

# Aggie Studies Old Problems Of Deer Hunt

What effect, if any does the weather have on deer hunting? Edwin D. Michael, wildlife management student at A&M University, is attempting to solve the age-old question raised annually among sportsmen with the opening of deer season.

Michael admits his conclusions are not firm yet. He is waiting on the computer to support the answers, although his general observations bear out some hunter's philosophy.

The best hunting times appear to be sunrise and sunset, when the deer begin to move in search of food. The worst hours are mid-morning and mid-afternoon when the animals bed down.

In addition, however, Michael discovered the four-footed animals also feed at high noon, to a great extent, and many enjoy midnight grazing.

Formerly from West Virginia, Michael has spent two-years at the Wedler Wildlife Refuge near Sinton, checking on the daily habits of the white-tailed deer.

From 40 feet high observation towers he constructed, Michael watched the deer around the clock, five or six days each month for two years. He sweated summer's highest temperatures and shivered from the winter's cold.

He counted deer every hour, noting their movements, their eating habits and other actions in an effort to learn more about the weather's influence on deer.

Michael found that a sharp cold front causes the deer to become more active. He also suspects that full moon stimulates the deer's night life, thus hunting probably would be slowed the next day.

On the night shift, Michael used a high-powered light and telescopic equipment to locate the deer, which paid "little or no attention to the light."

The night work was more painstaking, however. The count was made as light reflected from the animal's eyes.

"It's amazing how similar their eyes are to those of cows, racoons, bobcats and other animals," the doctoral student related. "Even a spider more than 50 yards away once fooled me."

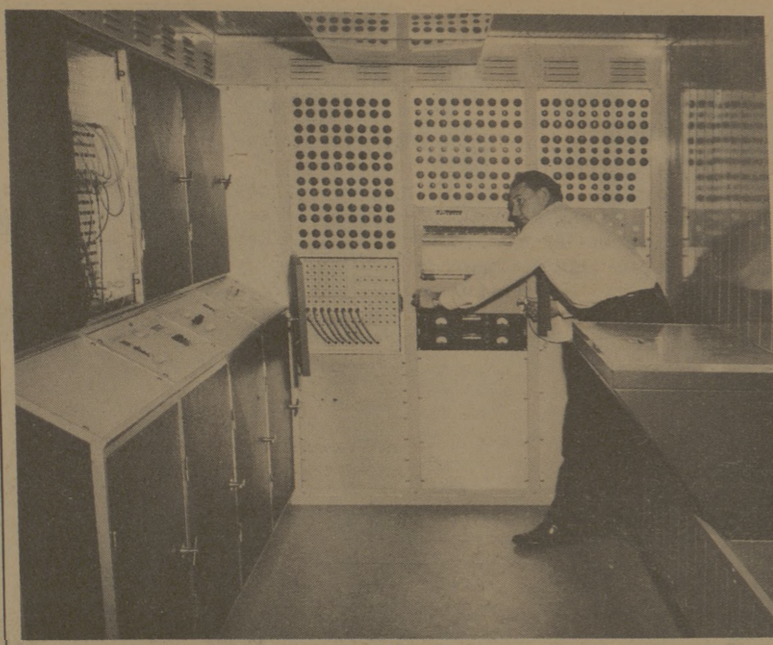
During the study, Michael also watched two does give birth to fawns. His eyewitness descriptions are recorded in the "Journal of Wildlife Management."

"One doe bedded beside a bush and gave birth to twins without apparent struggle, and another continued to graze while the fawn was born," Michael recalled.

"I wrote about the incidents because I knew of no published articles describing the birth of wild fawns," he added.

His data on the two-year study has been delivered the A&M Data Processing Center, where the information will be punched for the machines.

Then the findings will be examined for final conclusions.



## New Data Gatherer

A mobile data gathering unit, valued at \$100,000, has arrived on the A&M University campus. A gift of Dresser Controls of Houston, the equipment will be used by the Department of Chemical Engineering for laboratory and research uses. Dr. C. D. Holland, chemical engineering professor, examines the new electronic equipment.

## Contract Awarded

A&M University's Engineering Extension Service has been awarded an \$80,000 contract by the U.S. Office of Civil Defense to sponsor training in Texas.

