-1-2009
Bighorn is published 3 times annually

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Bighorn is a four-color glossy publication, and the following is required:

Ads should be supplied on a disk and in one of the following formats:

- Photoshop
- TIFF (Preferred)
- PDF (Preferred)
- JPEG

Each ad should be: 300dpi (minimum) in CMYK color space

All other formats must be approved by our production staff

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Spring – February 1st

Summer – April 1st

Fall / Winter – October 1st

DISPLAY ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Location	Rate Per Issue
Inside Front Cover (Supply as full color bleed)	\$270.00
Inside Back Cover (Supply as full color bleed)	\$270.00
Back Cover (Supply as full color bleed)	\$315.00
Full Page (Supply as full color bleed)	\$225.00
Half Page (4 3/4" Tall X 8" Wide)	\$175.00
Third Page (4 3/4" Tall X 5 1/4" Wide)	\$120.00
Quarter Page (1 3/4" Tall X 8" Wide)	\$ 75.00

Note: An exchange of advertising for Donations, Sponsorships, and In-Kind Advertising will be considered on a case by case basis.

PRODUCTION

Bighorn's production staff is available to help you build your advertising copy. Production costs, hourly rates, and estimates are available upon request.

STAFF

Editor-in-Chief

Bonnie McKinney

bonnie2mckinney@gmail.com

Graphic Design

LaurelHouse Studio / René Graham

rene@laurelhousestudio.com

Printing

Midtown Print / John Frullo

www.midtownprint.com

Marketing/Advertising

Diane Gregson

dgregson@texasbighornsociety.org



cover



cover photo by Jerrell Coburn

BIGHORN

Fall 2018

CONTENTS

New Members	5
President's Letter	7
Letter from the Editor	9
2018 Roundup	10
The Sheep of September	16
<i>Terry Rather</i>	
TTU Research Update	22
<i>Emily Wright, PhD Candidate</i>	
The Abbey Ram	24
<i>Bonnie McKinney</i>	
Lights, Camera...Sheep!	28
<i>Dewey Stockbridge</i>	

bighorns don't

bighorns don't need our help
bighorns don't live in Texas
bighorns don't matter



bighorns don't need the internet. bighorns need you.



Texas Bighorn Society

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR DONATE TODAY

4

M. Jones



Texas Bighorn Society

[Fall 2018 Membership Application]

YES! I want to help restore Bighorn Sheep in Texas!

MAIL WITH PAYMENT TO:

TBS Membership
1615 West Loop 289
Lubbock, TX 79416

SIGN ME UP FOR:

- ☐ RENEWAL/INDIVIDUAL
\$40.00
- ☐ STUDENT/ACTIVE MILITARY
\$25.00
*must include copy of valid ID
- ☐ FAMILY MEMBERSHIP
\$75.00
1-yr membership, 1 yr Bighorn Magazine,
2 Window Decals
- ☐ SPONSOR
\$250.00 [annual]
1-yr membership, 1 yr Bighorn Magazine,
2 Window Decals, 5-yr Wall Plaque
- ☐ LIFE
\$750.00 [one time]
Life membership, Life Bighorn Magazine,
2 Window Decals, Wall Plaque & Badge

LAST NAME FIRST NAME SPOUSE

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

EMAIL ADDRESS

HOME PHONE CELL/OFFICE PHONE

PAYMENT: MC/Visa/Discover/AMEX Check # DATE:

CARD# CV# EXPIRATION DATE SIGNATURE

OFFICERS

Jim Payne (Jill) *President*
PO Drawer 1719
413 Shelbyville St
Center, TX 75935
936.554.7307 (M)
jpayne@fairchildlawfirm.com

Sam Cunningham *Vice President*
6600 Sumac Place
Amarillo, Texas 79124
806.282.6889 (M)
scunningham@quailcreekent.com

Curt Brockmann (Tina) *Secretary*
1714 Aspen Ridge
San Antonio, TX 78248
210.846.4516 (M)
cdbrockmann@cpsenergy.com

Kathy Boone (Dan) *Treasurer*
1615 West Loop 289
Lubbock, TX 79416
806.438.3939 (M)
kboone@sonoramfg.com

DIRECTORS

Booner Beck (Shelli)
13501 Ranch Road 12, Ste 103
Wimberley, TX 78676
512.799.0229
boonerbeck@yahoo.com

Steve Bolner (Kathy)
1916 Pembroke Lane
McKinney, TX 75072
512.217.3338 (M)
thebolners@gmail.com

Clay Brewer
131 County Road 458
Rochelle, Texas 76872
325.792.4177 (M)
cbrewer@wildsheepfoundation.org

Ace High (Karen)
PO Box 39
Westhoff, Texas 77994
361.275.4064 (M)
ace.high.tx@gmail.com

Lynton Holloway (Wendy)
P.O. Box 79577
Ft. Worth, TX 76179
817.271.7558 (M)
lyntonholl@netscape.net

Robert Joseph (Daniele)
P. O. Box 2603
Lubbock, TX 79408
806.787.8650 (M)
icm-lbk@swbell.net

Dirk Parks (Susan)
3600 Timberwolf Trail
Midland, TX 79705
432.288.4784 (M)
parks8@swbell.net

Tommy Caruthers (Patricia) (Emeritus)
209 Ridgcrest Circle
Denton, TX 76205
940.391.1730 (M)
tommy@caruthersoil.com

ADVISORY DIRECTORS

Charlie Barnes	Brian Fienhold	Bonnie McKinney
Ron Bell	Terry Fricks	John Meyer
Vern Bleich	Froylan Hernandez	James Payne III
J.D. Bolner	Rutledge High	Terry Rathert
Charlie Butler	Hunter Holloway	Bill Scott
Jerrell Coburn	Tyler Mansell	Carleton Turner
Warren Conway	Bob McCoy	
Chuck Cox	Billy Pat McKinney	

Howdy, New Members!

On behalf of the current members, the TBS Officers & Directors, and all the Texas Bighorn Sheep your patronage will go to support, we'd like to welcome you to our organization! We appreciate your support and look forward to seeing you at the next TBS event!

individual

James Barton
Gemma Chovan
Bryan Corbello
J.E. James

Charles Mullins
Devin Naquin
Stephen West

family

Jonathan (Mike) Russell & Family
Miles Sims Family
Clifford & Patsy Ward

life

Chris Barrilleaux
Jeff Keeney

student

Jeff Ponshock, Jr.

sponsor

Tyler Beach, Campo Linea Outfitting

*please,

Help us stay current with your address and email information! Contact Diane Gregson if you have moved, changed email addresses, or have questions about your membership. She can be reached at:

dgregson@texasbighornsociety.org
806-745-7783

This & That

June 2018 Board Meeting Summary

by Curt Brockman

The June 2018 Texas Bighorn Society Board meeting was held before our annual Roundup event in Austin, Texas. Twenty-six people attended the meeting. The minutes of the March 2018 Board and General Membership meetings were reviewed and approved. Kathy Boone gave the treasurer's report, which was also reviewed and approved. Robert Joseph gave a membership report and reported that TBS has 836 members.

