

State pushing antlerless deer hunts

AUSTIN — Texas hunters will have more opportunities to hunt antlerless deer this fall through special permits issued by the state's Parks and Wildlife Department.

A LIMITED NUMBER of free antlerless deer hunting permits will be offered by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) for portions of the Sam Houston and Davy Crockett National Forests.

The USFS has informed Parks and Wildlife Department that the

permits will be issued by random drawing of applications made to the Texas National Forests headquarters in Lufkin. Applications must be in the National Forest office by Oct. 20.

Federal and state wildlife biologists said last year's antlerless deer hunt, offered only on the Sam Houston National Forest, was not very successful. That hunt's kill ratio measured less than one deer per seven hunters.

The antlerless deer hunt, to be

conducted this year in **Walker, Montgomery and Houston Counties**, is the result of joint efforts of the USFS and the Parks and Wildlife Department to help keep the deer herds in reasonable balance with the available food and cover on the national forests. Biologists estimate the deer population in these counties at one deer per 18 acres.

Hunters who wish to apply for the antlerless permits should write Gary Hartman, U.S. Forest Service, P.O. Box 969, Lufkin, Texas 75901. Applicants should identify the county they plan to hunt. A stamped, self-addressed envelope should be enclosed. Only one application per letter will be accepted.

ANTLERLESS DEER PERMITS will be also issued in three South

Texas counties earlier than the remainder of the state.

Charles Winkler, the department's big game program director, said the permits will be made available to landowners in **Webb, Maverick and Dimmit Counties** this week because of the special 16-day early antlerless deer season in those counties.

Those same antlerless permits may be used for the special season, Oct. 27-Nov. 11, and for the regular season which opens Nov. 17 in all three counties. The regular season closes Jan. 1 in Webb and Maverick Counties and Dec. 16 in Dimmit County.

Antlerless permits will be issued as follows:

Dimmit County, Oct. 18-19, County Courthouse, Carrizo Springs; Webb County, Oct. 15-17,

Laredo Civic Center; Maverick County, Oct. 18-19, County Courthouse, Eagle Pass.

Buck deer hunting permits for Webb County will be issued at the same time as the antlerless permits.

The Parks and Wildlife Commission established the special antlerless deer season in the three counties after intensive studies in Webb County showed overpopulation is the primary cause of a recent decline in deer quality in South Texas.

"Although antlerless deer permits have been available in all these counties for many years, utilization has been low," Winkler said. "The department is hoping that there is a segment of the hunting population which will utilize the special season to put some venison in the freezer."

Texas Reports

Ducks in Panhandle lakes die in apparent botulism outbreak

CANYON — Sick and dying ducks are being reported on several playa lakes in the Texas Panhandle, a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department spokesman has said.

"More than 85 dead ducks were collected on one playa lake, with most of the ducks being pintail, widgeon and teal," said Max Traweek, waterfowl biologist.

"These ducks were showing the typical symptoms of botulism, which is a toxin found in several area lakes," he said.

Similar duck die-offs have occurred each year. Hot fall temperatures, stagnant, high evaporation rates and decay of vegetation and animal matter provide a favorable environment for spread of the disease.

Weekend offers last chance for Engeling squirrel hunt

DALLAS — The outlook for squirrel hunters at the Engeling Wildlife Management Area near Palestine is quite promising, a department biologist says.

"The area will be open for an unlimited number of hunters," wildlife biologist David Synatzske said.

The last public hunt on the area will be held this weekend.

A \$4 fee is charged hunters each day. Each hunter must wear 400 square inches of fluorescent orange material, with 144 square inches appearing on both chest and back.

"Most hunters meet this requirement by wearing a vinyl vest," Synatzske said.

The management area check station, located on U.S. 287 about 20 miles northwest of Palestine, will open about 6 a.m. Shooting hours are 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.

Both fox and cat squirrels are located on the 10,000 acre area.

"Although we are still conducting census counts, the area supports a very high density," he said. "In fact, it looks better than last year, which was a good year."

Million acres of hunting land listed in department brochure

AUSTIN — A newly-revised leaflet listing large tracts of open hunting lands in Texas is now available from the state Parks and Wildlife Department.

