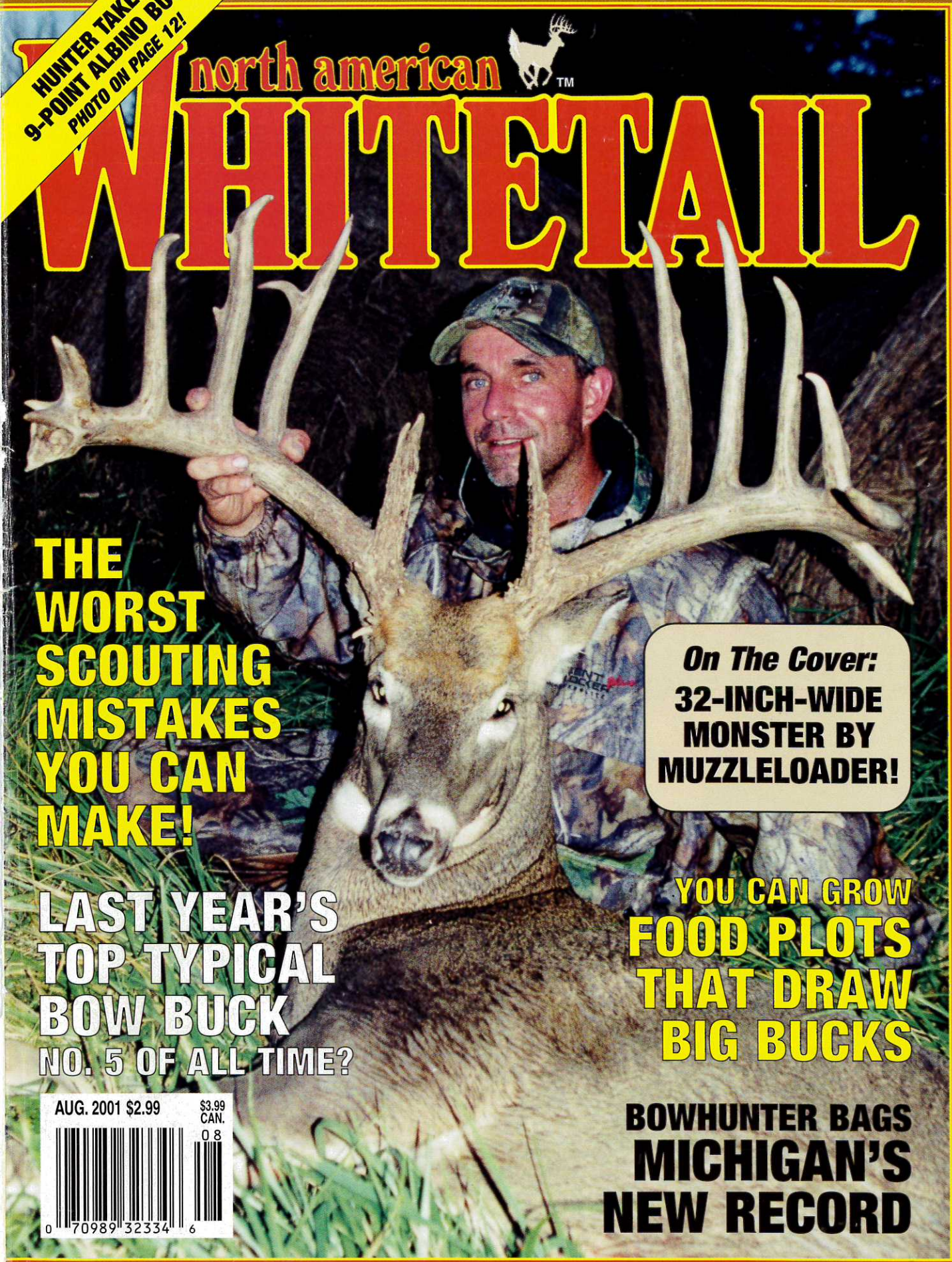
HUNTER TAKES 9-POINT ALBINO BUCK
PHOTO ON PAGE 12!

north american

WHITETAIL



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Part 1

Fair Chase Whitetails

Defining "fair chase" as it applies to whitetails sounds easy. Most of us might say something along the lines of, "Fair chase is giving a deer a reasonable chance to escape a hunter." Now, how hard was that?

