



## DEER TELEMETRY PROJECT ENTERS FINAL YEAR

**A** two-year Louisiana deer telemetry study entitled “Population Characteristics of a White-tailed Deer Herd in a Bottomland Hardwood Forest of South-central Louisiana” has entered its final year. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) and Louisiana State University (LSU) Agriculture Center have spearheaded the study with help from various contributors.

The primary objectives of the study are to assess range and movements of male and female white-tailed deer, evaluate age and sex-specific harvest rates of white-tailed deer and evaluate survival and causes of death among male and female white-tailed deer in a Louisiana bottomland hardwood forest.

Researchers are conducting the study on approximately 40,000 acres of bottomland hardwood forest located west of Baton Rouge and east of the Atchafalaya Basin. The study area is currently leased to more than 30 private hunting clubs, and each club belongs to a cooperative that promotes quality deer management on the property. A. Wilbert's Sons L.L.C. is the primary landowner and cooperator and is also providing technical, logistical and housing support for the researchers.

The LSU School of Renewable Natural Resources' Michael J. Chamberlain, Ph.D., and Justin Thayer, LSU grad student, are directing the study.

During the first year, researchers trapped and fitted 24 deer with radio tracking collars. Of those initial 24 deer, hunters shot nine deer, one deer died of disease and two deer slipped their collars. This left 12 deer (8 bucks, 4 does) from the first year of trapping that are currently being monitored. So far this spring, 21 adult bucks and 3

LDWF File Photo



adult does have been trapped and collared.

“Right now we are monitoring a total of 36 deer three to four times a week,” said Thayer. “This study is starting to produce important survival, mortality and movement data that will tell us more about the deer herds in this part of the state. This data will help landowners, hunting clubs and the department in future deer management plans.”

### DEER TELEMETRY STUDY - Continued on page 2

#### LDWF Administration

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Jimmy Anthony, *Asst. Sec., Wildlife*

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## STATE AGENCY ALLIANCE KEEPS OYSTER HARVEST SAFE

**L**DWF worked cooperatively with the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH) to replace boats and laboratory equipment damaged by the hurricanes of 2005. LDHH's Molluscan Shellfish Program uses this equipment to monitor water quality in approximately 800 coastal locations to ensure that water quality is safe for shellfish harvesting.

“We are very pleased that we could assist LDHH with the important work that they do with respect to the monitoring of water quality for oyster harvest,” said LDWF Secretary Robert Barham. “Our agencies work hand-in-hand in oyster management, so it made sense to provide funds that would facilitate renewed shellfish harvest in closed areas.”

The funding for replacement equipment came from the NOAA, which supplied approximately \$203,000 in federal hurricane disaster funds. The NOAA disaster funds, passed to LDWF through the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, allowed LDHH to quickly replace and repair necessary equipment so that monitoring of coastal waters would not be interrupted.

Four 20-foot vessels and necessary laboratory equipment were purchased with grant funds, allowing LDHH to maintain monitoring at full capacity following the storms. Funds were also used to update LDHH's mapping technology to produce more accurate seasonal classification maps of open (safe) and closed (unhealthy) shellfish growing waters. These needs were identified by the Louisiana Oyster

Task Force in their Louisiana Oyster Recovery Plan published in December 2005.

Without this necessary equipment, extended closures of oyster harvesting areas would have resulted. Because oyster harvest from open areas of Louisiana accounted for approximately \$36 million in dockside sales in 2006, these extended closures would have been devastating to the state economy.

“The disaster funds were critical to the recovery of this vital public health program and consumer confidence in the Louisiana oyster,” said LDHH Secretary Alan Levine. “Without the ability to continue our classification of oyster growing areas, necessary closures would have greatly impacted the economic viability of the industry.”

## DEER TELEMETRY STUDY - Continued from page 1

**S**everal groups have stepped forward to help fund this study for the final year. The South Louisiana Branch of the Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) donated another \$2,500 this year to bring their total to \$9,170 donated to the two-year study. The Acadia Sportsmen's League donated another \$500 this year to match the \$500 they donated last year. The Bercham Holding Company Inc. also donated \$500 this year to bring their total to \$1,000. Rubicon LLC was a first time donor, contributing \$500 to the study. The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation matched \$2,000 of the total amount donated this year to bring their total matching contribution to \$4,000. The Bayou State Bowhunters Association gave \$1,000 and Acoustical Specialties gave \$500 last year to the study.

“Studies like this one are expensive. We average over \$1,000 a month just in gas charges from monitoring and trapping the deer. We also hired two technicians to help trap this spring and track deer through the end of the year,”

said Thayer. “There is no way we could do this study without the generous donations given by so many outdoor interested groups. Their contributions show how important this study is to them and their members.”

Any person or organization interested in contributing financially to the project should contact Scott Durham, LDWF Deer Program manager at 225-765-2351. A fund held by the South Louisiana QDMA has been established to accept the tax-deductible donations.

White-tailed deer are an important economic and recreational resource across their entire range. In Louisiana and other southeastern states, land managers are choosing strategies geared toward developing quality deer herds. Because this management regime involves restricting harvest of younger-age-class bucks and increasing the harvest of females to lower herd density, substantial interest exists in understanding the effects of quality deer management on population characteristics.



## EIGHT CITED FOR TURKEY VIOLATIONS IN FLORIDA PARISHES

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Enforcement Agents cited seven men on March 21 and 22 for hunting turkeys over a baited area on the opening weekend of the season. Another man was cited for killing a turkey during a closed season on March 15.

