

# TEXAS BIG GAME AWARDS (TBGA)

## PROGRAM RULES and How To Enter 2017-2018

### Program Sponsorship

The Texas Big Game Awards is co-sponsored by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas Wildlife Association (TWA).

### Program Goals

The Texas Big Game Awards is designed to promote big game hunting in Texas and to promote and encourage sound habitat and wildlife management. The program recognizes:

1. The importance of our hunting heritage.
2. The landowners who work to achieve healthy habitats.
3. The quality of big game animals in Texas.
4. The achievements of young and new hunters.
5. The hunters who harvest these animals.

### Program Regions

Eight geographic regions are recognized by the TBGA (see TBGA website for detailed map). All program entries will be recognized within the TBGA Region where the animal was harvested. Minimum scoring criteria for Scored Entries differ among program Regions.

### Program Eligibility

*(For all categories including First Big Game Harvest and Youth Division)*

- 1. Hunters.** Any hunter who has a valid state of Texas hunting license and lawfully harvests a white-tailed deer, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, javelina, or bighorn sheep in Texas during the current year's hunting season may be eligible for entry into the TBGA, contingent on additional entry requirements for each recognition category.
- 2. Animals**
  1. The animal must be native to the state of Texas.
  2. The animal must have been wild-raised.
  3. Animals that were born or bred in captivity and subsequently released into the wild are not eligible.
  4. The animal must not have been trapped and/or released at any time during its life, including approved university research study animals.
  5. The TBGA program will no longer accept "scored entries" from release sites for five (5) years following the last release date. This will affect all properties with pen-raised deer, Trap/Transport/Transplant deer (TTT), and Deer Management Permit (DMP) deer released after March 1, 2017.
  6. The animal must have been lawfully harvested in the state of Texas by a licensed hunter during the current year's hunting season.
  7. Minimum scoring criteria will apply for all scored entry categories.
- 3. Ranches**

Any ranch in the state of Texas is eligible for program recognition if an animal harvested on that ranch is entered into the Scored Entry category, First Harvest

category, or Youth Division. Ranch recognition is optional at the landowner's discretion.

**4. Low fenced and high fenced categories for white-tailed deer. There will not be a category for high-fenced mule deer. Explanations below:**

- a. **Low Fenced Category** – To be considered for this category, the animal(s) must be harvested from a property with no game-proof fencing.
- b. **High Fenced Category** – To be considered for this category, the animal(s) must be harvested from a property which is completely fenced with game-proof fencing, or the property has less than one-mile of non-game proof fencing, or less than one-mile with no fencing. If a high-fenced property has a section of property boundary which is low fenced, and would like to be awarded in the low fenced category, that decision will be made at the discretion of the TBGA Scoring Committee.

**Recognition Categories**

1. **Scored Entries:** All qualifying scored entries will be placed into one of five categories (listed below). All scored entries must meet minimum Regional scoring criteria (see Minimum Scoring Criteria, below). Selection of typical vs. non-typical category will be at the discretion of the hunter under the guidance of the certified TBGA scorer. Any entry that does not select which category they want to be entered in, the TBGA will make that decision at the program's discretion. A deer must have at least one abnormal tine (point) to be categorized as a non-typical.
  - a. Typical white-tailed deer
  - b. Non-typical white-tailed deer
  - c. Typical mule deer
  - d. Non-typical mule deer
  - e. Pronghorn antelope
  - f. Javelina
  - g. Desert Bighorn Sheep
2. **First Big Game Harvest:** Any hunter (regardless of age) who harvests his/her first lifetime big game animal (white-tailed deer, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, javelina, or bighorn sheep) in the State of Texas during the current year's hunting season is eligible for recognition. Any big game animal (subject to program eligibility: animals above), regardless of sex or score, is eligible. A hunter may receive a First Harvest Certificate only once during his/her lifetime. Eligibility examples: A hunter who has previously harvested a white-tailed deer in Texas and harvests their first mule deer, pronghorn antelope, or javelina this year is not eligible. A non-resident hunter who has previously harvested deer, pronghorn, or javelina in other states but takes their first Texas deer this year is eligible. Landowner recognition is also available.
3. **Youth Division:** Any youth hunter (under 17 years of age when they purchase their hunting license) hunting under the authority of a Youth Hunting License who lawfully harvests any white-tailed deer, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, javelina, or bighorn sheep (subject to Animal Eligibility, above) during the current year's hunting season is eligible. Any big game animal (subject to Program Eligibility: Animals, above), regardless of sex or score, is eligible. A maximum of one Youth Division certificate will be issued per hunter per year. Landowner recognition is also available.

