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**SCHOOL EDUCATES ON SAFE AND CORRECT DEER HUNTING**

*Tuscaloosa, Ala.* – As the countdown to deer hunting season begins, many find themselves struggling to mesh a desire to hunt with access to proper knowledge and equipment.

In Alabama, there are distinct nuances in whitetail deer hunting which may vary from those in other areas of the United States. For example, stalking and tracking deer may work well in New York or Pennsylvania, while still-hunting along wildlife travel corridors, or along a quality wildlife food plot, are the most effective way to harvest a quality buck in the Southeast.

“For deer hunters, it is important to have experience, and an educated idea of where to hunt and how to plan a deer hunting strategy”, said Kevin McKinstry, certified wildlife biologist for The Westervelt Company.

“Many people today are intimidated to just join a hunting club, where trying to learn effective hunting techniques and secrets can be secondary to the overall goals of the other club members,” he said.

This gap in service has lead Westervelt Lodge in Aliceville, Alabama, to develop a Deer Hunting School December 5-7, 2008 to add to its existing curriculum of educational efforts. Safety and responsible harvesting practices are of paramount importance to the deer hunting program, and McKinstry believes more hunters are eager to learn while they hunt.

(more)

“Whether it’s having access to guns, or going out with a professional guide to learn more about technique and practices, or meeting people who can help them develop their local hunting network, hunters can benefit from participation in this educational program,” McKinstry said.

There are other benefits to education as well.

“Deer hunting is often used to entertain clients or friends, and many will decline invitations because they are unsure of what to do,” he said. “Attending the school provides comprehensive exposure to practices and helps demystify expectations.”

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