Dr. W. R. Bodine, head of A&M's civil defense training program, said the funds will be used to conduct 20 conferences, 10 shelter manager instruction and 12 radiological monitor instructor schools.

In addition, Bodine and his four-member staff will teach 15 shelter manager courses and offer training for radiological defense officers, both new programs under the new contract.

Bodine said each shelter in Texas needs a shelter manager, radiological monitor officer and an assistant shelter manager.

"Through our instructor courses," he added, "we train persons who will be able to teach others proper shelter management practices. Eventually this statewide shortage of civil defense personnel may be filled."

A&M's civil defense training center, located at the Research Annex, was established a year ago.

Other staff members include Eugene Kronenberg, Clark Titus, Frank Malek, Jr., and Floyd Vaden.

## THE BATTALION

### 'LOCO AMERICANO'

# Students Study Mexican Wildlife

The Mexicans shook their heads as they paused along the dusty road leading to a banana plantation.

They stopped to watch an American, perched on a rock in the middle of the Rio Cuzalapan.

"Loco Americano," one Latin mumbles to another, "What is he doing?"

They watched Jack Meyer trap a lizard, slip a plastic band around the animal's waist and let it go free.

The Mexicans looked at each other, shook their heads in confusion and continued down the dusty road.

What the Latins didn't know was Jack Meyer and others from A&M University had discovered the wildlife "pot o' gold," little-known

animals located in the remote areas south of Veracruz.

For a half-dozen years now, A&M wildlife management students have worn paths through the untraveled Los Tuxtlas area in search of rare animals.

John Raymond (Jack) Meyer of Indianapolis, Ind., wasn't the first Aggie to discover the wildlife habitat. Meyer is interested in a semi-aquatic lizard called "Anolis barkeri."

This reptile, known previously by a single specimen collected in the Los Tuxtlas region in 1939, and officially recorded in 1939, lives in the swift clear streams flowing from the mountains.

Meyer recently learned the lizard was named after R. Wright Barker of Houston, a geologist who lived there in the early 1930's as an oil company employee.

Barker, who had just arrived in the Americas from England, caught the odd-looking reptile and sent it to a British scientist named Schmidt, who officially recorded the animal in 1939.

Only until recently did the Aggies learn that Barker was a

Houston resident. They then arranged to meet the geologist, who had kept detailed information on his earlier trips to Mexico.

"He (Barker) was also surprised to learn that the lizard was named after him," John Van Conner, another wildlife graduate student, said. "He heard nothing from Schmidt."

Conner is more interested in the so-called swamp eel, found in swampy areas of Los Tuxtlas. Interestingly enough, the eel's sex changes after two years, for some unanswered reason.

Conner and Richard Roneskevitz of Garfield, N. J., are on their way back to Mexico with supplies for Meyer and Harry Gentner of Fort Worth.

Gentner wants to know more about parasites that inhabit the tropical climate, and Roneskevitz is concerned with a herpetology study.

Doug Robinson of Waterbury, Conn., is a Los Tuxtlas veteran. A Ph.D. student, he located the stream where the Anolis barkeri are found. His finding also is recorded in scientific journals.

Most of the research equipment is stored in an apartment rented by Robinson, and most of the Aggies make headquarters there.

The Department of Wildlife Management professors insist students participate in field studies, and many students select the Los Tuxtlas area because of the chance for rare finds.

## Grant Provides Scholarships

A&M University is the recipient of a \$2,000 grant from the Cooper-Bessemer Corporation, Dorsey E. McCrory, director of A&M's Development Fund, announced.

The funds will be used to provide two \$500 scholarships and equal grants for the departments of chemical engineering and mechanical engineering, McCrory added.

Larry Allen Maddox of College Station and Edward Duran Esparza of San Antonio will receive the scholarships. Maddox also received the same award last year.

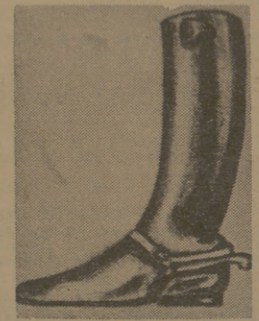
Maddox, son of Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Maddox, Jr., is a senior chemical engineering major.

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