



# Local Game Warden Vance Flowers Offers Tips



**Vance Flowers,**  
Texas Parks and Wildlife,  
Game Warden for Mills County  
325-203-1525.

## Call Before Spotlighting

Hunters doing night surveys or varmint shooting should contact the local sheriff's department at 325-648-2245 to notify the dispatcher of his or her intent. The call will be recorded in a log, which helps reduce misunderstandings about why people may be spotlighting at night, he said.

## Operation Game Thief

Help stop the illegal hunting and fishing in Texas. If you have information which will assist game wardens in apprehending persons who are violating the hunting and fishing regulations of this state, Operation Game Thief needs your help!

Call immediately! Dial toll-free, 1-800-792-GAME (4263), any time, day or night and provide the following information to the Texas Parks

and Wildlife police communications officer:

- the nature of the violation
- the location of the violation
- the name and/or description of the violator
- a description of any vehicle or boat involved in the violation
- any other important information which will assist in apprehending the violator

If you wish to remain anonymous, a code number will be assigned to you. You do not have to give your name if you do not want to. The more information you can provide at the earliest opportunity will increase the probability of arrest and conviction.

## Landowner Relations Count

Landowners who have deer leases are encouraged to post a copy of the lease documents at their camps or give a copy to the hunters using the land so the documents can be accessed quickly.

Lessors should make an effort to talk with neighbors in case a wounded deer jumps the fence. Always gain permission to follow a deer into a neighboring place BEFORE you follow it.

Lessors and landowners should also work with neighbors on hunting stand location, especially when placing a stand near a perimeter fence. NOTE: If your bullet crosses the fence, it is a criminal offense.

## Hunter Safety Certification Options

In addition to a hunting license, anyone born after Sept. 1, 1971, must successfully complete a hunter education training course or purchase a one-time deferral good for one license year in order to hunt legally in Texas. The certification is val-

id for life and is honored in all other states and provinces.

Hunters who need hunter education certification now have expanded contemporary options including a streamlined, one-day basic course and an option for anyone 17 years of age or older to take the hunting safety training completely online.

A combination online home study and 4 to 5 hour skills field day course is also offered. More information on hunter education certification is available online at [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/outdoor-learning/hunter-education](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/outdoor-learning/hunter-education).

## Local Game Donation Program

Hunters who take a deer and decide they do not want to keep the meat can donate the animal to the local Ministerial Association, which has a program to get the meat processed and to needy families locally. Hunters who wish to donate an animal are asked to field dress it before taking it to the Mills County Meat Co. or to contact the Game Warden to pick it up.

## 13 Inch Rule in Fourth Year

This marks the fourth year of the 13-inch antler restriction and each year has shown a decrease in the number of illegal bucks harvested. I think this has also improved the overall condition of the deer herds. Along with this antler restriction, please keep in mind that the doe population needs to be managed as well.

## Tags & Hunter Ed

Hunters may only hunt with their own tags. Hunters should keep their hunter education cards with them or have that status indicated on their licenses.

## Dove Rules

During dove season, hunters may NOT hunt from any vehicle (trucks, cars, UTVs, ATVs, etc.)

Hunting over placed bait (grain, rock salt, etc.) is NOT permitted.

The dove aggregate limit is 15 and the total possession limit is 45 for the 2016 season. Ring neck or Eurasian doves are not considered as part of that daily limit and in fact are not controlled by us since they are an exotic species of dove. There is no limit or a closed season on those.

## Turkeys Still on the Rise Here

A personal observation I have made is that in the spring of 2015 and 2016, there was a considerable increase in the local turkey population with much larger than average numbers seen and harvested.

## New This Year: Hunting Effective September 1, 2016

Longest dove seasons in all zones in over 80 years, an increase from 70 days to 90 days.

Season dates in North and South Duck Zones and West Goose Zones changed.

Potential additional areas added for mandatory Chronic Wasting Disease testing of hunter killed white-tailed deer and mule deer. For details see the CWD informational page.

"Special Late Antlerless and Spike-buck Season" replaced with a "Special Late Season" for antlerless deer and "unbranched antlered bucks."

Youth may harvest antlerless deer without a permit on U.S. Forest Service Lands during youth-only seasons.

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