

00;00;10;15 - 00;00;33;22

Dana

Welcome back to the Extension Experience podcast. I'm Dana Zook. This week I am joined by Dr. Duane Elmore, professor, Wildlife Extension Specialist and Bollenbach chair in wildlife Biology at Oklahoma State University's Department of Resource Ecology and Management. It's a long title. Dr. Elmore focuses revolve around wild Turkey northern Bob White, scaled quail. Is that how we say that?

00;00;33;22 - 00;00;41;04

Dana

I had not heard of that before and the greater prairie chicken. So you said that that's your research most of your research focus.

00;00;41;05 - 00;00;43;01

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yes mostly the game birds for research.

00;00;43;11 - 00;01;04;06

Dana

But we know Duane as our wildlife extension specialist, so he gets to do lots and lots of different stuff. You also focus on invasive plants, nuisance animals, which we'll hear from Duane in a few weeks on that. Fires as a management tool and many other wildlife species such as deer. Can I assume that that's a big topic in Oklahoma?

00;01;04;06 - 00;01;13;20

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

That's what a lot of people call about. They want to know how to manage white tailed deer, sometimes to have more of them, sometimes to have less of them, you know, especially if they're having crop issues.

00;01;13;21 - 00;01;19;24

Dana

Right, Right. So both sides of the story. Right. Okay. So thank you for allowing me to come to your office.

00;01;20;02 - 00;01;20;24

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Thanks for being here.

00;01;20;28 - 00;01;27;16

Dana

Tell us a little bit about your background and what brought you to Oklahoma State because you're not a native to Oklahoma?

00;01;27;16 - 00;01;48;23

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

No, I grew up in Tennessee and went to three different land grants. So I've been land grant system a long time. Something really important to me, the University of Tennessee, Mississippi State University, and then eventually Utah State University and Oklahoma was very appealing to me because growing up in the East but spent a lot of time in the West, it's the great crossroads of the country.

00;01;48;28 - 00;02;01;12

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Okay? A lot of different peoples and and plants and animals kind of converge in this center of the continent. And so I love it. I mean, where else can you have alligators and bighorn sheep in the same state?

00;02;01;13 - 00;02;04;01

Dana

Right. Right. How many alligators actually are here?

00;02;04;08 - 00;02;04;22

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Just a couple.

00;02;04;22 - 00;02;07;07

Dana

Just a few. Down in the southeast.

00;02;08;00 - 00;02;09;12

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Most. Mostly McCurtain County.

00;02;09;13 - 00;02;16;02

Dana

That's wild. I know. People told me that. And I kind of thought that they were kind of pulling my leg, but But it's for real.

00;02;16;03 - 00;02;17;19

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

We live in a very diverse state.

00;02;17;19 - 00;02;24;17

Dana

Yeah, I coming from Nebraska, I kind of feel like it's just it's not the Midwest, It's not the South, its not the west

00;02;24;26 - 00;02;25;20

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

It's a Great Plains.

00;02;25;20 - 00;02;35;10

Dana

Yeah, it's wild. So I was going to ask you, how how is it from a wildlife perspective? So, you know, how does Oklahoma stand out? And so you kind of answer that.

00;02;35;10 - 00;02;45;19

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yeah, a lot of diversity here, not just in the species that occur here all year, but a lot of birds passed through Oklahoma. You know, that's happening, right? You know, right.

00;02;45;19 - 00;02;45;27

Dana

Now.

00;02;46;01 - 00;02;48;20

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

In the spring, lots of things are coming back, going head north.

00;02;48;29 - 00;02;58;04

Dana

Right. I've been to Utah. That's quite a bit different from Oklahoma. Lots of public lands, right? Yeah. And so what did you do your research on there?

00;02;59;00 - 00;03;24;13

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

I worked on primarily Utah Prairie Dog, which is very controversial species. Right. There's a lot of damage to ag producers and it's on the threatened. It's threatened under the ESA. So yeah, you can imagine there's a lot of conflict and controversy about that. But it was good training for what I do now. You know, dealing with different diverse stakeholders with different ideas and different coming from different backgrounds and yeah.

