#### the state

## Texas deer population declining

By HARVEY LAAS
Special to the Battalion

he quality of the white-tailed theastene deer population in parts of Texas has defined by gradually declined for a number of duce part only from an aesthetic viewpoint, needs but also in terms of economics.

It is true that most hunters will robably not stop hunting because de deer are small. But there is alner the bayes cause for concern when memers of a species begin to get smaller. a goal of the decline has been in body and uel in the antler size.

Two factors have been linked to the decline of white-tailed deer: en support poor nutrition and genetic selection urphey selection and genetic selection uphey selection to support the selection and genetic selection uphey selection to support the selection and genetic selection upher selection to support the se

Research into these problems is being conducted at the Kerr Wildlife Management Area mear Kerrville in y of the the Hill Country.

Bob Armstrong, wildlife biologist the Kerr area, said that deer need atleast 10-11 percent protein in their det for proper growth. Armstrong aid the Kerr Area conducted a progm raising a number of bucks of 10 ercent protein and then reduced it 8 percent. This resulted in reed antler size and fewer points. nce antler development is at bring least in part a reflection of general n, one can see the effect even a show mall drop in protein can cause.
The protein deficiency is caused

a number of factors. One is that e are too many deer in many areas. Another is competition with domestic livestock. These two probms are often interrelated

The Texas Rarks and Wildlife Detment has been working with downers in an effort to overcome

hese problems. Jim Yantis is a wildlife technician with the department stationed in yan. He said that few understand nutritional requirements of ble at the deer, because deer eat little grass. A white-tail deer's main food sources are forbs (small broad-leaf plants) nd browse (the tips and leaves of rush). Thus, one problem has been eed to educate people about the rements of deer.

sheep and goats compete more ditly with deer because their food bits are more closely related. owners who wish to have sheep dgoats, as well as deer, must keep mind when deciding how ch livestock to raise, Merrill said. razos County does not have an population problem. Yantis said population here has been slowly ning since around 1970. He said nunting has not been a cause of decline, but that a number of

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igs have contributed. Destruction of habitat appears to ne of the main contributors, he d. The urbanization of the county the clearing of land for improved re are responsible for the loss of bitat. The number of cattle has increased, adding to competi-

Yantis said that a rise in the coyote ulation has also caused increased It is not known how much tes have, but it is believed affect a deer population's gh Brazos County does not rpopulation of deer, the is different in Robertson located immediately to the has a great number of deer. these circumstances, it is permitted. The Parks Idlife Department does not sdiction to set limits in all In some counties the com-

is the case in Robertson ty. Many landowners there and ighout the rest of the state still doe hunting is bad. As Yantis ated out, many people feel it is ng to hunt does because of tradi-



Both weight and antler size of mature whitetail bucks throughout Texas have grown

steadily smaller over the past two decades. Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

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tion. However, their grandfathers hunted does because it was normal practice in those times. Buck hunting started more recently when deer populations were greatly reduced in the 1930s by overgrazing.

Others believe that there are not as many deer now as in the past. Yantis said that in some cases this is true, but the habitat may have changed due to more cattle being

Two factors have been linked to the decline of white-tailed deer: poor nutrition and genetic selection toward smaller deer.

introduced or improved pasture. This means that the land can support fewer deer. Also, human nature can come into play.

Because does are not hunted,

many areas have a population imbalance, with does out numbering bucks five to one.

Yantis said this causes populations to go through boom and bust cycles. If, during one year, range conditions are particularly good there will be a large fawn crop. This cycle will re-peat itself as long as an imbalance exists. If there is a better balance between bucks and does, the population will be more stable because it will not capable of large leaps in pro-

It is a widely held belief that spikes, deer with unbranched antlers, are yearlings which will develop larger antlers later. Armstrong said this is not the case. Studies at the Kerr area and elsewhere have shown that spikes are caused by poor nutrition and genetics.

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#### LULAC demands query

## Special ed policy attacked

League of United Latin American Citizens Monday demanded an investigation of the Brownwood school district, alleging its special education department was a dumping ground for Mexican-American children.

The Hispanic civil rights group, acting on the complaint of three special education teachers who resigned in protest, said many non-English speaking students were being assigned to the department because they could not pass examinations written only in English

LULAC said the policy bolstered the enrollment in the department designed for handicapped students, which resulted in higher state and federal payments for the subsidized program.

The complaint alleged that despite state law, parents of Spanish-speaking children — often unable to speak English themselves — were given consent forms to sign that were in English

The teacher-LULAC complaints claimed that many students were placed in special education even though they had passed the evalution tests. The complaints also alleged there were no Spanish-speaking teachers in the special education department.

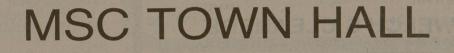
The teachers, Rayla Stiles, Patricia Roberts and Rebecca Cole resigned Oct. 1, in protest of the

conditions but the Board of Education refused to accepted their resignations because they would not stay until replacements were

The board is now attempting to have the teachers' certifications revoked because of their failure

LULAC said it would defend the teachers in any action taken against them by the district.

LULAC also said it had asked the education committees of the Legislature to investigate wrongdoing by the school. The complaints also were filed with the new U.S. Department of Education, the Texas education department and the regional civil rights



present Mon., November 26 8:15 p.m. Rudder Auditorium



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