Not hard at all . . . until we get to those pesky details. What's a "reasonable" chance of escape? Fifty percent? Ninety? Ten? Do we mean the odds of a particular deer getting away on a given day? All season long? Does it matter if we're talking bow vs. gun? Compound or crossbow? In-line or traditional muzzleloader? Open sights or scope?

The above would be enough questions to ponder — but there are many more. As David Morris noted in his January 2001 feature, "Managing Whitetail Management," there's now concern that intensive manipulation of herds might threaten fair chase. Can bringing in non-native genetics ruin deer hunting? Is supplemental feeding evil? What about the recent boom in high fencing?

If we at ***WHITETAIL*** didn't already think defining the details of fair chase was tough, we do now. That's because, along with David's feature in the January issue, we ran a reader survey on how various management and hunting methods affect fair chase, and we're happy to report that many of you sent it in. In fact, so many of you shared your thoughts that it took us weeks to read them all. But read them we did — every last one.

As a result of our survey, for the first time ever we have numbers to show how at least some of you feel about the issue of fair chase. While hardly scientific, this survey at least provides a platform for discussions that could shape the future of deer hunting and management.

Where do we draw the line on "ethical" ways to hunt and manage deer? The answer depends on whom you ask.

by Gordon Whittington

We'll detail the survey results in this series, starting with our September issue. In the meantime, let's look at the origins of this elusive concept known as "fair chase."

A MODERN IDEA?

Man presumably is the only predator that intentionally limits his own ability to kill prey. He does so to ensure the survival of the hunted species, to protect human lives and property, and to challenge his own hunting skills and strategies.

In the not-so-good old days, human sensibilities concerning animals were dictated by how full or empty a person's stomach was. Only recently have enough folks been sufficiently well fed and clothed to care how deer feel about not being at the top of the food chain.

For most of us, whitetail hunting has evolved into a complex blend of recreation, social bonding and herd control, with varying degrees of grocery shopping thrown in. Regulations are in place to strike a balance between taking too many animals and taking too few, with an eye toward public perception of how ethically animals are treated in the process. And at the heart of that treatment is the concept of "fair chase."

The term was introduced during the early days of the Boone and Crockett Club, which was founded by Theodore Roosevelt and friends in 1887. The club took a stance against some common hunting practices of the era, including burning animals out of their dens and "crusting" (running them down in deep snow). This was the first effort to draw the line on methods that, in the minds of members, violated fair chase.

With no hunting regulations in those days, such a stance was particularly bold. But that doesn't mean the early leaders of this campaign were all that pure in their own methods. Indeed, by today's standards some would be viewed as unethical slobs, not champions of wildlife.

Even some of Roosevelt's hunting tactics would be viewed as offensive today. Although clearly among the most conservation-minded leaders in world history, he engaged in many hunts that would strike modern observers as unsporting.

For example, he wrote of the joy he felt in using horses to run down all manner of game on the North Dakota plains. He also was a fan of

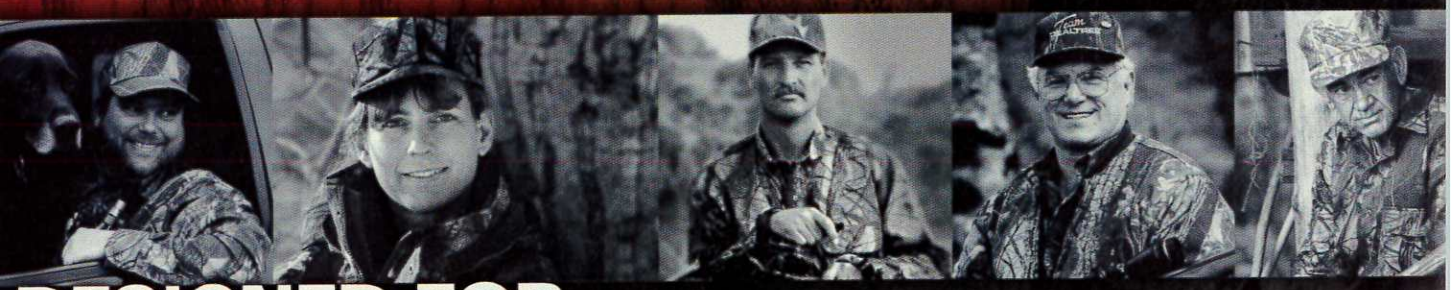
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Most hunters might agree with the general idea that "fair chase" means giving game a reasonable means to escape hunting pressure. But our survey results suggest the details of that definition are tricky to pin down. Photo by Mike Biggs.

turning loose the dogs on virtually any critter that would flee them across the prairie. And in the Badlands he once shot a bison, despite being aware that the beast was among the last of its kind.