Entitled "Acres For The Asking," the leaflet lists properties owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, paper and timber companies, national forests and some national wildlife refuges and National Park Service recreation areas. These areas combined offer more than one million acres of hunting land accessible free of charge to hunters.

The leaflet features thumbnail sketches of the agencies or companies with available land, including their addresses, telephone numbers, acreages, and facilities and wildlife species available.

To obtain the leaflet write to Literature Distribution, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744, or call toll free 1-800-252-9327.

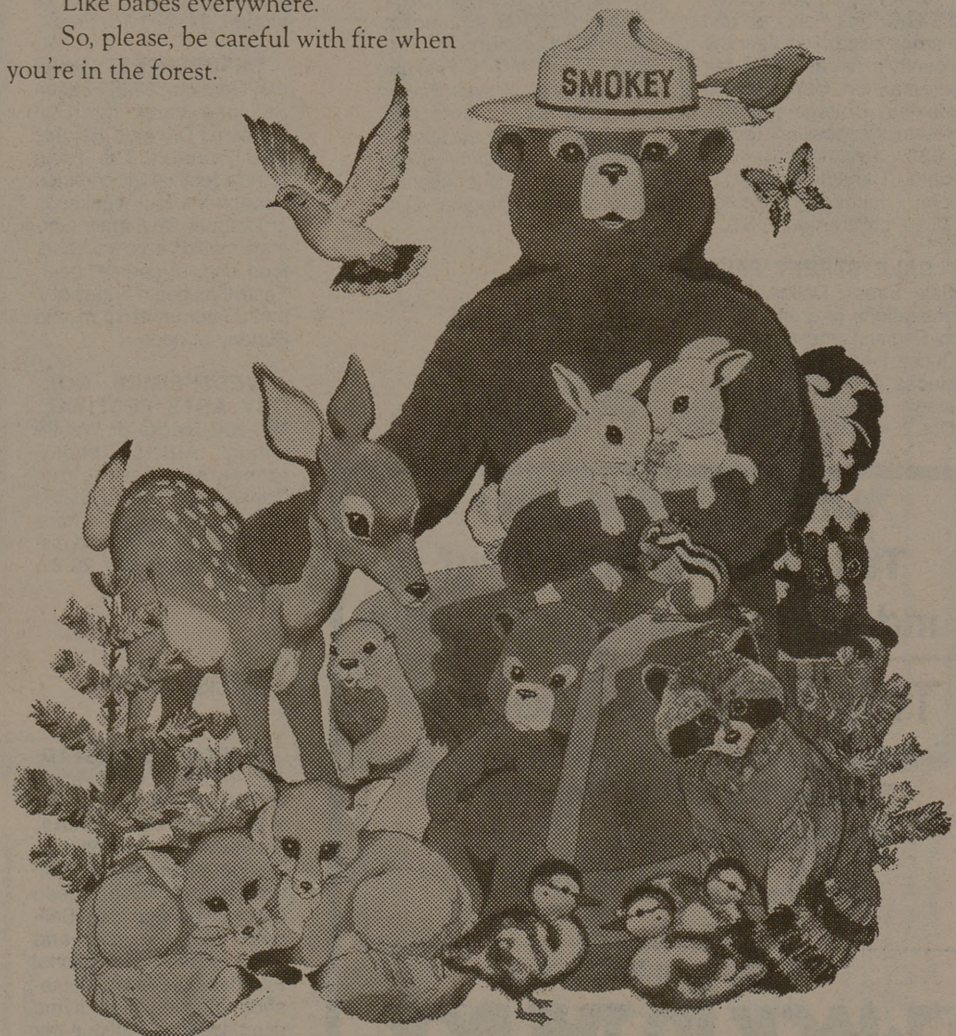
Be careful with fire. Remember: there are babes in the woods.

And those baby fawns, rabbits, squirrels and trees need a safe, happy home. They need a place where they can grow up strong and healthy.

Like babes everywhere.

So, please, be careful with fire when you're in the forest.

Follow all the rules of safety and caution — just like any other place where there are children at play.



Advertising contributed for the public good.