00;03;24;17 - 00;03;43;23

Dana

Cool, cool. I've been there a couple of times just as far as taking in all the sights and stuff like that. It's really cool, very unique. So let's dive right in. We're going to focus on deer management and some people may think, Well, deer, that's kind of a strange topic, you know, in the spring.

00;03;43;23 - 00;04;02;16

Dana

But I think, you know, this is a year long kind of management system. I would assume What I want to talk about is what land owners and hunters can do. Now to prepare for the off season to make hunting a more, more fruitful type situation for people. But before we get into it, I want to put a disclaimer out there.

00;04;02;16 - 00;04;19;10

Dana

I personally shot and harvested one deer in my life about 15 years ago while I was in college. I haven't hunted since then. Besides deer also being a ruminant animal, I That's all I know about deer. Very little. So just so the listeners know that.

00;04;19;10 - 00;04;20;27

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Im Glad that, you know, they are a ruminant.

00;04;20;27 - 00;04;21;26

Dana

They are. Yeah.

00;04;22;00 - 00;04;54;18

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

You know, one of the big differences between white tailed deer and cattle, for example, is cattle are, you know, what we call roughage feeders. They take in huge volumes of very low quality, generally speaking, low quality food. Right. Grasses. Yeah. Rarely deer do not eat grass to any great extent. The exception to that is in the winter when food availability is really, really long and they're hitting your wheat fields right time of year, they are eating grass, but the bulk of the time they're eating highly high quality but limited amounts of forage.

00;04;54;18 - 00;05;05;20

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So they're they're they're a selective, what we call a concentrate selective feeder. And that has really important implications, implications about when you think about deer foods and how you manage the landscape for deer.

00;05;05;21 - 00;05;11;10

Dana

Okay, so kind of is it similar? So I think of goats as kind of browsers a little bit like that.

00;05;11;10 - 00;05;20;02

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

A lot of overlap between the diet of goat and white tailed deer and very little overlap between the diet of white tailed deer and cattle.

00;05;20;03 - 00;05;26;23

Dana

Okay, Yeah, I could think. I just think of kind of the structure of those two animals, like the mouth structure.

00;05;26;24 - 00;05;27;08

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Exactly.

00;05;27;08 - 00;05;31;00

Dana

And so that's what I would think of why they do that. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

00;05;31;00 - 00;05;40;05

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Deer have, you know, like a prehensile tongue, Right. And very small mouthparts so that they can take just those choice parts of the plant.

00;05;40;10 - 00;05;58;04

Dana

Yeah. Cattle are not so good about that. No, they just, they try to select but it's more volume there. Okay. So I just wanted to let people know I don't know a lot, but it's so interesting to me. This is a big part of our economy, you know, in Oklahoma. Yeah. So let's first talk about generally improving the habitat for deer.

00;05;58;10 - 00;06;17;12

Dana

Okay? If we're thinking about this time of year, let's just start out by talking about the amount of acres and and kind of how we should think about that. If I have an acreage outside of Stillwater, is that good for. That's probably not good for hunting, obviously, but you can view a lot of wildlife doing that. But from you know, there's there's a big range.

00;06;17;12 - 00;06;18;16

Dana

So talk a little bit about that.

00;06;18;16 - 00;06;36;10

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yeah, well, I mean, deer have pretty big home ranges and it's it's variable depending on the quality of the habitat, you know, and the time of the year, certain times of the year, they may mostly just be spending the bulk of their time on ten or 20 acres. Other times of the year. They might be ranging several miles, especially during the breeding season.

00;06;36;10 - 00;06;57;19

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So it varies seasonally. It varies with habitat quality. But most landowners don't own or control enough land to fully encapsulate a deer home range and certainly not population of animals. That doesn't mean

that you can't have good hunting on 20 acres. You can, but you're relying on your neighbors, right, to be providing a lot of the habitat. Yeah.

00;06;57;19 - 00;07;18;06

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So from a hunting standpoint, small acreages can be really productive. But if you're really thinking about managing deer, the bigger the better. And certainly if you have less than 1000 acres, there are a lot of limitations from a management standpoint. That doesn't mean you shouldn't manage for deer, but you have to have realistic expectations about what you can actually control.

00;07;18;14 - 00;07;39;22

Dana

Well, that's a really good point. So even just all other kinds of wildlife, probably that applies that too as well. I mean, of course, quail may not be as wide ranging or anything like that, but you've got to have some expectations about how much, how many you can see or hunt exactly in that area. Tell us a little bit about the species.