Roosevelt wasn't bashful about presenting his views on what made a game animal worthy of praise. In that regard, he criticized the whitetail for its tendency to skulk in thick cover, rather than come out into the open and take it like a . . . well, like a mule deer. In this man's opinion, part of what made the mulie nobler than the whitetail was that it liked open terrain and had to be shot — or, more often, shot *at* — from a long way off.

In general, you could summarize Roosevelt's hunting philosophy as follows: The longer the shots, the less hospitable the terrain and the more daring the horsemanship and/or dog work required in getting his game, the better. The man's writings are replete with tales of game for which many follow-up shots were needed or which ultimately went unrecovered, and he expressed few regrets about those losses.

Such events would seem to contradict Roosevelt's professed views. "In a civilized and cultivated country," he wrote, "wild animals only continue to exist at all when preserved by sportsmen . . . the genuine sportsman is, by all odds, the most important factor in keeping the larger and more valuable wild creatures from total extermination."

This isn't meant to bash the man viewed as the greatest friend of hunting ever to occupy the White House. It's only to illustrate that standards vary over time. Were we able to ask Roosevelt if his methods were consistent with fair chase, he surely would have claimed they were. And perhaps his quarry did have a "reasonable" chance of escape, given that the man was hunting in wild country and had at his disposal few of the hunting aids now widely used.

B&C's DEFINITION

B&C added to its list of unsporting hunting methods as various situations arose, ultimately coming up

with its "Fair Chase Statement for all Hunter-Taken Trophies." This list of rules applies to all animals entered into the record book as hunter kills. (Those found dead or otherwise not entered as hunter kills aren't held to "fair chase" standards.)

In addition to mandating that the kill have been made in compliance with all applicable game laws and regulations in the area where the kill occurs, current B&C rules disallow the following:

(1) spotting or herding game from the air, followed by landing in its vicinity for pursuit;

(2) herding or pursuing game with motor-powered vehicles;

(3) use of electronic communications for attracting, locating or observing game, or guiding the hunter to such game; and

(4) hunting game confined by artificial barriers, including escape-proof fencing; or hunting game transplanted solely for the purpose of commercial shooting.

Of these, the rule on high fences has caused the most debate. For this reason, on our survey we asked several questions about the role of high fences in the whitetail world.

P&Y's DEFINITION

The Pope and Young Club, which accepts only bowhunting trophies, later adopted a similar stance with its "Fair Chase Affidavit." But P&Y rules are more detailed than those of B&C, as they set guidelines for eligible archery gear. In addition to trophies taken with high-let-off bows, lighted sight pins, etc., the club's record book excludes animals taken under the following circumstances:

(1) helpless in a trap, deep snow or water, or on ice;

(2) by "jacklighting" or shining at night;

(3) any other conditions considered by the Board of Directors as unsportsmanlike.

By the way, the club recently voted to keep its rule against high-let-off bows, thus turning down the entry of Mike Beatty's potential world-record Ohio non-typical. On our survey, we asked how you felt about the rule.

LONGHUNTER'S DEFINITION

The Longhunter Society maintains the record book on North American muzzleloader trophies. This is the youngest of the three major record-keeping groups, having been formed in the 1980s.

With the exception of substituting muzzleloaders for bows, Longhunter rules on fair chase are quite similar to those of P&Y. But there's one more, and it pertains to management: "the herd from which the trophy is taken must be self-propagating, self-sustaining, and not artificially fed except for occasional emergency reasons."

On our survey, we asked how you feel about the stocking and handling of deer, supplemental feeding, baiting and food plots.

BEYOND THE BOOK

Legally, the rules determining "proper" hunting and management methods — and thus, fair chase — are those enforced by state and provincial wildlife agencies. These vary widely, which makes finding common ground on fair chase even more of a challenge.

