HERD COMPOSITION DATA

Herd Composition data (often called incidental observations) may be the most valuable data collected on a deer herd. When properly collected, herd composition data can reflect the overall health of a herd and help guide the manager in making proper harvest recommendations.

Herd composition data should be collected between August 1 and September 15.
The fawns have become a part of the herd by this time, yet they are small enough to be easily distinguished from adult deer. Observations outside this period may result in inaccurate data. Observations may be collected any time during the day. However, the first and last hours of daylight are often the most productive.

All deer recorded must be viewed through binoculars or a spotting scope.
Small antlers are easily overlooked without optical aids. Fawns whose spots have started to fade are also hard to distinguish when they are observed alone. Be sure to look at the hips of deer that you think could possibly be fawns because the hips are the last place to lose spots.

Ideally, a minimum of 150 deer should be identified. If possible, a larger sample size is desirable to strengthen the data and increase the confidence in the harvest recommendations. Observations can be made during routine ranch operations or as a special effort. Observing the same deer recorded on a previous count is not a concern. If a conscientious effort is made to record accurate data, a small amount of duplicate recording should not affect the ratios. All deer should be recorded as a buck, doe, or fawn. Recording bucks according to number of antler points is also beneficial. The occurrence of inferior animals versus multi point animals can be used to measure progress in the quality of the deer herd over time.

Submit data **by September 15th** to: Robert Trudeau
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Wildlife Biologist- Bastrop/Caldwell Counties
901 Pecan Street
Bastrop, TX 78602
Robert.Trudeau@tpwd.texas.gov
512-332-7280, Office
512-581-7187, Fax

HERD COMPOSITION / INCIDENTAL OBSERVATIONS

Ranch Name: _____   Acres:_____   Year:_____

Observer: _____   County/WMA:_____

Date	2-3 Point Bucks	4-7 Point Bucks	8+ Point Bucks	Undetermined Bucks	Does	Fawns	Comments
8/5	II	IIII	I	III	IIII IIII III	IIII I	Example
Totals:							