



Courtesy photo

CALHOUN HUNTERS Cody Shook (far left), Zack Boone (inside left), John Rieger (inside right) and Dusty Wilhite (far right) with their hog trophies.



Courtesy photo Jeremy Berry

OUACHITA PARISH hunters Jeremy Berry (left), Mickey Evans (center) and Billie Jo Evans (right) and their dogs pose with a trophy hog.

Outdoor pests: feral hogs foul up deer hunting



Courtesy photo

CALHOUN HUNTERS John Rieger (left), Cody Shook (center) and Dusty Wilhite (right) with their dogs and hog trophy.

With feral hogs increasing in numbers, more landowners and clubs are seeking removal or relocation of the tusked nuisances. Clubs that have had dogs drive hogs out on night runs are now seeing the results on their game cameras. The deer move back in and eat longer at the corn feeders.

Hogs have a way of coming in and taking over, rooting up vegetation, food plots, tearing down feeders and bullying other would-be eaters. These creatures are the equivalent of overgrown rats and just as nasty. Feral hogs are plagued by a multitude of diseases and can infect you, your wildlife and water supply.

Feral hogs are also known to prey upon livestock and wildlife. They can catch and consume baby goats, lambs, and calves, usually leaving no evidence of the attack. If the opportunity is available, feral hogs will consume fawns, rabbits, turkey nests, roadrunner nest and any other wildlife they encounter.

"Some club owners that have called Hog Hunters in really do see a difference in their deer," said Jeremy Berry, West Monroe.

A feral sow litter is four-to-six. But the litters from many sows can and will be watched over and suckled

by one sow while the others are feed elsewhere. This practice accounts for the sometimes-large number of babies spotted with one sow.

They have a very highly developed sense of smell, which will match or even rival that of other competing wild life. Their sense of hearing is also highly developed.

Their eyesight is severely under estimated. They may not run, they may not pay attention, but don't

think they can't see you. Hogs are at a disadvantage when it comes to sight mainly because of their low profile. They can't raise their heads high like a deer or other wild animals to see over grass or vegetation.

Feral hogs should be humanely euthanized immediately when caught. They are dangerous and should not be relocated.

Louisiana hunting regulations are way behind on encouraging hunters to get involved with the eradication of these animals. All studies show that night hunting is the best time to harvest hogs but our regulations are a little complicated to understand.

To hog hunt at night, you need to be a holder of a valid Louisiana hunting license. But Louisiana requires more than that. To hog hunt at night on private property, you need to have the landowner, his lessee or agent give you written permission and keep the landowner's contact information in your possession during the hog hunt.

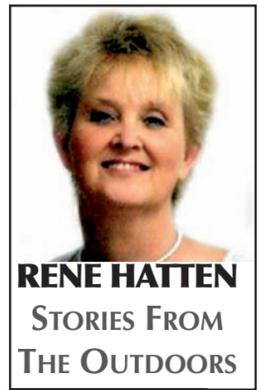
Anyone taking part in these activities at night is required to notify the parish sheriff's office 24 hours in advance of any such hunt. That said, feral hogs can be taken year round during legal daylight shooting hours.

"These feral hogs have had a Russian Boar breed into them and they have more running capability and are harder to catch," said John Rieger, with Hog Hunters of Calhoun.

Rieger said that they rarely turn to make a stand, like they used to do. Your typical hog dog would run and bay, but now they have had to re-breed the dogs to run and not be afraid to sink teeth into them as they run.

If you would like to contact these two, see *HattenHome.com*.

Rene Hatten writes about outdoor life for the *Ouachita Citizen*. She can be reached online at *HattenHome.com*



RENE HATTEN
STORIES FROM
THE OUTDOORS

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Louisiana hunting regu-

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