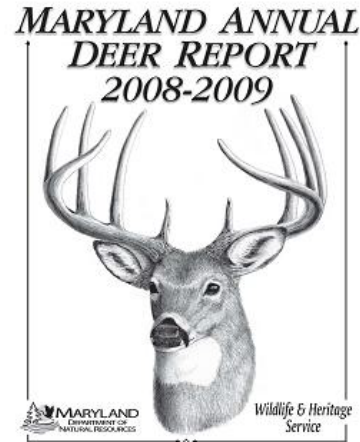


THE MARYLAND ANNUAL DEER REPORT FOR 2008-2009

The Maryland Annual Deer Report for 2008-2009 has been released and this year's report includes 3 years of harvest and research data all collected in the same manner. The Deer Project is responsible for the management of Maryland's Whitetail deer and Sika deer utilizing broad-base management techniques to insure the present and future well-being of our deer. Recreational deer hunting remains the most efficient and cost-effective tool in the management arsenal. To maintain the effectiveness of recreational hunting, informing while educating the public and hunters on current deer management remains a priority. The annual report not only has last year's harvest numbers by county (a record harvest of 100,437 deer), trends of harvest from 1999 to 2008 antlered and antler less and by Bow, Muzzleloader and Firearm. This publication (as past years) has it all and more from history to present, changes in hunting regulations and research and data examined statewide. "For the first time in 2008-2009, DNR staff collected outside antler spread measurements for yearlings and adult white-tail deer. Preliminary results reveal that 94% of yearling male deer in Maryland have maximum outside antler spread of less than 14 inches. Conversely 78% of adults (2.5+ years) male white-tail deer in Maryland have outside antler spreads 14 inches or greater. Staff will continue to collect antler spread measurements in coming years to evaluate long term trends. These data will be useful in the future if the Department considers implementing antler restrictions for quality deer management purposes." Brian Eyler, Deer Project Leader, George



Timko, Assistant Deer Project Leader and the Deer Project Staff should be complimented for this very impressive report. After four years of attending meetings, talking with QDMA members and others across Maryland on deer and deer hunting issues, whether it's improving the

quality of the deer hunting in the area or population management, both topics can be achieved by the use of recreational hunting. The QDM management plan includes both doe management for population, at the same time passing of yearling males to improve the male age class. By keeping good harvest records this will enable trends to be measured. When the QDM management is not practiced or limited, the measurable results can and will show up. Some have expanded their management tactics but changes will take time.

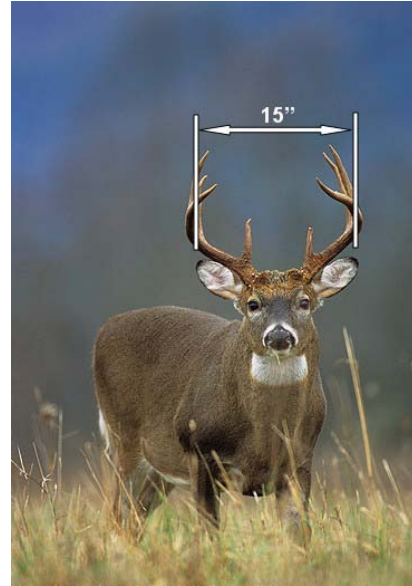
The three stages of a hunter is one of the major issues. The first stage “Shooter” is getting an opportunity to take a shot, Second stage “Limiting out” to harvest all you can, Third Stage “Trophy” to harvest impressive racked deer. In most cases at the trophy stage is when QDM will start to be practiced or so I’m told. I’m not in agreement with this! However I believe this does show us how hunters have evolved from just getting a shot to using hunting as a management tool. To say it another way, 35 years ago when you saw a deer (buck), you better take it because you may not see another. The evolution of hunting is



changing to managing our deer resource by harvesting doe to stabilize populations while improving male (buck) age structure with in the deer populations. This QDM management approach produces healthy deer herds with balanced adult sex ratios with increased numbers of older bucks while maintaining herds within existing habitat conditions and/or people deer conflicts.

Maryland’s deer population prior to the 2008-09 hunting season was estimated at 229,000 deer, nearly identical to the 2007-08 estimates of 228,000. The liberal antlerless regulations have slowed or halted deer population growth in many areas outside the Washington, D.C. to Baltimore suburban corridor. In some rural counties, the deer population has begun to decline. This is possible to track due to hunters checking in the deer they harvest, along with DNR’s Research and data collection at butcher shops. In some of these counties “Voluntary Quality Deer Management” has been practiced although limited. Is the next step for one or more of these counties to have a “pilot program by outside antler spread?”

This question will be brought up at the next stake holder's meeting. With 2009-2010 regulations in place, if any changes are going to be proposed hunters may want to start talking with their stakeholders. While I can't speak for other stakeholder groups, the Maryland State Chapter QDMA and local branches have an open door policy. QDMA members and nonmembers are always welcome to attend our meetings and/or contact us through our website. The Maryland State Chapter QDMA website or forum, www.marylandqdma.com will post up to date whitetail deer management



information as soon as possible. Others should contact their stakeholders for more information or join the QDMA.

Take home message:

Deer hunters harvest the deer and do have a voice in the management process. For years, Maryland's biologists and state wildlife agencies have been trying to educate the most valuable and important resource in the wildlife management field, our hunters. QDMA has been a major part of this education and has created a niche all onto itself. Because of all the quality information and education that the QDMA puts out, we now have a new renewable resource called the QDMA member. The Maryland State Chapter QDMA along with other sportsmen groups are working with and supporting DNR and the Wildlife & Heritage Service in the common goal, ethical hunting, sound deer management and the preservation of our deer-hunting heritage.

Respectfully,
E.W. Grimes

Director - Maryland State Chapter of QDMA



References: Annual Deer Report 2008-2009