



Arizona Game and Fish Department Wildlife Matters

December 2006

Volume IV,
Issue 12



Agency Liaisons

Legislative Liaison
Tony Guiles:
602-789-3280
aguiles@azgfd.gov

Ast. Legislative Liaison
Ben Alteneder:
602-789-3533
balteneder@azgfd.gov

Small Game Seminars



Game and Fish Calendars now available

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays legislators and staff. Arriving shortly in your mailbox will be our 2007 wildlife calendar and an informational handout on legislation that may show up on your desk.



Free Small Game hunting Seminars Offered for Beginning and Novice Hunters

PHOENIX – Hunters who have puzzled over the right shot size for ducks, where to find Mearns' quail, or whether a flashlight and gunnysack are really needed to hunt snipe can find the answers to these and other questions at two upcoming seminars hosted by the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

The two-hour seminars are free to the public and will be held Wednesday, Nov. 29 and Thursday, Dec. 14, starting at 7 p.m. at the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Mesa regional office, 7200 E. University Drive in Mesa. Pre-registration is not required.

“These seminars are designed for the beginner and novice hunter who would like to learn the techniques for putting more game on the table,” says Randy Babb, information and education program manager for the Game and Fish Mesa region. “We’ll provide tips to help ensure a more successful hunt.”

Topics include how and where to hunt a variety of small game species (including quail, doves, ducks and rabbits), firearms, ammunition, regulations and miscellaneous equipment.

Bighorn Sheep



Desert and Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Restored to Natural Habitats

PHOENIX – Desert and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep populations in the state received a boost thanks to two capture-transplant efforts by Arizona Game and Fish Department biologists to restore these majestic animals to their historic ranges.



Department biologists last week captured 28 desert bighorn sheep in the Virgin and Beaver Dam mountain area of the Arizona Strip near Utah and transplanted the animals to an area called Hell's Half Acre along Burro Creek near Wikieup, which is located between Kingman and Wickenburg. This is the first effort to restore desert bighorns to this historic range.

Game and Fish biologists this week also captured 31 Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep from the Eagle Creek area in the vicinity of the Morenci Mine near the New Mexico border. The Rocky Mountain bighorns were transplanted yesterday to the rugged West Clear Creek Area on the eastern edge of the Verde Valley. This release augments the animals from the first 29 Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep released there last year.

About one-third of the bighorns released at both sites were fitted with radio telemetry collars so biologists can track their movements and assess the transplant.

“These two captures and transplants are part of a 50-plus-year effort to bring these magnificent wild animals back from the brink of extirpation and restore them to their historic habitats,” says Brian Wakeling, big game supervisor for the Arizona Game and Fish Department.

In fact, Arizona's efforts have been so successful over the years that this state's wildlife agency has assisted other states to recover their bighorn populations, as well.

In the late 1800s, bighorn sheep were eliminated from a large portion of their range as a result of exposure to disease and unregulated hunting. By the 1950s, bighorn populations in Arizona had dwindled significantly, and some feared they might be lost forever.



December Key Dates



"The endeavor to restore the populations of these superb animals over the decades has been a classic cooperative effort between biologists and sportsmen," says Wakeling.

Restoration efforts have involved enhanced land use planning, interagency cooperation and partnership, water development, conservative hunt strategies, transplants, habitat studies, habitat mitigation and many hours of volunteer support from organizations like the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society.

December Key Dates & Events

Dec. 9, 2006

10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Basic "digi-scoping" Photography Class

Do you own a simple digital camera and a decent pair of binoculars, or maybe a spotting scope for watching birds? If so, you already have the tools for "digi-scope" photography, a way to take telephoto pictures without a powerful zoom lens. You'll be surprised at the results you can get, either by free-hand digiscoping or with a simple and inexpensive camera mount adapter. Classes in this innovative, low-tech photography technique will be offered at Boyce Thompson Arboretum, a 320-acre Arizona State Park located 45 miles due East of Mesa on Highway 60. Florida/Arizona nature photographer Bob Ruzala will teach an informal walking-tour class explaining the basics of digiscoping Saturday, December 9, starting at 10:30 a.m. and there is no additional charge or pre-registration; the class is included with regular daily admission of \$7.50 for adults or \$3 for ages 5-12. For more information,

Contact Bob Ruzala at bobinezruszala@aol.com.

For additional information about *Wildlife Matters* Legislative Publication contact:

Ben Alteneder, Assistant Legislative Liaison
Arizona Game and Fish Department
602-789-3533

balteneder@azgfd.gov

Department Staff have contributed to this publication in the form of articles and photographs.

December 4, 2006

Wildlife Matters
Legislative Affairs Division