

## Safety first when hunting from tree stands

One in every three hunters who hunt from a treestand will fall at some point in their hunting career, and of those, 75 to 80 percent occurs while ascending or descending the tree.

Nationally, 300-500 hunters are killed annually in treestand accidents and another 6,000 will have treestand related injuries.

Tree stand incidents are one of the leading causes of injury to hunters. The DNR urges hunters to utilize the following safety tips:

- Always wear a full body harness, also known as a fall arrest system, when you are in a tree stand, as well as when climbing into or out of a tree stand. Make sure it is worn properly. Treestand harnesses have an expiration date and should be replaced when they expire and/or if a fall occurs.

- A safety strap should be attached to the tree to prevent falling more than 12 inches.

- Always inspect the safety harness for signs of wear or damage before each use.

- Follow the 3 point rule of tree stand safety. Always have 3 points of contact to the steps or ladder before moving. Be cautious that rain, frost, ice, or snow can cause steps to become extremely slippery. Check the security of the step before placing your weight on it.

- Always hunt with a plan and if possible a buddy. Before you leave home, let others know your exact hunting location, when you plan to return and who is with you.

- Always carry emergency signal devices such as a cell phone, walkie-talkie, whistle, signal flare, personal locator device and flashlight on your person at all times and within

reach even while you are suspended. Watch for changing weather conditions. In the event of an accident, remain calm and seek help immediately.

- Always select the proper tree for use with your tree stand. Select a live straight tree that fits within the size limits recommended in your tree stand's instructions. Do not climb or place a tree stand against a leaning tree.

- Never leave a tree stand installed for more than two weeks since damage could result from changing weather conditions and/or from other factors not obvious with a visual inspection.

- Always use a haul line to pull up your gear and unloaded firearm or bow to your tree stand once you have reached your desired hunting height. Never climb with anything in your hands or on your back. Prior to descending, lower your equipment on the opposite side of the tree.

- Be aware of suspension trauma. A rear attached full body harness is intended to prevent falls, not to be suspended in for any length of time. Suspension trauma can happen in less than 20 minutes and can be fatal. Hunters should attach an additional foot strap to the body harness to take the pressure off their upper legs and carry a pocket

knife to cut away the harness if the situation turns critical.

### Game Warden Field Notes

The following items are compiled from recent TPWD law enforcement reports.

#### Deer in the Headlights

Two Tom Green County game wardens saw a vehicle attempt to run down deer in an open field. The game wardens stopped the vehicle and could smell a strong odor of alcohol on the lone subject. Sobriety tests were administered and the subject was arrested for DWI, driving with a suspended license, two local warrants and hunting with illegal means and methods.

#### Overkill

A Taylor County game warden received a call from a landowner who said a neighbor contacted him and said he saw someone with a flashlight on his property. When the warden arrived, two other landowners had the suspect blocked on a county road. The 25-year-old suspect had shot a deer on property that bordered the landowner's property, and the deer ran onto the landowner's land. The suspect then proceeded to track the deer approximately 400 yards into the landowner's property, where he found the wounded deer and again shot it.

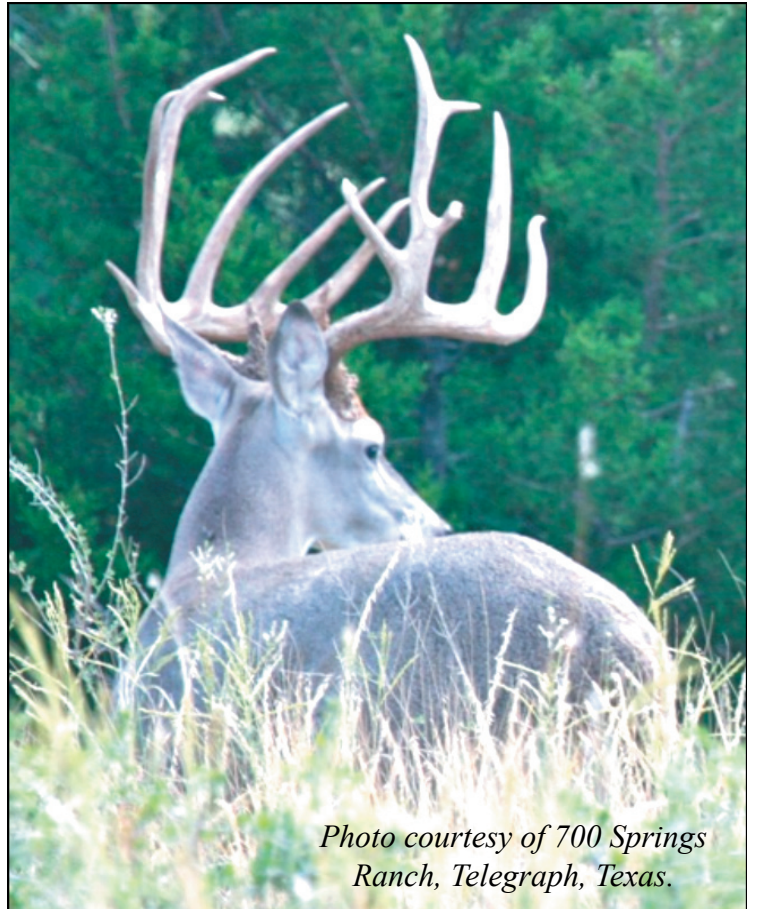


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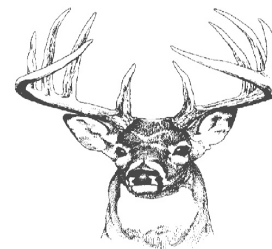
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