This certainly isn't an effort to divide the whitetail fraternity into "us" vs. "them." It's meant to help all of us better understand opposing views on tough issues.

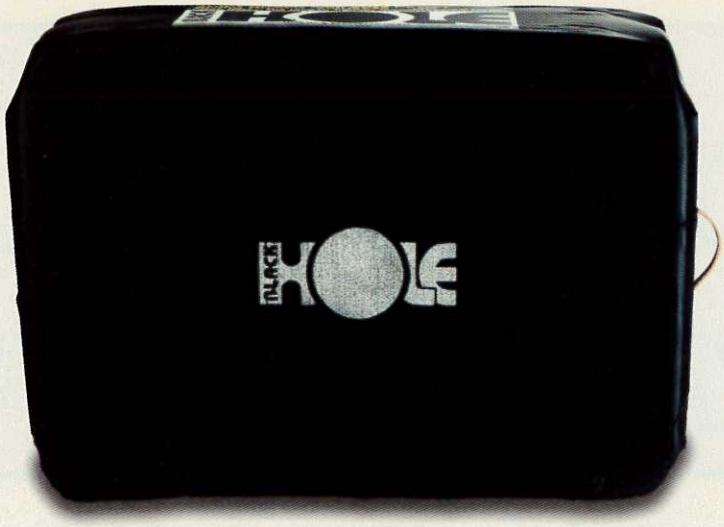
Deer hunters and managers all over North America have for years been getting legal reinforcement as to which methods are "good" and which are "bad." Fortunately, many of you responded to our survey in a way that suggested you tried to put any such biases aside and address these issues on a broader scale.

Starting next month, we'll get into an analysis of your views on fair chase, trying in the process to find a basic definition that could apply to all hunters and managers. We'll go over each survey question, showing not only how you voted on various hunting methods or management practices but also letting some of you say *why* you voted as you did.

This certainly isn't an effort to divide the hunting fraternity into "us" vs. "them." It's to help all of us better understand opposing views on tough issues. So stay tuned. What's coming could be the most important series we've ever published.



The longer,



28"



(because it's longer, it better resembles the horizontal shape of big game)

lighter,

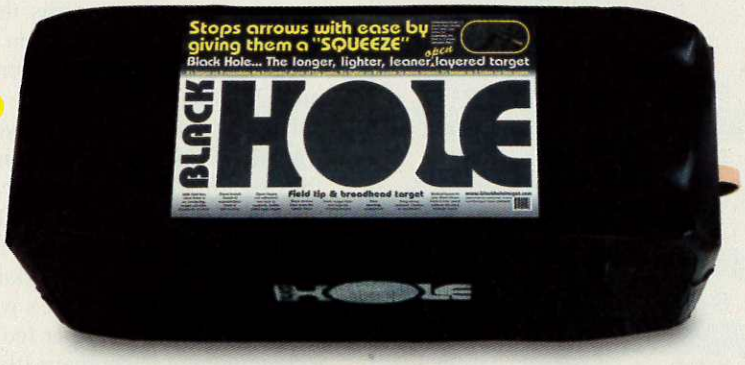




(because it's lighter, it is much easier to move around)

leaner,

9"





(because it's leaner, it takes up less space)

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World's No. 5 Typical By Bow?

Practically in the shadow of Chicago, Ray Schremp arrowed one of the greatest bucks ever taken by a bowhunter. Here's how it happened!

by Randy Templeton

Breaking the Illinois bow record for typical whitetails is no minor feat. The state's No. 1 typical is Mel Johnson's 204 4/8-point Pope and Young world record, shot 36 years ago. Plenty of giants have been arrowed since then, but none has ended up a real challenger to his title of "bowhunting's top typical."

However, with a little luck, there could be a new state — and thus, world — record as you read this. The hunter's name is Ray Schremp, and his Chicagoland buck from last fall had enough antler to take the crown!

Only a couple of abnormal points kept Ray's buck from posting a net entry score of 205 4/8 typical, which would have knocked the Johnson buck off his throne. As is, the abnormals lower the entry score to "only" 196 6/8 P&Y points — still high enough to make this new deer the potential No. 5 bow typical ever.

How did Ray, a 38-year-old operating engineer mechanic, take this deer in the shadow of one of America's biggest cities? Let's find out.