The Board discussed some last-minute Roundup items and then discussed the 2019 Roundup, which will be held at the Westin Riverwalk hotel in San Antonio. The initial Roundup date coincided with Father's Day, so it was moved to June 20-22, so mark it on your calendar. We also discussed the 2019 Work Project

which is tentatively set at Black Gap. TPWD is considering adding some new guzzlers in the area. The date is not final but it should be around mid-March.

Mark Garrett provided the Board with an overview of the sheep herd in the various TPWD wildlife management areas. A new web camera system was installed at Elephant Mountain. A recent sheep survey at Elephant Mountain showed 134 sheep with a 50% lamb crop. TPWD is anticipating that the next capture and relocation from Elephant Mountain will be in late 2019.

At Black Gap, TPWD continues to track the recently collared sheep. One sheep was detected in Mexico. The relocated sheep have grouped up with resident sheep in and around the

Black Gap area. TPWD also burned and treated 7 miles of giant reed along the river. At Sierra Diablo, the Mule Deer Foundation built two new guzzlers and repaired one guzzler.

Dr. Conway provided the board with an update on the Texas Tech University Bighorn Research Collaboration project. Dr. Conway also introduced Ms. Emily Wright. Ms. Wright is a Texas Tech University Ph.D. student who will be performing research on bighorn sheep population genetics. Her research project is funded in part by TBS' donation. Welcome aboard Emily! We look forward to getting to know you.

That is all for now. I hope you all have a great fall and get to spend some time in the outdoors.



to Jerrell & Pam

Long-time members of TBS, Jerrell & Pam Coburn, who have contributed untold resources to TBS over the years, please know that you have all of our prayers and we are thinking of you daily and wish Jerrell a speedy recovery. Wishing you the best Jerrell!



Check [facebook.com/texasbighornsociety](https://www.facebook.com/texasbighornsociety) for more news, info, photos and videos!

President's Letter



Jim Payne
TBS President

Greetings!

Although the outside temperatures may not yet reflect it, the calendar says that we are moving toward Fall here in Texas. That means hunting and holidays! Remember that if you hunt and fish you are, by both your actions and your spending, a leader in conservation!

Conservation, specifically wild sheep conservation, received its annual shot in the arm from TBS with our Roundup this past June. I think we had one of our best auction weekends yet, in terms of the quality of the offerings and the resulting money raised. Good fun and fellowship simply put a bow on the whole package. TBS is profoundly grateful for everyone who participated in any way.

We are thankful to the Trans-Pecos staff for completing the second guzzler at Black Gap WMA which helicopter problems prevented us from building at our Work Project last spring. At any rate, it is now up and operating on the top of Stairway Mountain. As always, water helps keep sheep on the mountain, as well as a variety of other wildlife.

Speaking of the Work Project, I am proud to tell you that we've made it a point this year to lock in the dates for the next one earlier than we have in the past. You can pencil in on your calendar next year's Work Project for March 15 – 17, 2019. Details as to the scope of work and the exact location in Texas "sheep country" will be forthcoming soon. Please monitor our Facebook page and website for announcements.

Lastly, I would ask that you make it a point this fall at the hunting camp, at holiday parties, or just any occasions, to tell other people about the Texas Bighorn Society. Please share why you are a member and something about the good work that we do for a native Texas species. Please tell of the money we raise, the trips we make to far west Texas and the good members with whom you associate. By doing so you will likely recruit a new member to the "best little conservation organization in Texas!"

God Bless Texas Bighorns!

Jim Payne

President, Texas Bighorn Society

This & That

El Carmen Land & Conservation Co. To Be Honored

El Carmen Land & Conservation Co. (ECLCC), owned by Cemex USA & Mr. Josiah Austin is being honored at Texan By Nature, Conservation Wrangler Summit on October 29, 2018 at the George W. Bush Presidential Center in Dallas, Texas.

In 2011 Mrs. Laura Bush founded the "Texan By Nature Program" as a way to bring conservation and

business leaders together to continue working toward the conservation of natural resources in Texas. "Conservation Wrangler is a program highlighting the very best Texan-led conservation projects that demonstrate tangible returns for people, prosperity, and natural resources. Texan By Nature provides selected projects with tailored support and increased

visibility." ECLCC is delighted to be honored by this program, and thank all of our many supporters and volunteers that have worked on many "boots on the ground" conservation projects the last several years at ECLCC. Check out the Texan By Nature website at:

<https://texanbynature.org/program/conservation-wrangler/>





Remembering George “Tim” Hixon TBS Life Member April 8, 1937 - July 18, 2018

George C. “Tim” Hixon, prominent local business man, conservationist, philanthropist, champion of education, loving husband, proud father, and beaming grandfather passed away Wednesday, July 18th at the age of 81. Tim was born in Jacksonville, FL, April 8, 1937 to George C. and Sarah Hall Hixon, the second of four brothers. He is survived by his wife of 43 years Karen Johnson Hixon, his sons; George S. (“Timo”) Hixon and wife Ashley Solcher Hixon and their children Foster and Clayton of San Antonio, and Bryan S. Hixon of San Antonio, and his three brothers; Joseph M. Hixon III and wife Renate of Ponte Vedra Beach, FL, Bryan Simpson Jr. and wife Page of Jacksonville, FL and John H. Simpson and wife Elaine of Jacksonville, FL.

Tim’s 81 years were power packed from beginning to end. He touched countless lives, promoted many causes, shook the hand of seven Presidents, conferred with three in the oval office, shot a Boone and Crockett “Book” whitetail in his 79th year, was a loyal friend and boss, a benefactor to many, saw the world, and promoted causes that have truly left the world a better place for his having been here. Tim and Karen, his wife, best friend, and partner in conservation, have left a profound mark on the landscape of America, most specifically, Texas and Idaho.

As a conservationist, Tim served on the Board and as Vice Chairman of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission from 1989 to 1995, and as Chairman of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation from 1995 to 2002, where he was honored as a Trustee Emeritus and inducted in to the TPW Conservation Hall of Fame in 2010. He was also a Trustee and Director of the National Board of The Nature Conservancy as well as The Texas Nature Conservancy, President and Trustee (Emeritus) of the San Antonio Zoological Society, a Director of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (who recognized him with its Texas Legends Award in 2004), and on the Board of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute. Tim also served as the President of the Boone and Crockett Club and as Director and Executive Vice President of Game Conservation International.

