

Pennsylvania State Fox & Coyote Hunters inc.

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Spring Newsletter – March 2014



On the Cover:

Recipients of Youth Awards presented during the 2013 Annual Meeting; (L-R) John Chapman (Achievement Award), Johnathon Saxe, Emily Carr, Matt Mauer, Mike Davis and Rachel Stucker (First Deer Awards). Director Ron Davis, grandfather of Mike Davis, presented the awards.

Editor's note: Be sure to notify the Association of your successful young hunters, so that we might appropriately recognize them at this year's Annual Meeting.

From the President's Pen...

2014 has gotten off to a good start for your Association, as you will see from the following news items:

Our calendar for 2014 is being finalized and preparations are underway for our major events.

Our Annual Meeting has been set for Saturday, April 12th, and our "Member's Only" Coyote Tournament is underway, with several good specimens being reported.

Dates for Major Activities Scheduled

Many members have requested the earliest possible notice for our major activities for 2014, in order to allow for scheduling vacations, etc. Unless unforeseen circumstances develop, our calendar for 2014 is as follows:

Saturday, April 12 th	Annual Meeting
Tuesday, June 10 th	Meeting - PA Game Commission
Saturday, June 21 st	Family Day Picnic

The Annual Meeting will be held at the American Legion in Wyalusing, the Family Day Picnic will be held at Molyneaux's Training Facility in Endicott, New York. Further details will be announced as they become final.

Details Regarding Field Trials Undetermined

At the time of publication, the availability of Molyneaux's for field trials is uncertain. Other options regarding competitions are currently under review by your Executive Committee.

We will immediately publish our plans as soon as a final determination has been reached.

Annual Meeting – Saturday, April 12th, 2014

The Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania State Fox & Coyote Hunter's Assn. has been scheduled for 4:00 pm, Saturday, April 12th at the American Legion, Route 6, Wyalusing, PA. In addition to election of officers for 2014, the agenda will include a review of the accomplishments of the organization during 2013, plans for 2014, and review of significant legislative issues and other important business. Please mark your calendar and watch for further correspondence regarding this meeting.

Annual Meeting to Feature Pork Roast Dinner

This year's Annual Meeting will feature a Pork Roast Dinner provided by the folks from the Wyalusing American Legion Auxiliary.

In order to insure proper dinner arrangements, please RSVP to Dick Bednarczyk via e-mail (dick.bednarczyk@epix.net) or by phone (570) 586-9270 if you plan to attend.

Please note: There will be a \$10.00 charge for the dinner, payable to the American Legion.

Annual Meeting to Feature Member's "For Sale" Table

In response to requests from membership, we will have a "For Sale" table available for anyone wishing to sell electronic collars, systems, etc. (No firearms please). Hopefully this will provide an excellent medium for interested buyers and sellers to see what will be available. Sellers will be asked to personally attend their merchandise or have it clearly tagged for ease and accuracy of any transactions.

Remember to Nominate Your Youngsters for "First" Awards

Recently we expanded our award program to include "First Turkey", "First Bobcat" or "First Coyote" in addition to the "First Deer" or "First Bear" awards. The PA Game Commission will provide certificates for youngsters who take a deer, bear or turkey, while the Association will present our own "First Bobcat" or "First Coyote" Certificate. Members are requested to notify Dick Bednarczyk about the successful hunters and provide a digital photo, if one is available.

Accepting Nominations for Youth Achievement Awards

Since we introduced the concept seven years ago, the recognition of deserving youngsters with Achievement Awards has proven to be very successful. The award is in the form of a citation which is usually presented at the Annual Meeting and is followed by an appropriate article in our quarterly newsletter. Since we are a statewide and multi-state organization, there is one challenge with this program - that is the difficulty of identifying deserving youngsters. At this time we are encouraging all members to help us with this matter, by nominating any deserving youngsters that you may know. Our criteria are broad and informal – merely that the youngster has shown a deep interest in hounds and hunting or has enthusiastically participated in the events of the Association.

Please give this some serious consideration and provide your suggestions to Dick Bednarczyk at 570-586-9270 or to any other officer or director, if it is more convenient to do so.

Game Commission to Recognize Youngster from Our Organization

Jay Delaney, PA Game Commissioner, Northeast Region, will present an original Game Commission Coyote Patch to the first Mentored Youth from the PA State Fox & Coyote Hunter's Assn. who successfully takes a coyote. Please keep this in mind and be sure to notify any of the Officers or Directors immediately, when this historic event occurs. Our sincere thanks go to Commissioner Delaney for this gesture and his continuing support of our Association.

PA State Fox & Coyote Hunter's Coyote Tournament

This is a reminder that our season-long coyote tournament will end on March 31st. Successful participating hunters should return their weight cards to Dick Bednarczyk by Wednesday April 16th.

Proposed Seasons/Bag Limits Changes - Pennsylvania

The following proposed changes may be of particular interest to our membership:

Please note that these changes must be approved at the April meetings of the Board of Commissioners to be effective. The information has been reported on the PGC web-site.

- **Many seasons will start later in coming license year.**

The Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners gave preliminary approval to hunting and trapping seasons and bag limits for 2014-15 license year.

Hunters and trappers – particularly those setting vacations for this fall and winter – are advised that, once again, several seasons in the 2014-15 license year will open or run ***about a week later*** than they do in many years to accommodate calendar swings related to the timing of Thanksgiving.

Other modifications proposed for the 2014-15 seasons include: changes to fall turkey seasons in several Wildlife Management Units; new extended bear hunting opportunities in WMUs 2C and 4B; an expansion of the fisher trapping season to WMUs 1B, 3B and 3C; and increased possession limits for small game.

