

# Hunters prepare to encounter rut



BILL PARKER

Some of the hottest deer hunting of the season will take place over the next couple weeks as the whitetail rut gets into full swing. Mature bucks have been leaving rubs and scrapes throughout the woods in recent weeks in anticipation of the annual mating season — referred to by hunters as "the rut."

During this mating season both bucks and does will be excessively active as they roam the forests and woodlands in search of a prospective mate.

Smart hunters will use the rut to their advantage and spend as much time as possible in the woods. The Michigan whitetail mates in the fall of the year so that fawns will be born in the spring when the weather is warm and food abundant. A mature whitetail doe goes into estrus — a cycle in which an egg is available for fertilization — for a 26-30 hour period. If the egg isn't fertilized during this period, the doe will go back into estrus in another 28 days — or early to mid-December. Some young does (last spring's fawns) will also go into estrus in December adding to this minirut.

Estrus, just like antler growth, bear hibernation, bird migration and most everything that occurs annually in nature, is triggered by diminishing or increasing hours of daylight. In Michigan, the rut occurs predictably in mid-November as the days grow shorter and the nights longer. The rut lasts, for the most part, about two to three weeks although bucks will display rutting-like antics in the weeks preceding the actual rut.

Bucks become very aggressive during the rut. They will mark their territory and defend it against any intruding bucks. The biggest most mature bucks will do most of the mating.

Fresh rubs and scrapes are sure signs that an eager buck is present.

A rub is a very visible sign. Bucks remove the velvet from their antlers in late summer and early fall by rubbing them against branches and saplings. "Mating"

or "sparring" rubs are made the same way prior to or during the rut, but usually in a much more aggressive manner.

These rubs act as a visible sign to alert other deer that a buck is tending an area. This activity also helps strengthen the buck's incase he has an encounter with another mature male.

When this rubbing occurs the trees and branches are left scarred and bare of bark. Rubs are usually found one to three feet off the ground, depending on the size of the deer. Bigger bucks rub on bigger trees.

Scrapes are created when a buck paws an area of earth free of grass, leaves and sticks all the way down to the dirt. Scrapes are usually made beneath an overhanging branch, or licking-stone which will be ripped or broken off near the end. Scrapes range in size from one to eight feet in diameter. An active scrape will have a strong odor and the dirt will be moist with urine. A fresh scrape will also have a hoof print in the middle of it and time (antler) marks scraped through it which can help indicate the size of the buck using the scrape.

When an estrus doe finds a hot scrape she will urinate in the scrape then hang around the area until the buck returns. Bucks will often leave a number of scrapes throughout a two to four mile range, depending on the number of deer in the area. He'll check these scrapes on a daily basis, usually approaching from downwind so he can tell with his nose if a doe is present.

If a savvy hunter can set-up, undetected, 20 to 30 yards downwind from an active scrape and sit tight he'll stand a good chance of intercepting a buck.

The rut is under way. If you hunt with a bow and arrow get out of the house and into the woods. If you're waiting for the start of the Nov. 15 firearms season take a day out to scout now so you'll be ready for that rutting buck on opening day.

(Hunters and anglers are urged to report their success. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to: Outdoors, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. Fax information to 644-1314 or call Bill Parker Monday evenings at 901-2573.)

## OUTDOORS CALENDAR

### DATES AND EVENTS

■ **ARCHERY**  
Royal Oak Archers will hold a 3-D shoot beginning at 9 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 14, on its walk-through range in Lake Orion, 693-9997 or 693-1369.

The Terminator 3-D course, featuring two challenging 30-target courses including one that is handicapped accessible, is open for practice 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. week-ends. Call (617) 522-8777 week-ends or 475-2830 weekdays.

■ **FISHING CLUB MEETINGS**  
The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets 7:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Maplewood Center in Garden City, 477-3816.

The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of each month at the Livonia Clarenceville Junior High School, 420-2233.

■ **SEASONS**  
A hunter's safety class will be held Saturday and Sunday at the Wayne County Sportsmen's Club, 532-0285.

Duck season ends Nov. 7 in the Middle Zone (northern Lower Peninsula).

Canada goose season ends Nov. 7 in the Southern Zone (southern Lower Peninsula).

Quail season ends Nov. 11.

Woodcock partridge and the first archery deer seasons end Nov. 14.

Duck season ends Nov. 14 in the Southern Zone (southern Lower Peninsula).

Pheasant season ends Nov. 14 in zones II and III.

Firearm deer season opens Nov. 15.

A special pheasant season, with a one-bird per day limit, will be held Dec. 1-5 in an area located west of US-23, east of US-131, south of M-57 and north of the Ohio/Indiana/Michigan border.

■ **SHOOTING RANGES**  
Sighting-In Days run through Nov. 14 at the Western Wayne County Conservation Association, 453-9843.

