

For many, shooting a trophy whitetail buck is the absolute pinnacle of their hunting career. While moose, elk and mule deer all sport bigger antlers, there

is just something about a big old whitetail buck that haunts hunters. I must admit to not having the most impressive collection of whitetail racks in my trophy room and for me, it's a combination of two factors. First, I haven't put the time in hunting deer that I need to if I expect to be successful. But, second, and likely more important is that I haven't concentrated my efforts in areas of the province that consistently produce trophy heads.

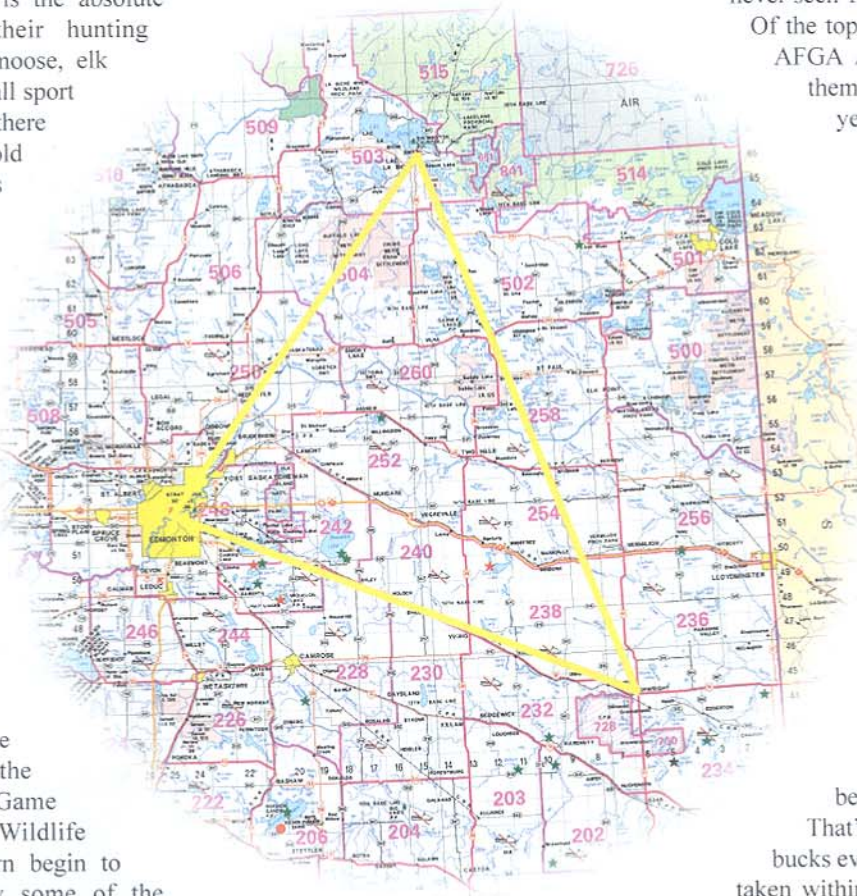
If you take the time to really study the trophy books, like Boone and Crockett and the Alberta Fish and Game Association's Alberta Wildlife Records, you'll see a pattern begin to emerge. While undoubtedly some of the success in these hot spots has to do with the number of hunters hunting a certain region, I think there is more to it. Certain areas of the



The Boland Buck

province just seem to have the perfect blend of cover and food, and genetics as well. If you are going to be a successful trophy whitetail hunter then of course you need to hone your skills and put the time in but, you may as well do it in an area that is known for producing monster bucks.

These trophy whitetail hot spots are not a case of the good old days either. A quick look through any of the trophy books is a good indication of just how good the hunting is



today. Whitetails are one of those species that can not only adapt well to human encroachment through agriculture and other industrial uses; they seem to thrive on it. In many areas where logging and gas and oil has opened up clearings in the heavy bush country,

whitetails are flourishing where they were never seen 10 years ago.

Of the top-10 typical whitetails listed in the AFGA Alberta Wildlife Records, six of them have been killed in the past 15 years. And of the top-10 non-typical whitetails, six of them were also killed in the past 15 years. When you do the math, 60% of the best whitetail deer ever taken in Alberta were killed in the past 15 years. Are you starting to see why now is a great time to be a trophy whitetail hunter? We did see a brief dip in trophy quality in the late '90s and early 2000 but this can easily be attributed to the brutal winters of 1996 and 1997 when the province's deer herds were devastated.

Archers have fared even better with an unbelievable 9 of the 10 top typical and non-typical whitetail archery kills being taken in the past 15 years.

That's right, 90% of the top archery bucks ever killed in this province have been taken within the past 15 years. This includes the incredible 192 inch Jim Hole buck and the almost unbelievable 199 5/8 buck taken by Don McGarvey in 1991. Another buck that definitely deserves mention here is the Wayne Zaft buck that was originally entered at 206 7/8, making it not only the Alberta record archery kill, but the world record archery kill.

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The Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and grizzly bears live in some of the most spectacular and rugged country on the planet.

Filmmaker Leon Lorenz journeys into the Alberta Rocky Mountains and captures rare and incredible footage of a sheep fight that lasts for hours.

The battle starts off with three rams against a very determined new comer to the band. The fighting of bighorns is one of the most exciting rituals in the mountains.

The mountain grizzly bears have only humans to fear as they roam the valleys and mountains that they call home. British Columbia has some of the best habitat for them and Leon has spent many years capturing close-up and seldom seen behaviors of these powerful and unpredictable animals that are born to be forever wild.

Grizzly bears have one of the lowest reproduction rates of any North American land animal and this is one of the leading reasons for their low numbers. They are a true symbol of the wilderness and their survival depends on how we humans will manage their population and care for the ecosystems.

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