### **Entry into Multiple Categories**

Any individual who has a qualifying scored entry and is also eligible for either the First Big Game Harvest category or Youth Division may receive certificates for both categories. Separate applications are required. An individual **may not** receive both a First Big Game Harvest certificate and a Youth Division Certificate during the same program year. Youth who enter the First Big Game Harvest division will not receive a Youth Division certificate during that program year.

### **NEW FOR 2017-18 Entry Forms \*\***

Entry forms for all categories are now a one-page form for all categories. Completed entry forms must be mailed to Texas Wildlife Association in San Antonio and must be postmarked **no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>** immediately following the close of the current year's hunting season. Xeroxed and/or faxed entry forms will be accepted on a case by case basis. Incomplete entries will not be accepted and will be returned to the hunter.

### **Scored Entry Forms\*\***

All Scored Entry Forms must include the following:

- 1) Hunter information (including hunter name, address, telephone, sex, age, and current Texas hunting license number) **must be complete.**
- 2) Harvest information (including date and time of harvest, and weapon type) **must be complete.**
- 3) Ranch information (including ranch name, county, ranch acreage, telephone number, high-fence status, and whether the property has a current, approved TPWD management plan in effect) **must be complete.**
- 4) **The form must be signed and dated by the applicant.** If the applicant is a minor, the application must also be signed by the applicant's parent or legal guardian.
- 5) The Scoresheet must be completed, in ink, by the official TBGA scorer who scored the animal.
- 6) The Scoresheet must be signed and dated by the official TBGA scorer.
- 7) If an entry is scored by an official Boone and Crockett (B&C) measurer who is not a TBGA scorer, we will accept an original, official Boone and Crockett scoresheet. The hunter may be asked to provide additional information needed by the TBGA program, which the hunter must complete and return to the TBGA prior to March 1<sup>st</sup> to be recognized.

### **All Scored Entries are Subject to Re-Score**

The top five entries in each category in each region will be subject to re-score and the entry must have been scored by an official Boone and Crockett (B&C) measurer, either initially or upon rescore. Scorers are encouraged **not** to submit application forms for the hunter but to rather encourage them to submit their applications as early as possible. The original cape must be provided upon request.

### **First Big Game Harvest and Youth Division Entry Forms**

All TBGA entry forms are now on one form per 2017. Entry forms are available on line at **[www.TexasBigGameAwards.org](http://www.TexasBigGameAwards.org)**, or from certified scorers, Game Wardens, Hunter Education instructors, TPWD offices, and the TWA office. All First Big Game Harvest and Youth Division Entry Forms must meet the following requirements:

- 1) Entry category must be indicated.
- 2) Hunter information (including hunter name, address, telephone, sex, age, and current Texas hunting license number) must be complete.
- 3) Harvest information (including date and time of harvest, species harvested, and weapon type) must be complete.

- 4) Ranch information (including ranch name, county, ranch acreage, and telephone number) must be complete.
- 5) The form must be signed and dated by the applicant. If the applicant is a minor, the application must also be signed by the applicant's parent or legal guardian.