The gun range at the Pontiac Lake Recreation Area is open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday-Sunday, 666-1020.

The gun range at the Bald Mountain Recreation Area is open 9 a.m. to sunset Monday and Tuesday; 10 a.m. to sunset Wednesday; and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, 693-6767.

### OAKLAND COUNTY PARKS

■ **SPICE TREES**  
Learn about the exotic history of spices while using them to create

an unusual spice tree centerpiece for the holidays in this nature class which begins at 7 p.m. Thursday at Independence Oaks. There is a \$15 fee and all materials will be provided.

■ **OH DEER**  
Explore the cycles of the whitetail deer as it relates to the deer in the park in this program which begins at 1 p.m. Saturday at Independence Oaks. The program includes pictures, games and a hike.

■ **HEY BEAR**  
Junior naturalists ages 9-13 will learn about Michigan's black bear through crafts, games, pictures and skins in this nature program which begins at 1 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 20, at Independence Oaks.

■ **COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS**  
Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required for all Oakland County Parks programs, 625-6473.

### METROPARKS

■ **MT. ST. HELEN**  
A photographic glimpse of the Pacific Northwest including a fascinating visit to Mt. St. Helen 12 years after the 1980 eruption will be featured in this program which begins at 7 p.m. Friday at Stony Creek.

■ **WINGS ON THE WATER**  
A drive through the park in

search of migrating ducks and other water birds, begins at 9:30 a.m. Saturday at Kensington.

■ **KID STUFF**  
Kids ages 6-10 will bake and decorate a holiday cake, make a holiday potpourri and create a Victorian Christmas ornament in this program which begins at 10 a.m. Saturday at Indian Springs.

■ **CORNUSK DOLLS**  
Learn how pioneers created toys for their children from materials they had on hand in this nature program which begins at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at Kensington.

■ **BIRD MIGRATION**  
A look at bird migration including why they leave our area, how they navigate and where they go in winter, begins at 1 p.m. Sunday at Indian Springs.

■ **NATURE SKETCHING**  
A naturalist will help adults see with an artist's eye and draw wildlife from mounts in this program which begins at 1 p.m. Sunday at Kensington.

■ **THE WHOLE TRUTH**  
Learn about the creatures that make and/or live in the many cavities and holes found in nature in this program which begins at 2 p.m. Sunday at Kensington.

■ **METROPARK REQUIREMENTS**  
Most Metropark programs are free, while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required, 1-800-47-PARKS.

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## Lutheran Westland routs Liggett

Lutheran High Westland finished its 1993 football season on a winning note Saturday, clobbering visiting Grosse Pointe University-Liggett, 39-7.

The Warriors (3-6) rolled up 349 total yards, all on the ground. Jelani Kyle, a 5-foot-10, 149-pound junior tailback, averaged almost seven yards per carry, rushing for 153 yards. He scored three touchdowns on runs of 16, 1 and 18 yards.

Kjel Skov, a 5-11, 155-pound senior, added 70 yards in six attempts, including TD runs of 39 and 8 yards. Mark Mashburn, a 5-8, 149-pound sophomore, picked up 76 yards on five carries.

Matt Baltz added a 1-yard TD run in the third period to give the Warriors a 26-6 lead.

Offensively, Liggett (0-9) was limited to 141 yards rushing and 39 passing.

Linebacker Troy Smith, a 5-10, 181-pound senior, was in on 17 tackles to lead Lutheran High.

Junior linebacker Jason Bayuah, who kicked three extra

### FOOTBALL

points, added nine tackles.

■ **THURSTON 41, CLARENCEVILLE 0:** Redford Thurston fared all turnovers and limited Livonia Clarenceville to three first downs, all in the first quarter, to win the season finale on Saturday at home.

The Eagles, members of the Mega Conference Blue Division, finished with a 6-2 overall record but failed to qualify for the Class III playoffs. Clarenceville finished 4-5 overall.

Linemens Bryan Washington, Ellis Hedges and Joe McFarland led the defensive pursuit and the Trojans failed to complete a pass in seven attempts.

"Our defense was all over them and played with a lot of intensity," Thurston coach Bob Small said. "We were a bit down because of the playoff situation but happy our defense was able to control the play."

Thurston led 28-0 at halftime.

The Eagles scored on their second possession, capping a four-play, 63-yard drive with Steve Davanzo's 2-yard touchdown run. Pete Quinn ran 21 yards and Davanzo 18 to set up the score. A two-point conversion pass from Brian Strickland to Dave Hired gave the Eagles an 8-0 lead.

After a short Clarenceville punt, Thurston went ahead 14-0 with Tom Durney's 40-yard run near the end of the first quarter.

Thurston recovered a fumble at the Clarenceville 18 and Durney scored on the next play. Quinn intercepted a Clarenceville pass at the Trojans' 33 and two plays later, Quinn scored from the 4. Thurston held a 28-0 lead at halftime.

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