



NEWSLETTER

Volume • May 2000 • Jim Bradford, Editor

OUR GOAL: To Promote, Preserve, and Experience One of the Greatest Southern Traditions Known... Quail Hunting.

Alabama Quail Seminar 2000

Saturday June 3rd

This is a cooperative educational project by the Alabama Wildlife Federation, Quail Unlimited, and Alabama Quail Hunters with input from State Wildlife and Fish. This will be much like last years Hurtsboro seminar that was attended by 230 Quail supporters from around the state.

Wes Burger, a noted Quail Biologist from Miss., will be featured along with others listed on the enclosed flyer.

This location will be much different from Hurtsboro as this site is a work in progress. Ted Devoss is converting a working cattle ranch owned by Sam Upchurch into a more Quail and Wildlife friendly habitat. Please see the enclosed flyer for more details.

Montgomery Meeting

Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF) and the Alabama Div. of Wildlife and Fish met recently to address the decline of certain wildlife species that require early successional habitats (Quail, indigo buntings, etc.). Together, they compiled a list of peoples who might be interested in working on a cooperative effort in this regard. As president of Alabama Quail Hunters, I was invited to attend, but will be unable to. Frank Harris will represent us at this very important meeting. We are very excited about the possibilities that could trace their roots to this meeting.

6th Annual Field Trial

The trial was held at Aaron Parkers preserve near Clanton. To accommodate the nearly 40 braces, we used 2 fields and still ran all day long. Special thanks go to Jenise Frost for co-ordinating between the two fields which were about 100 yards apart. As usual, Doug Edge with Pro Balance provided large bags of their finest for all the dogs that placed. The birds, which flew great, were delivered by Dale Mims and were reserved by Tommy Edmondson. Tommy became exhausted at the trial but reported that he recovered shortly. The judging was done by Bob Grimes, John Johnson, Terry Cohron and Rodney Martin.

Competition was close in all classes with Jason Jackson and Ben taking top honors in Gun dog and Bob Carr guiding Sue to a win in Puppies and placements in Derby and Gundog.

The winners were:

PUPPY

1st Place..... Bob Carr Sue
2nd Place..... Jake Deane..... Dan
3rd Place Aaron Parker..... Red

DERBY

1st Place..... Randy Keef..... Scar
2nd Place..... Bob Carr Sue
3rd Place Mike BarlowBuck

GUN DOG

1st Place..... Jason Jackson Ben
2nd Place..... Tommy Edmondson..... Mack
3rd Place Bob Carr Sue

YOUTH

1st Place..... Heath Jones Sue
2nd Place..... David Martin Bandit

ALBANY EDUCATIONAL TOUR

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On Saturday, March 11, 2000, 10 Alabama Quail Hunters' Members toured Nilo, Pineland and Pinebloom Plantations near Albany Georgia. Clay Sisson and Gerald Scholar were the tour guides. Both are employed by Auburn Universities Albany Area Quail Research Project. Clay is the project coordinator.

The tour begin on the Nilo Plantation. Nilo provides traditional agricultural land consisting of row crop production as well as pecan production, all in addition to the finest quail hunting. Within 15 minutes we were hearing bobwhite calls signaling the beginning of spring. Ten hunting courses are available on Nilo Plantation. The hunting courses consist of 500 hundred acre blocks more or less. The size is designed to accommodate a day of hunting on horseback. Auburn's research indicates that the ideal hunting course consist of 40 % open land. Land which is plowed occasionally if not every year. Nilo offers 30 to 35 % open land depending on the specific hunting course. Wooded land consist of pine and hardwood species. The woodland is much more open than you would be accustomed to in Alabama. Bird populations run up to 3 birds per acre. Clay emphasized that the open land should not all be located in one area, but distributed throughout the property. Once the field size exceeds 10 acres the productivity for quail levels off. Field configuration enters into the equation, with

the more field edge the better. Fields provide the food source for baby quail chicks. Protein is the key to rearing young quail and this is obtained from insects.

A fabulous horse barn was nearing competition on Nilo Plantation, this provided an excellent break for the tour.

The next stop was Pinebloom Plantation. A timber harvest was ongoing on Pinebloom. In addition to harvest of mature pine timber, pre merchantable hardwood timber was being removed. Actually some of the hardwood timber was being destroyed rather than harvested. Live oaks were being removed. The idea was to destroy the habitat of predators and allow sunlight to hit the ground.

