

Cover Story:

“We spend time with ya..”

Wilson Whitetail: Working Woman Woods

BREYANA SEGURA

Nestled in the southeast corner of the county, on 1,100 acres of south Texas brush country, sits a meticulous whitetail outfit suited to accommodate both the seasoned and novice hunters.

After selling their ranch in Sabinal, Wilson Whitetail and Wing Shooting Ranch owners, Craig and Christin Wilson purchased the Frio County land 12 years ago.

The ranch was transformed into a haven for those who want to get away from it all but who still demand a level of comfort hitherto unheard of in the open country.

“It was a blank slate,” Caitlin Woods, hunting operations manager said. “All the improvements and buildings were done by the Wilsons.”

The Wilsons developed a plan that would bring an outdated piece of hunting

property into modern times, beginning with a lodge that would accommodate visitors and provide for their every need in recreation, cooking, outdoor gathering, entertainment, bed and bath, and above all relaxation.

Boasting a unique variety of south Texas brush, red sand and rolling hill terrain, the ranch ensures a quality hunting experience. Woods, who was originally hired in the sales and marketing department, offers a wealth of knowledge of not only the land and animals, but she makes it her top priority to ensure each hunter is catered too.

“We specialize in personalized hunts that are unique in the fact besides hunting a lot of business is completed out here.”

In addition to prime opportunities for harvesting whitetail, the ranch offers exotics, dove and quail. Just a short distance from the lodge, nestled under the mesquite, was a kudu. The large animal remain calmed enjoying the brisk air as to not be disturbed by the passerbys. Along with kudu the ranch is home to fallow, black buck, axis, sika, scimitar horned yourks, addax, gemsbok, and red stag.

Woods, who wears many hats at the outfit, has hit the ground running since the beginning of September when dove season opened.

“We are known for our dove hunts and have hosted almost a thousand hunters this year.”

Although the tropical weather caused white wings to leave the area sooner this season, the only non-inclusive hunt the ranch offers, managed to attract hunters from across the state.

Simply put, the ranch is home to South Texas white tail deer.

Last season a hunter bagged a buck

that scored a 260 on the Safari Club International (SCI) scale; each year the outfit harvests 15 to 20 bucks scoring anywhere from 140 to 220.

“We take a lot of pride in our white tail population,” Woods said as she pointed to the mounts carefully placed throughout the lodge.

“He shows up, does the hard work, he started this and did it right...”

The lodge, which sits on top of a glistening pond, features a large, open great room, a full-size commercial kitchen, a game room and beds to accommodate 14 is considered the hub of the ranch.

Hunters are treated like royalty at the lodge, as Caitlin and the Wilson’s make it their priority to

accommodate all needs of their guests. The trio will listen to stories, help sight in guns, go over safety protocols all before heading to the custom built blinds scattered across the 1,100 acres.

During prime hunting season, a few people who are knowledgeable with the ins-and-outs of the ranch and can help guide the hunts assist Caitlin.

The evenings are a time to share stories, enjoy appetizers and cocktails, followed by a dinner prepared by a professional chef.

Although dove season has ended, Caitlin has not slowed down one bit. The Panhandle native has been busy preparing for quail and white tail hunts.

“This year was a record year for quail; there are a lot of bob whites.”

Throughout the year, Caitlin maintains the white tail population by ensuring the feeders are full of protein, cottonseed, corn and the food plots are secure from unwanted guests.

“Craig loves

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Caitlin and her dogs, Bear and Christy.