

Of The Outdoors | Gary Howey

Whitetails Unlimited: Working Hard For Hunters

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

Whitetails Unlimited (WTU), established in 1982 in Sturgeon bay Wisconsin is a huge wildlife conservation group with chapters in 30 states, where they put on over 450 events. The organization has a membership of over 80,000 with their banquets drawing over 130,000 people.

When a chapter in northeast Nebraska receives an award for the largest increase in membership, now that is a big deal.

That is what happened Saturday March 29 at the N.E. Nebraska Whitetails Unlimited banquet held in Wausa, NE. Whitetails Unlimited District Director Sol Soltero

presented Chapter Chairman Chris Carlson and the committee members WTU's National award for the largest increase in membership in the U.S.

Carlson addressed the crowd of over 400 indicating, "This award is not just for our committee members, it's for all of you gathered here at the banquet, our members."

The N.E. Nebraska Chapter formed in 2006 and since that; time has grown to over 412 members.

Much of the money raised from the banquets stays in the area. Since its inception in 2006, the N.E. Chapter had donated \$51,165.00 back into various schools, groups and organizations. These funds were distributed to Northeast Nebraska Schools, 4-H Programs, Archery Clubs, Hunter Education, Shooting Sports, Wausa, Osmond, Bloomfield, Camp Glad Tidings, area Pheasant Forever, area National Wild Turkey Federation and the Nebraska Game & Parks.

Whitetails Unlimited not only promotes whitetail deer, they also promote numerous other programs some of which are listed below.

DEER PROGRAM: (Developing Educational & Environmental Resources)

The DEER program is a national educational campaign designed to address and instill in the public: with emphasis on youth and a basic understanding of practical conservation measures.

For two decades, Whitetails Unlimited, Inc. has been one of the nation's leaders in promoting public wildlife education and recreation in the great outdoors. They have developed an extensive series of educational materials and brochures dealing with conservation issues, some of which include: artificial wildlife feeding, regulated hunting, forest management and habitat enhancement

The organization has financially supported and implemented numerous hands-on wildlife programs that entertain and educate our nation's youth about the most popular big game animal in North America, the Whitetail deer.

Since 1982, they have established strategies and implemented programs to sustain traditional values and promote the philosophy that wildlife is a cherished natural resource.

The organization also provides financial support to the 4-H Shooting Sports Program, FFA - Wildlife Management, STEP Outside, hunt for the Hungry, Becoming an Outdoors Woman, and numerous other national efforts.



A huge crowd attended the annual Northeast Nebraska Chapter of the Whitetails Unlimited banquet in Wausa, Neb. at the banquet, the chapter was given the National award for the largest membership increase in the U.S.

HOPE FOR WILDLIFE: HOPE Program (Habitat Options & Planned Enhancement)

This program promotes the acquisition, restoration, and management of wildlife habitat.

WTU is committed to managing the white-tailed deer and its habitat for present and future generations. When it comes to habitat, WTU's Hope for Wildlife program is a huge success because of voluntary cost-share partnerships between Whitetails Unlimited, the landowners, and government agencies. Various techniques applied to the land ensure the white-tailed deer will have a stable habitat for decades to come. Some of these include:

- Prescribed burns
- Development of wildlife openings
- Cedar & Hemlock regeneration
- Seeding and fertilizing
- Exclosures to monitor forest regeneration
- Maintain small openings on summer range

HUNTING TRADITION: Preserving the hunting tradition for future generations

Their wildlife enhancement program works for both the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of people, with hundreds of projects currently underway on both private and public lands.

Land acquisition is another segment of their Hope for Wildlife program. With the U.S. population of approximately 275 million people, expected to double by the year 2100, the program offers an opportunity to share in the responsibilities and rewards of conserving our priceless natural resources for future generations. The partnerships created will ultimately produce untold benefits for many of our nation's wildlife species.

If any species has ever been contradictory to American wildlife, it is the white-tailed deer.

While most other big-game species have declined with the spread of urbanization, the whitetail has been able to adapt to its ever-changing environment. Through the efforts of state agencies and conservation groups like Whitetails Unlimited, wildlife officials estimate today's

whitetail population to exceed 30 million.