From the Editor



Bonnie McKinney
Editor, *The Bighorn*

To All TBS Members,

The Trans-Pecos weather patterns this summer have been nothing short of amazing, a long hot summer with some areas finally receiving abundant rainfall, whereas others only light showers. However, most of the bighorn country has greened up, providing lots of nutritious forbs for browsing bighorns. Early fall migration is starting for the birds moving south, and hunters are getting ready for the fall-winter season.

The annual TBS Roundup in June in Austin was a great success, and many thanks to all the TBS members that helped make it happen. Great fun to see the huge bat flight, visit with old friends and welcome new ones to TBS. Be sure to check out the photos from Roundup, Dirk Parks did a great job covering the Roundup, his generous contribution of photos from TBS events are much appreciated. Remember to mark your calendar for next year’s Roundup in San Antonio at the Westin Riverwalk Hotel on June 20-22, 2019.

Your “Bighorn” magazine has some great articles this issue, and many thanks to all the contributors.

The annual bighorn sheep surveys by TPWD were conducted in August, unfortunately the results were not available for inclusion in this issue of “Bighorn,” hopefully this information will be made available soon.

Don’t forget upcoming winter events; the Wild Sheep Foundation Show in Reno, Nevada, and both Dallas Safari Club and Houston Safari Club shows. They are all great places to spread the word about Texas Bighorn Society.

Saludos,

Bonnie McKinney

Wildlife Coordinator

El Carmen Land Conservation Co.