- **Board Proposes Expanded Bear Seasons.**

The Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners proposed opening up extended bear hunting opportunities to two additional WMUs in 2014.

WMUs 2C and 4B each would be open to bear hunting for four days in deer season, beginning the first Wednesday of the 2014 statewide general deer season Dec. 3.

Game Commission staff had recommended the additions based on increases in the bear populations within those WMUs.

- **Fall Turkey Season Changes Moved Forward.**

The Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners today gave preliminary approval to fall turkey seasons for 2014 and spring gobbler dates for 2015.

Decreasing populations in WMUs 3A, 3B and 3C prompted the preliminary adoption of a ***two-week fall turkey season*** in those WMUs. Previously, there had been a three-week season there.

The three-day Thanksgiving season segment would continue in WMUs 3A, 3B and 3C despite the one-week decrease in the earlier segment.

- **Proposed 2014 -15 Furbearer Hunting Seasons**

COYOTES: No closed season. Unlimited. Outside of any big game season (deer, bear, elk and turkey), coyotes may be taken with a hunting license or a furtaker license, and without wearing orange. During any big game season, coyotes may be taken while lawfully hunting big game or with a furtaker license.

RACCOONS and FOXES: Oct. 25–Feb. 21, unlimited.

OPOSSUM, STRIPED SKUNKS and WEASELS: No closed season, except Sundays. No limits.

BOBCAT (WMUs 2A, 2C, 2E, 2F, 2G, 2H, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D, 4A, 4C, 4D and 4E): Jan. 20-Feb. 10. One bobcat per license year, but all licensed furtakers may obtain one permit.

Reminder –Raffle Drawing

Although we indicated a February 28th deadline for raffle ticket returns, we can continue to receive them up to the moment of our drawing, which will be held at the Annual Meeting on April 12th. This fundraiser has become an integral part of our overall financial scenario for the year. The grand prize is a Garmin Astro Hunter-Dog GPS with the improved DC40 collar valued at approximately \$600.00 retail or a \$500.00 Cash Award. In the event that you have not yet made your returns, we encourage you to support your organization by doing so.

2014 Memberships Now Due

At this point, everyone should have received their 2014 membership billing. We are requesting prompt payment of dues so that we may continue to fund our various activities and maintain our advocacy of hound owners' rights with the various governing bodies which affect our sport. In the event that you may have misplaced your billing, you may remit your dues to Dick Bednarczyk, using the address which appears on the letterhead.

PA State Fox & Coyote Assn. Members Enjoy Success in Tournaments

Many members continue to appear among the successful hunters at regional tournaments. A partial listing follows:

District Nine Trappers – Tunkhannock

Successful members were; Bob Cragle, Dale Arthur, Shane Malicky, Jonathon Wychock, Nathan Minier, Bob Clark and Gerry Devine. It took a 51.0 pound coyote to win the Grand Prize. There were 35 entries overall. Seven Hundred and fifty nine hunters registered for the event. Eighteen coyotes were taken with hounds.

Mosquito Creek

Successful members were Bob Cragle (2 coyotes), Steve Minor (2 coyotes), Guy Michlowski (2 coyotes), Justin Smarsh, Jake Kowalczyk, Jay Green (2 coyotes), Bob Hendrickson (2 coyotes), Sean Morgan and Doug Routch. 102 Coyotes were turned in during the hunt, 69 of which were taken by hounds. There were 4077 registered hunters for the event.

Welcome New Members!

Recruiting efforts for 2014 is off to a good start. YTD 8 hunters have joined the Association. Since our last newsletter, Mike Johnson, Toby and Andrew Smarsh, Ryan, Chelsea and Dylan Wilkes, Richard Hawes and Joe Ross have come aboard. We are delighted to see the number of youths and family groups which have joined the Association over the past few years. Welcome hunters!

Legislative Monitoring – New York

New York Residents are requested to voice their support for New York Houndsmen bill A07851/S02688 which provides that dogs engaged in hunting and training as authorized by NYS ENCON Law shall not be deemed as running at large. This is obviously extremely important legislation for hound owners.

Legislative Monitoring – Virginia

A substitute bill to SB42 was passed which essentially guarantees that existing foxhound training pens may continue in operation for 40 years (until 2054). Readers are encouraged to review the complete contents of the substitute bill which has been nicely summarized on Speeddogs by Alan Bishop.

Legislative Monitoring - Pennsylvania

(Editor's note: The following information provided by an article by Gary Blockus, Allentown Call, February 25, 2014)

The Pennsylvania Legislature is threatening to merge the Pennsylvania Game Commission with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and take away their power to list or delist threatened and endangered species. At stake are the future of Pennsylvania's wildlife and habitat. House Bill 1576, the Endangered Species Coordination Act, which would remove the ability of both the game commission and fish and boat to add or subtract wildlife from the state's threatened and endangered species lists, could come up for a vote on the House floor as early as March 10.

On March 19, game commission officials will go in front of the House Game and Fisheries Committee to discuss a number of pieces of legislation on deer management. And, on March 19, the legislative Budget and Finance Committee will hold a 10 a.m. meeting on the potential merger of PGC and PFBC into one agency, a move that would strip autonomy from each agency and seriously affect how funds will be allocated for certain programs.

A long list of conservation groups, including the Quality Deer Management Association, National Wild Turkey Federation, Trout Unlimited, National Audubon Society and a host of others in-state and nationwide that are against the bill. Sportsmen need to be involved in this process by contacting their area legislators and letting them know how they feel about the proposals. The future of the outdoors and our wildlife in Pennsylvania depends on it.