Enforcement agents in East Feliciana Parish cited Kenneth M. Lang, 39, of St. Gabriel for hunting turkey over a baited area. John C. Passman, 46, of Baton Rouge, was cited for hunting turkey over a baited area, hunting without a big game license and hunting without a turkey stamp. Kenneth A. Curtis, 17, and Nathan J. Curtis, 18, both of Boys Ranch, Texas were cited for hunting turkey over a baited area, hunting without a non-resident basic hunting license, hunting without a big game license and hunting turkey without a turkey stamp.

In Tangipahoa Parish, agents cited George E. Martin III, 28, of Hammond for hunting turkey over a baited area, hunting turkey without a turkey stamp and hunting with an unplugged gun.

In St. Helena Parish, agents cited Dwayne Foster, 34, of Baton Rouge for hunting turkey over a baited area.



Agents in Washington Parish cited Jacob H. Moore, 21, of Sandy Hook, Miss. for hunting turkey over a baited area.

Agents also cited Nael M. Samara, 36, of Albany for taking turkey during a closed season, hunting turkey with a rifle, hunting without a basic license and big game license, and for hunting turkey without a turkey stamp.

If convicted, the fines each man faces for hunting turkey over a baited area are \$250 to \$500, or jail time up to 90 days,

or both plus court costs. The fine for taking turkey during a closed season carries a fine between \$900 to \$950, or jail time up to 120 days, or both plus court costs and forfeiture of anything seized. Hunting without a basic and big game license, and without a turkey stamp each carry a fine of \$50, or jail time up to 15 days or both. Hunting without a non-resident basic and big game license are both punishable by a fine of \$100 to \$350, or jail time up to 60 days, or both plus court costs. Hunting turkeys with a rifle and with an unplugged shotgun each carry a fine of \$250 to \$500, or jail time up to 90 days or both plus court costs.

*For more information, contact Lt. Col. Keith LaCaze at 225-765-2988 or [klacaze@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:klacaze@wlf.louisiana.gov).*

## THREE LOUISIANA MEN CITED FOR OYSTER VIOLATIONS

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Enforcement Division agents cited three men for alleged oyster violations in Terrebonne Parish on March 17.

While on oyster growing area patrol near King Lake, an agent assigned to the Oyster Strike Force responded to a reported oyster theft. He found one vessel dredging oysters from a private lease without the lease owner's permission.

The men on board were identified as Elton Wayne Verdin, 28, and Rick Adam Verdin, 23, both from Houma, and Aaron Matthew Dehart, 19, from Dularge.

Agents cited the men for unlawfully taking oysters from a private lease and failure to have written permission.

A total of 12 sacks of oysters were seized. The boats and dredges were placed under an LDWF seizure order.

The penalty for unlawfully taking oysters from a private lease is a fine between \$900 and \$950 or imprisonment up to 120 days, or both, plus court costs and forfeiture of anything seized in connection with the violation. Failure to have written permission is punishable by a fine of \$400 to \$750 or jail time up to 120 days, or both, plus court costs.

Agents participating in the case were Sgt. Bryan Marie and Senior Agent Mike Garrity.



## U.S. MINT ISSUES BALD EAGLE COMMEMORATIVE COINS

The U.S. Mint has issued three limited-edition commemorative coin sets honoring the recovery of the bald eagle and marking the 35th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act. The bald eagle was removed from the endangered species list in 2007.

The collectible coins include a \$5 gold coin, a silver dollar and a half-dollar, which are available individually and in sets. The coins will be sold through Dec. 31, 2008 at [www.usmint.gov](http://www.usmint.gov) or by calling 1-800-USA-MINT (872-6468).

A surcharge from the sale of each commemorative coin will be earmarked to create a special American Eagle Fund (AEF) endowment. The coin program has the potential to generate over \$10 million for future bald eagle conservation efforts.

Bald eagles were once abundant throughout the nation. However, illegal shooting, habitat destruction, pesticides and food source contamination took their toll, reducing approximately 100,000 nesting pairs at the nation's founding to just over 400 nesting pairs in the early 1960s.

Bald eagles began their road to recovery in the 1972 with the ban on the use of certain pesticides that caused the thinning of bird eggs in 1972 and passage of the Endangered Species Act in 1973. Now there are over 10,000 nesting pairs of bald eagles found throughout the United States.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) is charged with conducting annual bald eagle population monitoring in Louisiana. LDWF also works closely with feder-

al and state agencies to assure that development projects do not negatively impact Louisiana's nesting bald eagles.

During a 2006-07 survey, The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries counted 336 active Bald Eagle nests that produced 424 young birds. All nests are visited once per year to determine nest activity. A nest is considered active if one adult bald eagle is present at the nest when surveyed. However, LDWF visits many nests twice annually to determine nest productivity.

*For more information, contact Adam Einck at [aeinck@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:aeinck@wlf.louisiana.gov) or 225-765-2465.*

## COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSES AVAILABLE IN BOURG

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Licensing Section will be selling commercial fishing licenses from the Bourg office from April 1 to 3.

**LDWF TO SELL COMMERCIAL FISHING LICENSES IN BOURG:**  
**APRIL 1 to 3**  
**8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

Most commercial fishing licenses will be available for purchase from Tuesday, April 1 through Thursday, April 3 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. The office is located at 468 Texas Gulf Road in Bourg and their contact number is 985-594-4130.

Fishermen are reminded that only cashier's checks, money orders and cash will be accepted at the Bourg office. No credit cards or personal checks will be taken. To avoid pro-

cessing delays, those purchasing licenses are asked to bring their license renewal notices with them.

In addition to continual sales in Baton Rouge, LDWF has offered commercial licenses

from its office in Bourg twice a year since January of 2002. It has successfully provided LDWF with an improved method of customer service and proven to be a convenient way for commercial fishermen to keep their important licenses current.

*For more information, contact Janis Landry at 225-765-2881 or [jlandry@wlf.louisiana.gov](mailto:jlandry@wlf.louisiana.gov).*