Email: bonnie2mckinney@gmail.com

Photos by Dirk Parks



2018 R

JUNE 15-16 | AU

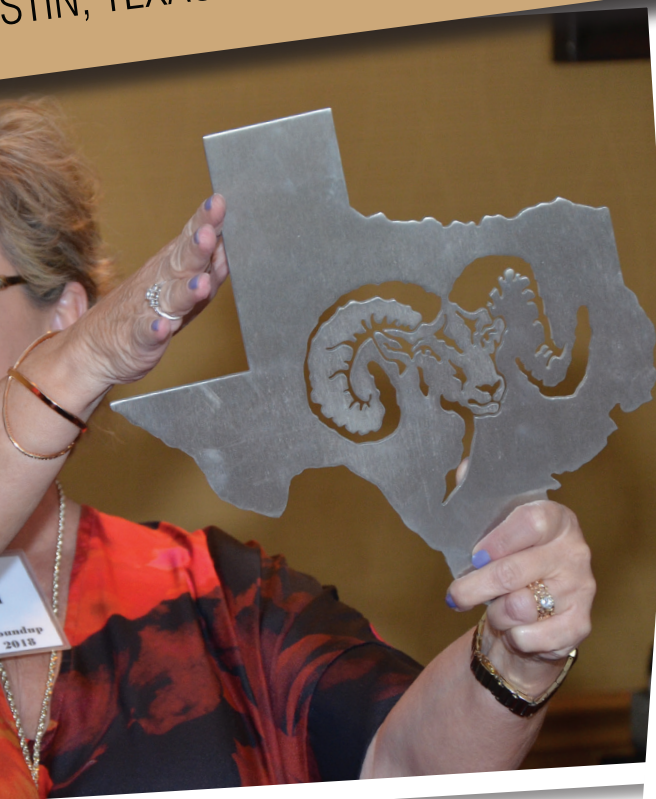
10





Roundup

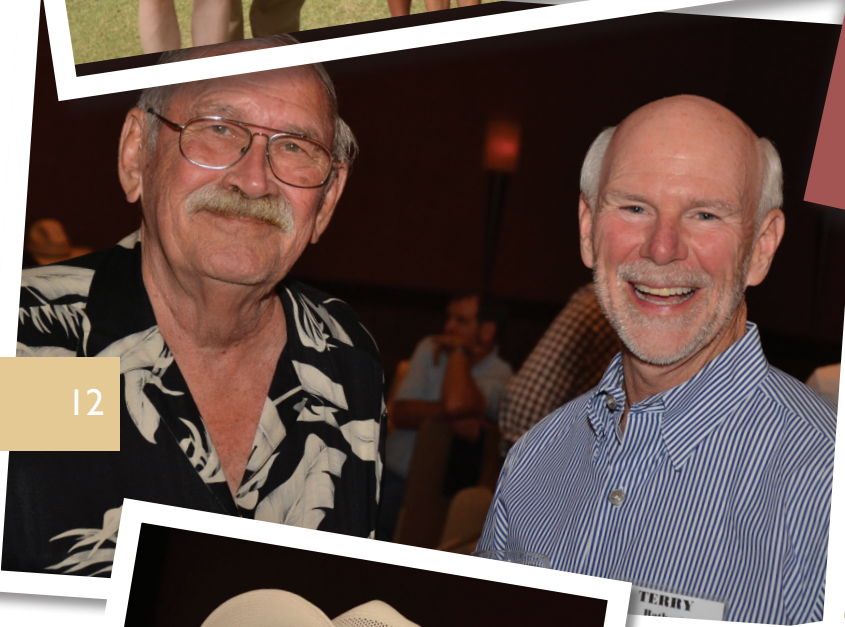
STIN, TEXAS





2018 R

JUNE 15-16 | AUSTIN



12





Roundup

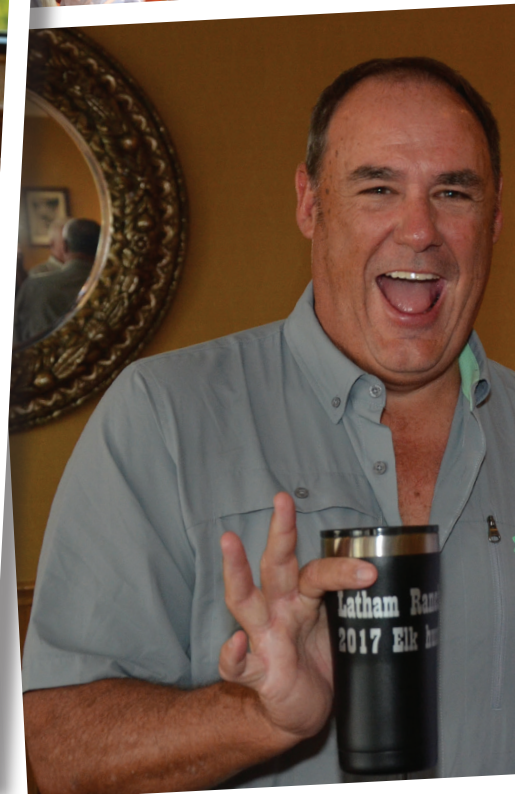
IN, TEXAS

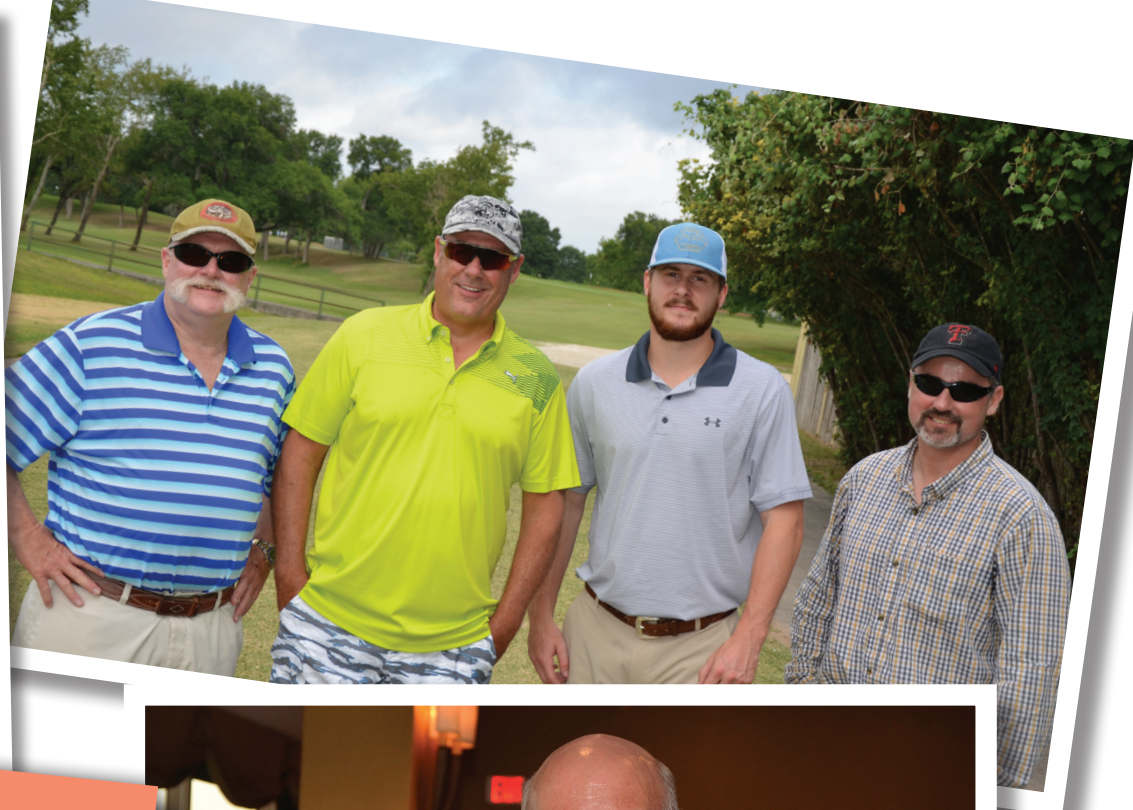




2018 Roundup

JUNE 15-16 | AUSTIN





Roundup

STIN, TEXAS



15



On June 15th & 16th, 2018 members of the Texas Bighorn Society gathered in Austin Texas for the 30th annual Roundup.

The venues were quintessential Austin: Friday night at the Hyatt Regency overlooking Lady Bird Lake, the Downtown Austin skyline, and the historic Congress Avenue bridge.

The TBS Auction Committee, headed by Co-Chairs Steve and Kathy Bolner, assembled a wonderful array of auction items for both nights. In addition the Bolner Family received the 2018 President's Award Saturday night in honor of all their hard work and dedication towards TBS.

The TPWD Trans-Pecos staff members once more graciously volunteered to display each item during the live auctions, accompanied by TBS Life Member René Graham. Long time professional auctioneer Forbes Meadows kept us all entertained and helped raise the big money for Texas sheep.

Both a fundraiser and a reunion, the Roundup is always a wonderful Texas time. See y'all next year!

The Sheep of September

by Terry Rathert

"Please call me"

was the only text showing in the three emails from Kevin in mid to late August. What ran through my mind? 'This cannot be good'. I was booked for the second Rocky Mountain bighorn hunt with Kevin Olmstead of Prophet Muskwa Outfitters and Scott Carter of Carter Outfitting in late September. I opened the attachments to the other emails – photos of bands of rams. My Rocky Mountain high returned thinking that it must not be bad news. I had just finished the day dry fly fishing the East River in Gunnison County, Colorado, and it had been a wonderful day.

Kevin wanted to know if I could

make the first hunt dates – arriving northern Alberta on August 28. The photos were incentive enough to try. Prior commitments would make this complicated, if I could pull it off at all. The biggest conflict was a planned Desert Bighorn hunt with Wayne "Zach" Zachary of Trans-Pecos Guide Service beginning September 10 in the Sierra Diablo Mountains of Texas. I hadn't intended to do two bighorn sheep hunts in one September... it just worked out that way over the course of juggling schedules. As a retiree, I should be able to do a better job managing my calendar. Oh, how I miss my executive assistant from those workdays! Zach managed to rearrange

the desert hunt if we needed to do so. But other commitments would suffer, so I declined the early invite to the Rockies from Kevin and asked Zach to stick to the original plan.

Fast forward to the end of August - Gunnison County, Colorado. I headed home down the mountain after a nice dinner with friends at their home high in the Elk Mountains. Earlier in the afternoon, we experienced superb dry fly fishing on a private ranch section of Tomichi Creek – fooling 17" to 19" native browns on size 16 and 18 dry flies and 6X tippet. The rental SUV dash lit up "LOW TIRE PRESSURE". Translation: flat tire! On a dark gravel road. In a rental! Without a flashlight, as I had



left the iPhone behind on the charger. Fortunately, a young couple stopped and helped me get back on the road.

At home there was a message from Zach on my iPhone. Texas Parks and Wildlife had completed their aerial survey and were not going to issue desert bighorn permits for the Sierra Diablo Mountains for the 2016-2017 season. The Rocky Mountain high was definitely gone now. Long gone. I rode an emotional roller coaster the likes of the Texas Twister at Six Flags.

I called Kevin to tell him that I was now available at any time. I headed to the ranch to continue my exercise program of climbing with a pack and shooting long distance off of it after

exercise; and to await word to go to Alberta.

Kevin's first two hunters each took their rams opening day. On September 7, I was winging it to Edmonton. The following day I met my guide Jeff Scouten and wrangler Mitch Olson in Grand Prairie. We met guide/wrangler/pro rodeo steer wrestler Joe Guze at the base camp, and got to know each other a little better before turning in.

Thirty some miles and nearly two full days' ride later; we were deep into the Alberta Wilderness. As we rode through a meadow approaching our planned base camp site, Jeff stopped and glassed the mountain east of us. He thought he'd seen a small band

of rams, but was unable to relocate them. Viewing the mountain meadow through a spotting scope at base camp revealed lambs and ewes, but no rams. Then, late in the evening, there they were. Three rams feeding on a western slope near 6,000' elevation, about 1½ miles away. I watched as two of them squared off and did what rams do – head butt each other. I couldn't hear them audibly, but I could hear them in my mind. What a spectacular sight.