The final plantation that we toured was Pineland. Here it was demonstrated that feeding plays a large part in the production of high quail numbers. The feed wagon is commonly loaded with corn and milo. The wagon feeds every 2 weeks. The objective is to keep the brood stock in excellent condition, so they can reproduce. Feeding does not improve one's chances of finding more quail. The feed is spread over a very large area. Feeding in summer months is only productive in dry years. It is legal to feed quail in Georgia.

Burning is a much needed tool in quail management. Cool season burns assist in bringing the site back to an early successional stage which is beneficial to quail. Burning in the summer months is prohibitive as it will destroy quail nest. Even on plantations where burning is a



Angus Cooper, Clay Sisson, Ed Witherinton, Bill Warren

practice, hardwood encroachment is a problem. On plantations in south Georgia the problem is mostly live oaks and in Alabama it is sweet gum. Chemicals such as Arsenal and Garlon 4 are being used to keep hardwoods in check.

Bobwhite quail are being captured and tagged with radio collars. They are monitored to determine feeding patterns, nesting success, and what kills them if they die. Auburn has accumulated the largest data on radio tagged birds.

The final stop on the tour was lunch at Blackbeard's Restaurant in Albany. This tour offered an excellent opportunity to view the areas where the best quail research is ongoing. Hopefully, we can apply some techniques we learned on the tour back home to increase wild bird populations. Wild bobwhite quail populations are certainly possible if one has the available land to work with and the resources to implement the changes to the landscape. A multiple approach to quail habitat is essential: feed, nesting, brood rearing and predator control all must be included. Any one interested should contact Clay Sisson. We want to thank, Clay and Gerald for being excellent host.

The Albany Area Quail Project is conducted through Auburn University's Department of Forestry and

Presidents Corner

Bill Allis sent us a very interesting letter in which he detailed work that 4 people are doing on the Connecuh National Forest. He also thanked us for providing a seeder that they use on food plots. I wish I could say that all is going well and that things have gotten better because of their efforts but that is not the case. Bill feels that 2 things are working against them. Large nesting season burns and a prolonged drought. But they are not giving up. Neither should you. People are beginning to work together to improve declining habitat or at least slow the rate of decline. Join the crowd, join our group, join Q.U., join AWF or some other group. After you join, become active, attend meetings and participate in projects. You can make a difference.

Coming Meetings

There will be a meeting on **June 14th** Meeting. This will be a good meeting to discuss the Quail 2000 Seminar.

Steve Guy will speak at the **July 11th** Meeting.

Steve is heading up a statewide ALFA program that could be very popular with local farmers and ranchers as it will show them how they can make more money by improving wildlife habitat. Mr. Guy is a passionate Quail and Turkey Hunter.

Past Meetings

APRIL

Ted Devoss, a Quail Biologist with Regions Bank and is also on the board with the Ala. Wildlife Federation, did a great job of talking about his current project of improving Quail and Wildlife Habitat on the Grey Rocks Ranch which on June 3rd will be the site of the Alabama Quail Seminar 2000. See enclosed flyer for details.

Melvin Winters, and a friend, drove from Fayette, AL to bring to our attention the problems facing gun owners.

MAY

We showed a very interesting video on the Bird dog Museum that is located in Holly Springs, Miss. For more info, contact Barbara Teave at 901-764-2058.

American Field Back Issues FOR SALE!

1954-1992 from the collection of the late Everett (Sonny) Kirk good condition 90% complete contact Gladys Kirk 205-455-2555

NEW MEMBERS

Tim Estes

Frank Thomas

Frank Thomas III

Mike Bain

E.O. Pinehardt

Brent Blackmon

Richard G. Anderson

Richard G. Anderson, Jr.

Harold Speake

Joseph Lynn Ford

David J. Schneider

Linda Parker

William W. Conwell

Ben Black

Roy Chastain

Roger Blackmon

We welcome these new members. I have met many of them and they seem to be willing to be involved. If they will attend meetings and participate in our club projects, they will have a rewarding experiences. They will discover a common bond with some of the finest people in Alabama.

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT

www.newleafpub/alaquail

***now containing
monthly updates***

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Office Phone _____

Email Address _____

New Member

Renewal

2000 DUES – \$10.00

Check Payable to "Alabama Quail Hunters"

Call Jim Bradford, 991-8635 or for more information.



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