### **Scoring**

- 1) All Scored Entries must be scored by a certified TBGA scorer or an official Boone and Crockett (B&C) measurer.
- 2) Scoring will follow all Boone and Crockett Club guidelines as published in the most recent edition of Measuring and Scoring North American Big Game Trophies, published by the Boone and Crockett Club.
- 3) The TBGA will utilize net green scores for Scored Entry category ranking criteria.
- 4) Animals in velvet may not be scored unless the velvet is removed prior to scoring.
- 5) Animals with split skulls may not be scored.
- 6) Antlers with broken tines may be measured to the point where the breakage occurred. Repaired antler material may not be measured. But if the hunter has the broken piece of antler material, and you as a scorer determine it fits the break, then the broken piece may be added into the score prior to the repair being made by a taxidermist.
- 7) "Shopping for Scores" is prohibited. If it is determined that an animal has been scored by more than one scorer, the entry will be removed from the program, at the discretion of the Scoring Committee.
- 8) All scored entries are subject to re-score.
- 9) Scorers are encouraged to inform hunters that the top five entries in each category in each region will be subject to re-score and the entry must have been scored by an official Boone and Crockett measurer, either initially or upon re-score. A list of official Boone and Crockett measurers can be found on the TBGA website.

### **Re-Scoring**

- 1) The TBGA Scoring Committee may choose to re-score any entry submitted to the TBGA.
- 2) The top 5 entries in each category and region shall be re-scored prior to the regional banquets.
- 3) **ALL TOP FIVE ENTRIES IN EACH CATEGORY MUST BE OFFICIALLY SCORED BY AN OFFICIAL B&C MEASURER**, either as an initial entry score or as a re-score.
- 4) The Regional Scoring Committee member may choose to waive re-scoring of any individual head (such as if scored originally by a Boone and Crockett measurer.)
- 5) Decisions to modify the original reported score for any re-scored animal shall rest entirely with the Scoring Committee and are final.
- 6) Refusal by a hunter to allow re-scoring shall be grounds for removal from the TBGA.
- 7) A hunter may petition the Scoring Committee, in writing, if he/she feels that the original score is incorrect. This petition must be received by the Scoring Committee no later than April 1 immediately following the current year's hunting season.
- 8) All Texas Slam awardees animals must be re-scored prior to the statewide awards ceremony.

## Minimum Scoring Criteria

The following regional minimum scores are established for entry into Scored Categories.

### White-Tailed Deer

White-tailed Deer Region	Typical	Non-typical
1. Trans Pecos	125	140
2. Panhandle	130	145
3. Cross Timbers	130	145
4. Edwards Plateau	130	145
5. Post Oak Savannah	125	140
6. Pineywoods	125	140
7. Coastal Prairies	125	140
8. South Texas	140	155

### Mule Deer

Mule Deer Region	Typical	Non-typical
1. Trans Pecos	145	160
2. Panhandle	145	160

### Pronghorn Antelope

Pronghorn Region	Minimum score
1. Trans Pecos	70
2. Panhandle	70
3. Cross Timbers	70

### Javelina

Javelina Region	Minimum score
1. Statewide	13 4/16"

### Javelina Scored Entry Category

- 1) Score will be based upon cleaned skull width and length; similar to B & C standards for cats and bear. To facilitate the entry process, entries will be accepted until March 1<sup>st</sup> the following hunting season for animals harvested during the entry year; this will allow for skulls to be cleaned prior to scoring and entry into the Javelina category. For example, the Javelina scoring season will be March 2<sup>nd</sup> through March 1<sup>st</sup> of the following season.

### Recognition, Awards, and Ceremonies

- 1) An Awards Ceremony will be held to honor program participants. These awards ceremonies will be coordinated by the Texas Wildlife Association. Scorers may access this information through the TBGA website.  
[www.TexasBigGameAwards.org](http://www.TexasBigGameAwards.org).
- 2) TBGA offers a college scholarship program (Freshmen-Juniors) annually. Further information on this program may be accessed via the TBGA website.

- 3) All program participants will be recognized at an awards ceremony where they will receive a certificate acknowledging their entry. Participants who are unable to attend the ceremony will be mailed their certificate.
- 4) The top three Scored Entries in each region and category will receive a special gift.
- 5) A Statewide Ceremony will be coordinated by TWA in conjunction with the TWA Annual Convention. The top three animals statewide, in each fenced category, will be recognized and receive awards at the Statewide Ceremony.
- 6) A limited number of listings of the annual program entries will be published via the TBGA website.
- 7) No awards of monetary value will be given.