Jeff smiled and said that the hard part was over – we found rams – although we were not yet certain there was a legal ram in the band. Jeff has spent as many as 8 or 9 days just to locate rams on past hunts. The plan

A we had discussed on the trail now become plan B. We continued to observe the rams through the spotting scope and with time, both Joe and Jeff felt that there was a legal ram, possibly two, among them.

As darkness set in, so did the weather. We retreated to the warmth of the small wood stove we brought with us. It was a welcome place to dry out from the night before. As we turned in, a gentle rain began to fall.

It rained intermittently all night. The early morning ceiling was below timberline. One could only have a cup of coffee and wait for the precipitation to stop and the ceiling to lift. Occasionally the rain turned to snow. Intermittently, I caught a glimpse of the mountain, or another up the valley or across the creek. They too, were covered in snow. By 1pm, Jeff declared it a "stay home and rest day". The precipitation and ceiling never lifted for long during daylight. We did however, catch an occasional glimpse of the three rams feeding at the back of the farthest bowl. The question would be whether they'd feed over the top and retreat to

the timber below to avoid the weather overnight...or do what sheep do, be unpredictable.

Everything left outside overnight had frozen. I slept lightly, at best. Joe fixed a hearty breakfast of coffee, bacon and scrambled eggs topped with a wedge of cheddar cheese; a real benefit of having a pack string over backpack hunting – you can carry a lot of groceries! Mitch gathered the horses. The rams were nowhere in sight when we broke camp and started up the mountain shortly after 8. Our packs were filled with gear and food. We would be better prepared to spend a night on the mountain than the two hunters with Jeff and Joe had been the week before after killing two rams on the same day.

Jeff charted our course – after crossing the creek, we'd go north to intercept the edge of the alpine at the far downwind end of the mountain. It took us nearly four hours to navigate the interim ridges – choked with thick timber, willows, shin tangle and deadfalls – and creeks and reach that destination, although we ascended

only 1,200'. Just before breaking out of the timber at 6,000', Jeff spotted one, then all three, of the rams on the far ridge above us to the south. We exited the thick timber and lay down, uncasing the spotting scope. The lead ram stared in our direction and never turned his head. I ranged him at just over 1,000 yards. We proceeded single file along the edge of the alpine to approach a small ridge between us and close the distance. When we reached our destination and again set up the spotting scope, the rams were nowhere in sight. After considerable discussion and glassing, we were certain the terrain wasn't concealing them. Why had they moved? Had the one watching our direction become nervous, anxious? They hadn't spooked, but were not in sight. Jeff made a quick recon run deeper into the bowl – no rams.

Our only option was to gain altitude and relocate them. Doing so would also reveal the entire backside of the mountain and the ridge behind the summit which was not visible from camp. Maybe it held more or larger rams. The climbing now became





Check
facebook.com/
texasbighornsociety
for more photos
and videos!





*From Carryons to Safari Bags,
for 30 years Wildgoose
Manufacturing and Mail Order has
been outfitting TBS Members who
want the very best.*

TEXAS MADE

Fine Leathergoods
Corporate Gifts, Logos, Ranch Brands







Don't miss our 2,200 sq. ft. Hill Country Store featuring custom furniture and lamps in mesquite and antler, art including Wildlife and Western original paintings, bronzes, scrimshaw, custom knives and so much more!

www.wildgoosetexas.com

Wildgoose
3189 Junction Hwy
Ingram, TX 78025-3189

WE SHIP WORLDWIDE
800-749-1805

830-367-5553
Fax 830-367-5243
info@wildgoose.com



more challenging, loose shale on a steep slope, on the north side of the ridge – interspersed with snow and ice. Fortunately, there was an eight to ten foot rib of solid rock jutting out vertically from the surface, offering an occasional handhold.

Joe looked over the rock rib and caught sight of the rams above us at about the same time as Jeff who was above him. The rams had climbed much higher to bed for midday. Jeff motioned us onward. He pointed out a destination above us, nearly parallel with the rams, which he thought would offer a shot between 250 and 300 yards. When we were just below that point of rocks, I dropped my pack and we developed a plan to get into position. Unfortunately, Joe ranged the rams at 442 yards – with a 20 to 30 mph cross wind!

Gain altitude! Close the distance! We packed up and headed for the summit in the snow. The slope moderated and we made good time – arriving shortly after 4 pm. Joe and Jeff first moved into position to range the rams and position a pack for my rifle rest. Joe signaled back a 300 yard reading from the Swarovski 10x42 EL Range binoculars. Jeff motioned me forward as he came back to retrieve

and position my pack. I prepared my MG Arms Ultralight 270 Winchester by dialing in 300 yards on the turret of the Swarovski Z5 scope and adjusted the parallax. Several times, I had to pull my hat down tighter on my head as it wanted to fly off (again) in the 25-30 mph slightly quartering headwind. Occasionally, I estimated the wind would gust to 35-40 mph. As I watched the three bedded rams, Joe and Jeff carried on a debate about which was the better. The one on the right. The one on the right. What about the one in the back on the left? No, the one on the right; it was finally decided, and he's quartering to us. Jeff told me I could take him whenever I wanted – bedded, or wait for him to stand. I chose the latter. He said it could be 5 or 50 minutes, or longer. I was prepared to wait. The distance and wind conditions demanded a larger target than the ram offered bedded. I did the mental math on wind drift and I practiced squeezing off the round several times while I waited for the ram to rise. Jeff cautioned me to let him know before I shot so that, one, they could be closely watching, and two, they could cover their ears from the blast of the muzzle brake. After all, they were immediately beside me.

Thirty or thirty-five minutes later,

the left ram rose. I pushed the safety off and awaited my ram's rise. As he began to stand, I softly said aloud, "Fire in the hole". The 130-grain Barnes TSX bullet hit the ram before he finished his stretch. Joe enthusiastically proclaimed at the shot, "You smoked him!" As I chambered another round, the ram disappeared over the ridge.

After congratulations and handshakes, we gathered our packs and started along the ridge. Jeff led the way and gave a thumbs up high sign when he crested the small rise between he and the ram. My first Rocky Mountain Bighorn was on the ground 50 yards from where he had risen from his bed.

We exited the thick timber and reached the river below at 9:30 p.m., in total darkness. After a half hour hike along the river and through meadows and woods, we arrived exhausted at camp. Yet, after a 3,000' ascent and descent to and from the 7,825' summit and a round trip of 9 to 10 miles mostly in the timber, we had energy to celebrate. Joe grilled fresh sheep meat and I celebrated with a wee dram of Glenmorangie scotch into the early morning hours of the next day.



