

multiply quickly, so it's important to dress the deer as soon as possible, transport it from the field and remove the hide, wipe it down with a clean, dry towel to remove blood and refrigerate the carcass," Dr. Cottrell said. "Cooling the carcass will help prevent bacterial growth."

Hunters who are interested in becoming more self-sufficient also can de-bone the carcass. The cuts are relatively simple and can be made while the deer is hanging or from a plastic sheet-covered table. An inexpensive plastic fluorescent light cover which can be purchased at any home supply store can be used for a cutting board. Deboning ensures the hunter can inspect and trim excess fat and damaged meat from his or her cuts of venison before freezing.

First, remove the shoulders with a filleting knife. This can be done without cutting a bone, by cutting behind the shoulder-blade. Next, remove the meat from the shoulder with a filleting knife.

Hindquarters can be removed from the carcass next by using a saw or by cutting from the underside with a knife. If you plan to have steaks or jerky made from them, don't make any further cuts.

Inside the body cavity, against the backbone, are the tenderloins, considered the best cut of meat on a deer. Use your hand, and a knife when necessary, to pull them free. Outside the cavity, along the backbone, are the

loin muscles or back-strap, which also are outstanding cuts. Again, using a filleting knife and your fingers, slide the blade along the spine to separate each back-strap and then finish each piece by cutting in along the top of the ribs and under the muscle to the first cut you've made.

The remainder of the carcass can be de-boned with a filleting knife. Try to trim fat from meat where you can and wipe off blood whenever it is encountered. De-boning can be done relatively quickly, but remember, every ounce of meat you remove increases your trimmings for sausage, bologna, meat sticks or other products. De-boned meat can be taken to a meat processor immediately, or frozen and taken later. Hindquarters may be frozen for processing later as jerky or dried venison. Steaks should be cut fresh. A link to a video on deboning in the field can be seen on our website

(www.pgc.state.pa.us), by putting your cursor over "Wildlife" in the menu bar at the top of the homepage, then putting your cursor over "Wildlife Diseases" in the drop-down menu listing, and then clicking on "Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)" in the next drop-down menu listing. To view the video link, scroll down to "What precautions should hunters take," and click on video link to the video.

"It's always a good idea to become self-sufficient as a hunter, because of the satisfaction you'll derive from processing a deer all by your-



The Mendoza family of Kermit proudly show off the 15 pound Yellow Cat they caught May 13, 2012, at Oak Creek Lake.

self and the extra care and quality control you'll provide," noted Cal DuBrock, Pennsylvania Game Commission Bureau of Wildlife Management director. "It also broadens your hunting experience and makes you more conscious of where you need to place the crosshairs when you shoot."

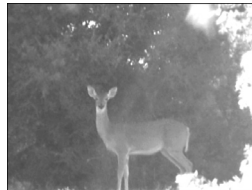
The Game Commission offers two free brochures on venison care and field-dressing deer. The first, "To Field Dress a Deer," offers step-by-step instructions - with illustrations - on how to field-dress a deer. The second, "Venison Needn't Be Pot Luck," offers field-dressing instructions and cooking tips.

To assist hunters in getting the most of their wild game harvests, the Game Commission offers a two-disk series, produced by Jerry Chiappetta and featuring Certified Master Chef Milos Cihelka. These DVDs - "Wild Game Field Care and Cooking" and "Upland Game Birds, Small Game & Waterfowl" - show step-by-step the best care for game animals from the field to the table. The videos are available from the Game Commission's website (www.pgc.state.pa.us). Put your cursor over "General Store," then click on "Visit the Outdoor Shop," choose "Pennsylvania Game

Commission Outdoor Shop" in the lower left-hand corner, select "Merchandise," then choose "Videos" and then scroll down to the DVD video you are interested in and complete the order form. Both DVDs sells for \$18.87 (plus tax and shipping and handling).

Finally, for recipes that will make venison tastier, consider buying the Game Commission's "Pennsylvania Game Cookbook" for \$4.71 plus tax and a \$1.25 for shipping and handling. The book and aforementioned free brochures are available by writing: Pennsylvania Game Commission, Dept. MS, 2001 Elmerton Ave., Harrisburg, PA 17110-9797.

Welcome Hunters!



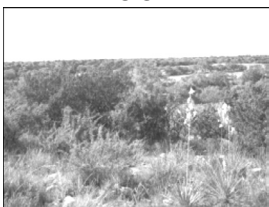
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