During this age of rising anti-hunting sentiment, some would classify the deer hunter as an "endangered species." WTU is working daily to combat this public misconception and preserve the hunting tradition. Since 1982, they have been serving the nationwide needs of over 55,000 volunteer hunter education instructors challenged with teaching our children safe and ethical hunting skills. The WTU's management program backed by over sixty years of research, supporting regulated hunting as the most beneficial tool that state wildlife agencies have to control deer populations.

As a national organization, Whitetails Unlimited has also joined forces with the NRA's Women on Target, WLFA, and AWCPC to make sure the hunting tradition is passed on to future generations.

Kids On Target Program
Whitetails Unlimited has several programs that are aimed at getting kids away from all the electronics in their lives, and get them outdoors involved in the shooting sports. They are doing this with their archery program Kids on Target.

Using open sights, the participant must shoot at 50 yards. The participant must fire three shots at the target and all three must be within the 6" red portion of the official target.

To qualify using optics, the participant must shoot at 75 yards. The participant must fire three shots at the target and all three must be within the 6" red portion of the official target.

To get started to qualify, you must shoot at the target from a minimum of 12 yards distance. The participant must shoot three arrows at the target and all three must hit within the 6" colored portion of the official target.

Get started today send an email or call 800.274.5471 to request your free official kit compliments of Whitetails Unlimited which will include:

- Official Kids On Target Program Guidelines
- Official Kids On Target Qualifying Targets
- 10 Commandments of Archery

Safety

- Whitetails Unlimited Kids on Target custom medal
- Personalized Kids on Target official color certificate
- Three in the Red — Practice all Year Long!

Archery Program

Get started today by sending an email or calling 800.274.5471 and requesting your free official kit compliments of Whitetails Unlimited that includes:

- Official Kids On Target Program Guidelines
- Official Kids On Target Qualifying Targets
- 10 Commandments of Archery

Whitetails Unlimited is a grass roots organization providing numerous programs that not only benefits whitetails and other wildlife, many of their programs like those listed above work with youth, hunters, landowners, other conservation organizations and state agencies to introduce others to hunting and conservation..

More information on upcoming Whitetails Unlimited events and all Whitetails Unlimited has to offer can be found at whitetailsunlimited.com

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is a former tournament angler, fishing and hunting guide. He is the Producer/Host of the award winning *Outdoorsmen Adventures television series*, seen on Fox affiliates throughout the upper Midwest. In the Yankton area, it airs on local channels 2 & 98 Saturday at 6:30 pm and Sunday at 7:00 am. It is also available on KTTW/KTTM-TV (Fox) Sioux Falls/Huron, S.D. Saturdays at 7:00 am as well as on MIDCO Sports Network Thursday at 5:30 pm and Sunday at 10:00 am. He and Simon Fuller are the hosts of the *Outdoor Adventures radio program Monday-Saturday at 6:45 am on Classic Hits 106.3 and ESPN Sports Radio 1570*. If you are looking for more outdoor information, check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

OUTDOORS DIGEST

2014 Elk Seasons Set

PIERRE — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission finalized the 2014 elk hunting seasons at their April meeting in Oacoma.

The Custer State Park elk hunting season will run from Sept. 20-Oct. 5 with five "any elk" licenses available, one of which is set aside for a successful entrant in a raffle conducted by a nonprofit organization dedicated to big game management. The Custer State Park early archery elk hunting season will run from Sept. 1-30 with four "any elk" licenses available.

The Black Hills archery elk hunting season will have 92 "any elk" and 15 "antlerless elk" licenses available for the season running Sept. 1-30. Unit 7 for the archery season was also changed; with the area east of Interstate 90 being removed and placed in Unit 9 of the prairie elk hunting season.

The Black Hills elk hunting season will have 420 "any elk" and 250 "antlerless elk" licenses available for the season that will run Oct. 1-31 for "any elk" hunters and Oct. 16-31 and Dec. 1-15 for "antlerless elk" hunters. Unit 7 for the Black Hills elk hunting season was also changed and follows the same adjustment as made to the Black Hills archery season.