Research Update from Texas Tech University

*by Dr. Warren Conway
and Emily Wright*



Researcher's Update: Emily Wright, PhD Candidate

22



Dear TBS Members,

Currently, I am a PhD student in a Molecular Systematics and Evolutionary Biology laboratory supervised by Dr. Robert Bradley, Director of the NSRL, studying population genetics, source-stock origins, and disease risk probability of Texas desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*). Bighorn sheep are susceptible to several epizootic diseases, such as pneumonia, thus severely impeding localized population survival, and influencing augmentation and may influence decisions regarding translocation of individuals among sub or meta-populations. Although diseases usually select for the most-fit genotype to survive, this may not be the case due to small, sometimes discrete sub-populations of bighorn sheep. From a landscape scale, these subpopulations form a larger metapopulation, which may undergo inbreeding and genetic drift for some duration, which may cause low genetic diversity – and influence disease risk and translocation management decisions.

My research at Texas Tech University involves collaboration between the Department of Biological Sciences, Department of Natural Resources Management, and the NSRL at the Museum of Texas Tech University and focuses on the genetic structure and diversity of metapopulations utilizing mitochondrial DNA and RADSeq

At the 2017 Roundup, The Texas Bighorn Society (TBS) and the Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) provided a \$2100,000 gift to Texas Tech University to support research among researchers, students, biologists, and private landowners focused examining risk of disease probability in Texas Bighorn Sheep to inform future population management and translocation efforts throughout the Trans Pecos Region of Texas. During the last year, we have purchased a liquid nitrogen freezer to store tissue samples from sheep range-wide and has been instated at the Natural Science Research Laboratory (NSRL) of the Texas Tech Museum.

Also, we have searched for graduate students to work on this research project, and through our partnerships with the Department of Biology at Texas Tech, we have been able to get two students working on this collaboration. We are happy to introduce Emily Wright, who will be pursuing her Ph.D. on population genetic structuring of Texas Bighorn Sheep, and below is a brief introduction from Emily, and her plans for her dissertation research. In a later update, we will introduce our second graduate student, who will be starting her M.S. research later this fall semester.

(whole genome approach), where RADSeq will be utilized to generate SNPs (single nucleotide polymorphisms). On a broad scale, RADSeq will identify variation in individuals to assess genetic variation and diversity among populations. In addition, SNPs may be mapped to known genomic loci to identify specific genetic traits, which ideally, will help provide some information regarding disease risk management in Texas Bighorn Sheep. Although our focus is upon Texas sheep, we are working to involve collaborators throughout the Bighorn Sheep range, and ideally – my dissertation research will be applicable and useful for conservation and management approaches throughout North America.

Prior to starting this research on Bighorn Sheep, I was working on M.S. at Texas Tech, focusing on gametic specificity of a sperm protein (zonadhesin) in mule deer, as related to potential hybridization between mule and white-tailed deer. Zonadhesin (ZAN) is a multi-domain, transmembrane, sperm protein that is crucial in species-specific binding of the spermatozoa during fertilization. Interestingly, ZAN is the only mammalian protein which shows species specificity across multiple mammal species and may act as a post-mating isolation mechanism that prevents two species from interbreeding – such as mule

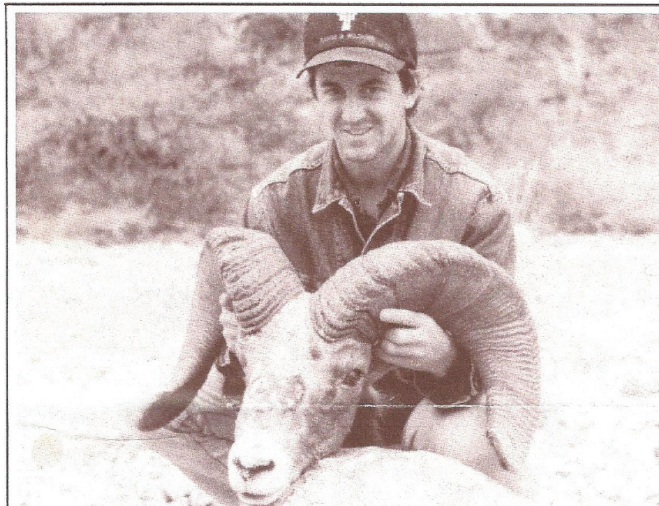
and white-tailed deer. If the ZAN pathway fails and no longer serves as a barrier for reproductive isolation, then presumably the sperm cell of one species may recognize the egg cell of the other species, allowing fertilization to potentially occur. This research was spurred by questions regarding how hybridization may occur between white-tailed and mule deer in a known hybrid zone throughout much of West Texas occurs. The *Odocoileus* (the genus of both deer species here) hybrid zones offer an excellent model to assess gametic specificity, considering egg and sperm from two different species overcome post-mating isolation barriers and allow hybridization. This work is currently being finalized for submission to a journal, and ideally might help management strategies where white-tailed and mule deer occur sympatrically.

I am looking forward to this research opportunity on Bighorn Sheep, and will hopefully be a stepping stone to my ultimate goal of obtaining a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. I am humbled and excited to see where this research takes bighorn sheep!

Emily Wright
emily.a.wright@ttu.edu

The Abbey Ram Returns to Texas

by Bonnie McKinney



David Abbey of Dallas takes a mature Desert Bighorn ram on his Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area hunt, December 15, 1990

**Texas hunter harvests 12 year old Ram
at Sierra Diablo WMA**

On December 15, 1990, David Abbey harvested a 12 year-old desert bighorn ram at Sierra Diablo WMA. Sadly, Mr. Abbey passed away in 2018. His wish was to have the full taxidermy mount bighorn ram returned to Texas from his home in Wyoming.

Through Mr. Abbey's friend, Russell Brown, TBS members, and Texas Parks & Wildlife Staff in Region I, and TPWD Austin staff, the desert bighorn was on display at Texas Parks & Wildlife's August Commissioner's meeting. Please see the accompanying article from the 1991 TBS Newsletter.

Now the full body mount bighorn ram taken in 1990 in the Sierra Diablo Mountains is on display at TPWD headquarters in Austin. Many thanks to a number of people that made this possible.

On the following pages you'll find a copy of 1991 TBS Newsletter with the original article about the Abbey Ram.



Photo by Billy Tarrant. Texas Parks & Wildlife Headquarters, Austin, TX



volunteer with us!

DID YOU KNOW THERE'S MANY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED AND HELP WITH TBS. FROM WORK PROJECTS TO FUNDRAISERS, WRITING ARTICLES TO GATHERING CONTENT FOR OUR FACEBOOK PAGE, WE CAN USE ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET! TO FIND OUT MORE CONTACT THE TBS OFFICES AT **806-745-7783**



BIGHORN!