THE SCHREMP BUCK

Scorable points 14 (6R, 8L)
Tip-to-tip spread 11 7/8
Greatest spread 23 6/8
Inside spread 21 0/8
Total length of abnormal points: 8 6/8

Areas Measured	Right	Left	Difference
Main Beam	29 6/8	29 0/8	6/8
1st point (G-1)	9 0/8	8 6/8	2/8
2nd point (G-2)	9 7/8	10 3/8	4/8
3rd point (G-3)	13 4/8	13 7/8	3/8
4th point (G-4)	12 3/8	10 1/8	2 2/8
5th point (G-5)	5 6/8	1 6/8	4 0/8
6th point (G-6)	—	—	—
1st circ. (H-1)	5 2/8	5 6/8	4/8
2nd circ. (H-2)	4 4/8	4 6/8	2/8
3rd circ. (H-3)	5 4/8	4 6/8	6/8
4th circ. (H-4)	4 6/8	4 7/8	1/8
Totals	**100 2/8**	**94 0/8**	**9 6/8**

Gross typical score 215 2/8
Subtract side-to-side differences . . . . . – 9 6/8
Subtract abnormal points . . . . . – 8 6/8
FINAL NET TYPICAL SCORE 196 6/8

Taken by: Ray Schremp **Date: 11/21/00**
Where taken: Kane County, Illinois

SUBURBAN SPRAWL

As the population of Chicago's suburbs continues to grow, some outlying areas that once were crop fields or blocks of timber have been overtaken by development. Thus, it's becoming harder for Chicagoland hunters to find good hunting near home.

Ray recognized this trend years ago and took steps to do something about it. He's been hunting the same land now for over 10 years, but that access has come at a price most hunters aren't willing to pay. Ray spends a lot of free time in the off-season working on that ground. Whether the need is for building fences or working crops, he's available to the landowner whenever there's work to be done.

Ray and hunting partner Jed Urich had just returned from a shotgun hunt in southern Illinois. If you wonder why Ray would spend gun season hundreds of miles away when he has good land close to home, the answer is simple. Kane County, where Ray's suburban hunting spot is located, has no gun season for deer.

Ray had gone into work early on Monday, anticipating a change in the weather. Late that morning the temperature fell into the low teens, and after lunch Ray took the afternoon off. He'd already put in eight hours.

When Ray got home, he decided he could either stay on the couch or go hunting. Slipping out for the last couple of hours of daylight that day was one of the best choices he ever made.

SCOUTING

Ray's hunting area consists of rolling hills, crop fields,

Did you know that using the wrong scent can cost you a deer?

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Keep it simple!

Scent-use mistake #1

Using a "sexual" scent in the early season can scare deer away

Using a doe-in-heat scent or other sexual scent before pre-rut or rut is unnatural and can scare deer away. Don't do it!



Scent-use solution #1

Use only attractants during early season

KISScents™ Trail Bait is a nonsexual, pure attractant that contains curiosity scents, soothing agents and musks to attract all deer in the early season.

Other attractant products commonly contain doe-in-heat or buck urine. Read the label carefully. If there is no ingredient list, beware!

Trail Bait is also effective during the pre-rut and rut. It will attract does, which in turn attract bucks.

Scent-use mistake #2

Using a dominant buck urine can scare off does and immature bucks

Dominant buck urine indicates the presence of an intruder, which can trigger an aggressive response from a big buck. However, this same scent can scare off does and smaller bucks.



Scent-use solution #2

Use a dominant buck urine only if you are after a trophy

KISScents™ Buck In Rut is designed for trophy hunters only. Use it when bucks are marking their territories with rubs and scrapes (the beginning of pre-rut).

Remember, a dominant buck urine can scare does, and does may be followed by a tending buck.

Scent-use mistake #3

Using doe-in-heat scent can scare away does that are not in heat

Estrus doe urine attracts all bucks during the rut. However, it can scare away does that are not in heat. If you intend to harvest a doe, avoid doe-in-heat scents.



Scent-use solution #3

Use doe-in-heat scent only if you are hunting bucks

KISScents™ Pure Heat is 100% pure, undiluted doe urine taken at the peak of the estrus cycle. It attracts all bucks from the late pre-rut through the entire rutting season.

If you want to harvest a doe (or either sex) use an attractant (Trail Bait). This will attract does, which in turn attract bucks.

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