The prairie elk hunting season will have 57 "any elk" and 36 "antlerless elk" licenses available. Season dates are unit specific. Prairie Unit 9 was modified to include an area northeast of Highway 34 and the portion removed from Unit 7 for both the Black Hills and Black Hills archery seasons.

GFP Commission Finalizes Several Waterfowl And Mourning Dove Seasons

PIERRE — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Commission finalized several waterfowl hunting seasons at their April meeting in Oacoma.

Hunters will be able to have three times their possession limit of sandhill cranes and mourning doves in 2014. The mourning dove hunting season will be Sept. 1-Nov. 9 and the sandhill crane hunting season will run from Sept. 27-Nov. 23.

Commissioners did not propose any changes in the number of waterfowl licenses available to nonresidents from 2013. There will be 4,000 special waterfowl licenses; 2,000 early fall Canada goose temporary licenses; 2,000 fall 3-day temporary licenses and 10,000 spring snow goose licenses available for nonresident hunters.

The number of special Canada goose licenses will also be unchanged from last year. The Bennett County season will run from Oct. 18-Dec. 21 and will have 800 3-tag licenses available for residents and 25 2-tag licenses available for nonresidents.

The 2014 South Dakota tundra swan hunting season will run from Oct. 4 to the end of the light goose hunting season and was finalized with 1,100 resident and 200 nonresident single tag licenses available.

First Buffalo Calf Of The Season Spotted At Custer State Park

CUSTER STATE PARK — The first buffalo calf of the spring, a bull calf, in Custer State Park was spotted on Tuesday, April 8. It was found by park staff off of Fisherman Flats Road in the interior of the Park. The calf is approximately 5-6 days old.

The park has about 860 head of bison going into the spring and is expecting around 400 calves. The herd size should be around 1,275 at the Annual Buffalo Roundup in September.

"Spring is a great time to view wildlife in the park," said Chad Kremer, buffalo herd manager. "Deer, antelope, turkey and buffalo can be seen throughout the park right now, and sharp-tailed grouse are strutting on

their leks."

Visitors are advised to leave buffalo calves alone. It can be dangerous to approach baby animals, particularly buffalo calves. If a mother buffalo feels she or her calf is threatened, she may charge.

"Occasionally, people will think a buffalo calf has been orphaned and try to rescue it," said Kremer. "This is rarely true;

buffalo may roam up to one mile from their calves and come back later for them."

Most buffalo calves are born in May, but a few arrive near the end of March into early April at Custer State Park.

For additional information on Custer State Park, please contact the park at 605-255-4515 or visit www.custerstatepark.com.

FORT KNOX

What's the temperature of your storage unit?

Climate Control Self Storage

716 Pine • 605.661.0987

10% OFF Your Project

Blackburn Basement Systems
Waterproofing & Repair

Basement & Foundation Specialists™

Wet Basement? Basement Wall Bowed? Foundation Settling?

• FREE Estimates • Financing Available

Toll Free 1-800-392-3389

www.blackburnbasementrepair.com

(Cannot be combined with any other offers)

Service is not our sideline, It's our business.



We are Your HONDA Walk Behind Equipment Dealer

Walk Behind Mowers

Service Special

\$4750

(Parts Extra)

Riding Mowers

Service Special

\$9500

(Parts Extra)

• Service Special •

Includes Sharpen Blades, Clean Air Filter, Check Belts, Lube, Change Engine Oil, New Spark Plug. All Parts Extra. Pickup & Delivery Available.

Fred Haar Company:

Freeman (605) 925-4241 • Wagner (605) 384-4580 • Yankton (605) 665-3762

Davison County Implement: Mitchell (605) 996-6633



MORNING COFFEE
WEEKDAYS MONDAY-FRIDAY

Monday, April 14

7:40 am Yankton City Manager (Amy Nelson)
8:20 am Yankton School Board (Jim Fitzgerald)

Tuesday, April 15

7:40 am Yankton County Comm
(Garry Moore, John Harper)
8:20 am March of Dimes
(Katelyn Lammers)