NEWS OF THE TEXAS BIGHORN SOCIETY • FURTHERING THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP IN TEXAS

Winter 1991



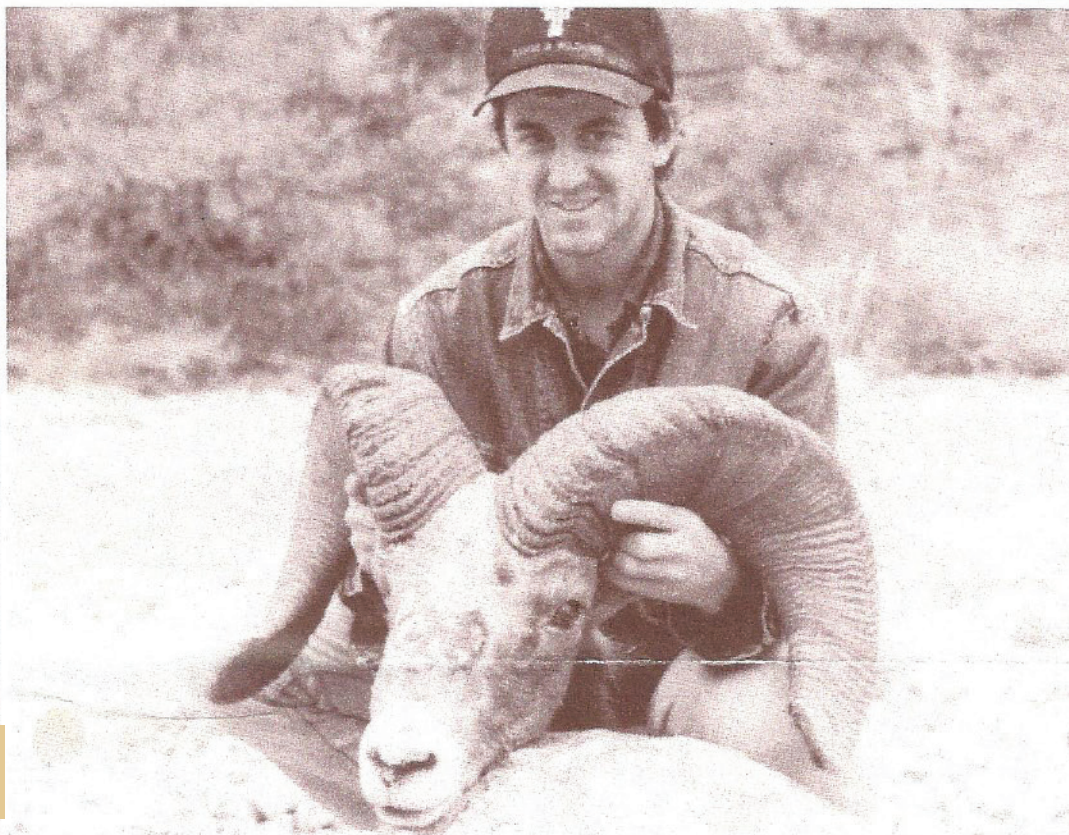
President's message

Dan Pedrotti's letter to Governor Elect Ann Richards dtd Dec 14, 90

It is my pleasure as President to invite you to become an honorary member of the Texas Bighorn Society and to participate in an exciting project that will result in Texans again being able to see the magnificent Desert Bighorn Sheep roaming the mountains of Texas. Historically these sheep occurred in large numbers throughout the mountains of west Texas until the mid 1930's, when disease transmitted by domestic livestock decimated the herds and the last known sightings of the Texana subspecies was reported in the 1940's.

A great deal of the work on this tremendous wildlife conservation project has been accomplished in the last eight years through the cooperation of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Bighorn Society. Starting in 1982 with a small band of wild sheep (20-30 survivors from a previous transplant effort), our bighorn sheep population has grown to over 300 as of the latest count. This number includes free ranging

continued on page 8



David Abbey of Dallas takes a mature Desert Bighorn ram on his Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area hunt, December 15, 1990

Texas hunter harvests 12 year old Ram at Sierra Diablo WMA

Report of Robert L. Cook, Special Assistant to the Acting Director, to Bighorn Sheep Advisory Committee

Please be advised that Texas' 1990 desert bighorn sheep hunter, David Abbey of Dallas, successfully harvested a mature desert bighorn ram on the Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area on December 15, 1990. The ram was

estimated to be 12 years old and its horns were heavily broomed. The horns measured approximately 29-30 inches in length, and the bases were over 14 inches in circumference. The ram was one of 4-5 mature rams observed during the 4-day hunt. David was accompanied on all or part of the hunt by Bob West, Jack Kilpatric, Mike Hobson, Ray Watley, Ruben Cantu, and Glen Mills -

all Texas Parks and Wildlife Department employees, who guided and also performed duties such as camp cook, game spotter, meat packer, in-field taxidermy, and photographer.

The Texas Bighorn Society has graciously offered to pay for taxidermy fees for the "Abbey Sheep". David

continued on page 2

TP&W report



Bighorn sheep project activities

Sierra Diablo WMA

Penned broodstock was cared for as needed. All sheep in the brood pens were captured and worked. Tagging and hoof trimming constituted the bulk of the work. A total of 25 bighorns, consisting of 2 adult rams, 5 adult ewes, 14 ram lambs, and 4 ewe lambs was removed from the facility. These sheep were transported to the Beach Mountain Ranch holding pen, to be held until spring greenup and released. One ram lamb suffered a broken back in transit, and he was taken to the Glaze clinic where he died. Five free-ranging bighorns were telemetry monitored. One of these sheep, a ewe was killed by a mountain lion. A total of 9 rams

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS						
	Rams	Ewes	'89 Lambs	'90 Lambs	Unknown	TOTAL
SIERRA DIABLO MOUNTAINS	0	0	0	10	125	135*
SIERRA DIABLO BROOD PENS						
NEVADA PEN	1	7	2(f)	4(f)	0	14
ARIZONA PEN	1	8	1(f)	3(f)	0	13
TEXAS PEN	1	6	5(f)	0	0	12
ELEPHANT MOUNTAIN	12	8	0	3(1 f)	11	34*
CHILICOTE RANCH						
PASTURE	0	0	0	0	18	18**
FREE RANGING	0	0	0	0	6	6*
VAN HORN MOUNTAINS	0	0	0	0	19	19*
BAYLOR MOUNTAINS	6	9	2	1	0	18*
BEACH MOUNTAINS	2	5	0	17(4 f)	0	24
GLAZE CLINIC	0	1	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	23	44	10(f)	38(12 f)	179	294*
*ESTIMATED						

was observed outside of the brood facility, and a number of bighorns were observed in Victorio Canyon during the sheep hunt. One hunter harvested a nice trophy ram.

Beach Mountains

Two adult rams, 5 adult ewes, 13 ram lambs, and 4 ewe lambs were placed in the new holding pen to be released in the summer of 1991.

