

MDC to Host 49th Annual Antler Measurement Day

So you harvested a big buck deer last hunting seasons and wonder just how high the antlers would score if experts apply measurements to record book guidelines? Answers are at hand. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) will host its free 49th annual Antler Measurement Day 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Aug. 26, at the East Hills Mall, 3702 Frederick Ave., in St. Joseph, Mo.

MDC's Northwest Region staff organizes the event and conducts measurements to assist hunters. Some may simply be curious. Others may wish to submit scores to organizations that maintain state and national record books about large antlers from white-tailed deer. This event is for scoring deer antlers only, staff will not measure antlers or horns from other species. The measurements will provide hunters with scores and what honors they may qualify for by private organizations honoring large deer, including Boone & Crockett, Pope & Young, Long Hunter Society, and Show-Me Big Bucks.

"The record books are to honor the animal, not the hunter," said Conservation Agent Dave Carlisle, event organizer.

Deer antlers are scored using a variety of measurements combined in a formula. For example, scorers count or measure the number of tines, distance between tines, circumferences, inside spread between the main beams, and other factors.

Hunters bring the antlers or mounted deer head to the mall. They must check the animal in with MDC staff and then check them back out after the scoring. Staff will also score shed antlers that people have found, or antlers on a skull cap that have been found. An antler can be scored if only one shed antler from a pair is found.

"They will know exactly how the antler scored and what honors with what organization they might qualify for," Carlisle said. "They decide if they want to send the paper work in and submit their deer for consideration."

MDC will also have staff on hand to discuss hunter education classes and requirements. Conservation agents will be available to answer questions about upcoming hunting seasons and issues related to the state's deer herd. The public is invited to drop by the mall and observe the deer antlers being scored.

For more information, call the MDC Northwest Regional Office in St. Joseph at 816-271-3100. For information about white-tailed deer and deer hunting in Missouri, visit <http://mdc.mo.gov>.