

Pruning Bushes for Deer

I find myself in Old Mexico hunting on the Rancho Santa Fe with Ranots Garcia. This is my fifth time to hunt in Old Mexico but my first time to hunt the ranch. This particular ranch had not been hunted in seven years. When you consider the life expectancy of a deer in the wilds of Mexico, you can bet that none of the deer on this ranch have had any hunting pressure.

In Mexico, supplemental feeding is highly encouraged and legal to hunt over. We spent the first day driving the roads, spreading feed for the deer. After we had made our rounds, we retraced our tracks to find racked trophy deer at every spot that we had fed. I was on a management buck hunt, which meant anything less than a ten point.

You see, their goal on this ranch is to cull the genes that produce racks of less than ten points. Once a deer is three years old or older, his main beam has produced the maximum number of points that it will ever produce. Now, there is always an exception to every rule but this is the most probable science. As a deer gets older, he will grow more mass, wider spread, longer ? and yes, he may grow kickers or forks in his antlers, but for the most part the number of points on his main beam will remain the same. For this reason, their manage program is to cull those bucks and eliminate them from the gene pool.

By the time morning was approaching now, I had literally seen over 100 racked bucks from eight points to a sixteen pointer and every number in between. The biggest eight pointer I saw was huge! He would have scored between 155 to 160 B&C points. I marked the spot on my GPS and we headed for lunch.

By 1:30 pm we were back at the marked location unloading all my gear from my truck. When bow hunting in Texas or Mexico, or anywhere else where tree stand hunting isn't possible, I always use my double bull blind and today was no exception. The blinds are so roomy, I carry everything but the kitchen sink with me when I am hunting in one

Everything was finally unloaded from the truck. As we were popping up my double bull blind, we decided to film the procedure so my TV audience could see how easy it was. Right after I had that completed, 23 seconds later, I began to explain how I was pruning shears to cut bush to help camo the blind. In the middle of my presentation , I spotted a huge 9 point watching and listening to my dog and pony show just 40 yards away. I guess he was interested in buying one and wanted to know how to put it up. When I saw the buck, I put down the shears and picked up my bow.

I put my bow sling around my neck. When the deer saw that the demonstration was finished, he decided to go about his merry way. He began to walk from my left to my right staying at 40 yards and grabbing a bite of browse as he walked. I pulled my release out of my pocket. Just before the buck stepped into a ? I drew my bow. When the buck stopped out into the ?, I grunted at him. He stopped, threw his head straight up, and looked at me. I put my 40 yard pin right behind his shoulder and touched off the release.

At the strum of my bow shooting, the buck attempted to duck but he was too late. Although he had moved approximately 2 inches the arrow still found its fatal mark. The deer bucked high into the air and bolted off.

The blood trail was easy to follow. It was all over the ground and all over the prickly fair cactus about belt high. I was following the trail so intently that after about 150 yards, I almost stumbled over the deer.

Boy, I was a happy camper. It wasn't the trophy 8 point I was setting up for, but it was a magnificent 9 point that scored in the low 140's. Hunting is one of those sports where the participant is extremely happy even when the hunt is over before it starts.