Van Horn Mountains

Two bighorns wearing radio collars were monitored 4 times during the month. One other collared ewe could not be located. Observations of 2 rams, 10 ewes, and one lamb were recorded.

Baylor Mountains

Eight bighorns wearing radio collars were monitored six times during the month. A total of seven were located. No observations of the sheep

or known mortalities occurred.

Chilicote Ranch

Ranch personnel reported seeing 6 rams, and 5 ewes inside the brood pasture, and 3 ewes and 1 lamb outside.

Elephant Mountain WMA

No effort was made to observe the sheep. No incidental sightings or known mortalities occurred.

Calendar of Events

February

21-24 Reno
FNAWS Convention
in Reno

22 Reno
Membership Meeting
6:00 pm
with party to follow

April

19-21 Kerrville
Weekend in Kerrville

20 Kerrville
Annual Awards
Banquet & Auction

Abbey sheep

continued from page 1

Abbey has agreed to let the Texas Bighorn Society and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department display the ram at selected future functions.

The success of this hunt is a result of continuing efforts by many Texans. The landowners adjoining the Sierra Diablo Wildlife Management Area, especially **Topper Frank, Jewell McAdoo Lutich** and **Nelson Puett**, have been dedicated to the restoration of desert

bighorn sheep in Texas for many years. The success of this program depends heavily upon them and other private landowners in the immediate area. The Texas Bighorn Society has been a strong and active supporter of this program, and their assistance is valued and appreciated. Finally, the continued support and active involvement of private citizens and conservationists on the various advisory committees in the region is appreciated.

Houston Woods & Waters Club donates \$200 to TBS

Ron Willenborg, president of Houston Woods & Waters Club and also a member of TBS, sent a check for \$200 in Jan. He said their club had such a good fund raiser that they wanted to share some of their good fortune with TBS. A great big thanks goes to the membership of the Houston Woods & Waters Club.

Lights, Cameras...Sheep!

by Dewey Stockbridge, TPWD

As the sun peeked over Elephant Mountain on Friday, May 25th, a small group of volunteers and several Texas Parks and Wildlife staff prepared to head up the mountain for a fun filled day of "work". Well, at least that's what we will call it so people that couldn't make it out to Elephant Mountain WMA do not feel so bad. The mission at hand was the installation of a revamped camera system. Over the next two days, eight more cameras were installed in strategic locations on Elephant Mountain proper, bringing the total number of cameras on the mountain to fourteen. While at times the sun could be a little unbearable, it

did make for great lighting for taking photos, I mean we were just moving work locations and a few desert bighorns wanted to see what all the fuss was about. By no means were we taking a break, enjoying the beautiful scenery during our mountaintop lunch. Thanks again to Jerrell and Pam for the great lunch!

After roughing it during lunch, it was back to work digging in the rocks so we could set the pipe for the installation of the cameras the next day. While it was hard digging, the unwavering determination of a good crew always prevails, especially when you have a motivational piece of equipment on site to help. So, you see, I was not

lying about all the rock we had to dig through, but I "might" have stretched the truth about how hard we worked digging the holes.

All joking aside, this was a great mini work project that was put in motion by the TBS board members at the last work project, and now offers everyone who goes to the Texas Bighorn Society website an opportunity to view free ranging desert bighorns. A big thank you again to the volunteers, TBS members and TPWD staff who made this project possible. As always; good people, good food, cold drinks and a lot of laughter added up to an enjoyable time on the mountain.





DESERT TAXIDERMY

30



Tye Vick
(432) 207-0953
DesertTaxidermy.com
Alpine, Texas



HIGH WEST OUTFITTERS



JIM BRECK BEAN
WWW.HIGHWESTOUTFITTER.COM

915-526-3001
HIGHTWESTOUTFITTER@YAHOO.COM

Dick MURRAY CUSTOM LEATHER COMPANY

C-8 Murray Rifle Cartridge Belt



10 round:
Elastic Loops **\$160**
Leather Loops **\$180**

C-3C Murray Buttstock Shell Holder

\$50
Black **\$55**

Lace-up type designed for straight stocked rifles, 8 elastic loops, nylon stitched on a rich saddle tan leather, quick access and available in cartridge sizes from 270 through 577 Nitro*. Available in left- or right-handed version.



*6 round capacity for most African calibers

C-1 Murray Rifle Shell Holder



Belt type made from billfold leather. Fold-over, double layer style with two safety snaps, 9 round capacity, virtually rattle-proof, soft point protection, and available in 4 cartridge sizes

Short - 243 length	\$50
Medium - 30.06,	
300 Winchester, etc.	\$50
Long - 375 H & H,	
300 Weatherby, 300	
Jarrett, etc.	\$50
W size - 378, 460	
Weatherby, 416 Rigby,	
300 Rem Ultra etc.	\$60
Winchester Short Mag	\$55

S-11 Murray Traditional Gun Slip **\$495**

Full length, end flap opening designed for your side-by-side or over/under. This case is a re-creation of the turn of the century style and is a time proven winner. Adjustable shoulder strap, hand grip, hanging loop, and lined with our exclusive man-made fleece. Made from the finest saddle leather or durable boot leather. Double stitched throughout. Also available for some scoped rifles.



C-7 Murray Carry All

For pleasure or competition this bag will work as a sporting clays bag, carry-on, camera case, or gear bag. Spill-proof design features a flat base and zippered top for quick, easy access. Features two strong hinged carrying straps, double nylon stitched throughout and hand-burnished edges. Made of prime saddle leather that is oiled and finished to a beautiful saddle tan. Ample room for your accessories.



\$550

S-10 Murray Takedown Rifle or Shotgun Case

Designed for your double rifle or shotgun, featuring two side by side compartments. Constructed of heavy duty saddle skirting leather and lined with our exclusive man-made fleece. This unit can be shipped inside your duffel. Full length brass zippers, Gorilla proof hinged leather carrying handles in rich oiled saddle tan finish.

\$595

Also available for 2 barrel set. **\$795**



S-2 Murray Ultimate Saddle Scabbard

Designed for maximum protection of your big game rifle, this case is made from the very finest saddle leather and completely encases the gun. Lined with an exclusive man-made sheepskin that is breathable and non-reactive to gun oil, it will protect the gun blue as well as the stock finish. This scabbard will conveniently fit inside most hard cases for travel. A detachable leather grip enables this scabbard to be used as a rugged year-round gun case.



S-2 designed for scoped (up to 44 mm) rifles **\$450**
S-2A designed for scoped (up to 56 mm) rifles. **\$495**

Dick MURRAY CUSTOM LEATHER ~ Phone: 817-441-7480 ~ Fax: 817-441-5690

www.murraycustomleather.com ~ dick@murraycustomleather.com ~ MasterCard ~ Visa ~ American Express