00;07;39;22 - 00;07;47;23

Dana

So the plant species that you kind of want to develop, some things that are naturally growing in your land area for deer.

00;07;48;01 - 00;08;11;29

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So as I mentioned, grasses are pretty minor component of deer diet, you know, with the exception of kind of late winter. And that has a lot to do with just the lack of other foods. Most of the year, what deer are looking for are. Forbes These are herbaceous broadleaf plants. So think ragweed, croton, sunflower. It can be exotic, cultivated plants like alfalfa or soybeans.

00;08;12;03 - 00;08;39;09

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Those are all what we call Forbes. They're non grasses and they're non woodies. That's the bulk of their diet, about 70 or 80%. And then in the wintertime, they do use a lot of vines and a low growing woody



plant so they can browse the tips off of things like dogwood or redbud, and they eat a lot of vine things like poison ivy, grape vines, oak, greenbrier, all those things.

00;08;39;09 - 00;08;40;26

Dana

Oh, those are some of the things that are bad.

00;08;41;09 - 00;09;07;02

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yeah. I mean, they love vines. So this is this should automatically be queing a landowner up to think about their spraying activities because those are plants that are often sprayed, especially in ag dominated landscapes. And so you know what you do with your herbicide program throughout the summer has huge implications to the amount of deer that you can actually carry on your property across the year.

00;09;07;07 - 00;09;11;15

Dana

Okay. So I'm hearing a variety, a definite variety of plant species.

00;09;11;15 - 00;09;26;17

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yes, they have a broad, broad diet, but it's generally plants that are high in protein. Okay. And things like Greenbrier is a great example. You know, it has 25 to 30% crude protein all through the winter. Yeah, that is a highly valuable plant, too. A white tailed deer.

00;09;26;23 - 00;09;40;04

Dana

Right. Okay. So I've read and I think you've been on sun up talking about trees for deer, not only the type of tree, but maybe cutting trees in a way to develop more habitat. Tell us a little bit about that.

00;09;40;04 - 00;09;43;09

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And you notice I didn't mention acorns as a food source.

00;09;43;09 - 00;09;43;22

Dana

Okay?

00;09;44;17 - 00;09;49;06

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

They do relish acorns when they're available. The problem is they're almost never available.

00;09;49;06 - 00;09;49;19

Dana

Okay.

00;09;49;19 - 00;10;07;21

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

They're they're only really available a couple of months, a year and some years. We have amassed crop failures, Right? In some years, in some places, there aren't any acorns, period. So during the brief time when people were out hunting, yeah, deer keyed in on acorns. And that's a good place to hang a deer stand for most of the year.

00;10;07;21 - 00;10;29;13

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

It's an irrelevant food source. And in fact, those trees are shading out understory vegetation that deer ate the other ten months of the year. Okay, So we're not talking about eliminating all your trees, but if you can selectively remove some trees in a forest to let sunlight hit the forest floor, you can dramatically increase the amount of food in the carrying capacity for deer.

00;10;29;22 - 00;10;37;05

Dana

Okay. So talk about this dreaded eastern red cedar that we have, not the dreaded by everybody, but do deer like it?

00;10;37;26 - 00;11;11;08

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

But they will use it for bedding. Okay. But they'll use almost anything for bedding cover. I would certainly not save Red Cedar for that purpose because deer will bed in switchgrass. They'll bed in sumac thickets, they'll bed in Greenbrier thickets. Any dense cover works. And some of that dense cover also provides foods. I'd much rather have a thicket of green brier that deer can browse and hide, and then a patch of eastern red cedar, which provides absolutely zero food value, and it's shading out any other potential vegetation.

00;11;11;13 - 00;11;20;17

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So as a general rule, red cedar is poor for white tailed deer and for a lot of other wildlife species that people are trying to manage for.

00;11;20;24 - 00;11;42;29

Dana

Right. We just I mentioned that just because it is such a huge management issue. Yeah. And they spread so badly, but that is a good future topic. Okay, so there's a good resource, white tailed deer habitat evaluation and management guide. That's that's kind of good to evaluate kind of what what your property offers to deer is.

00;11;43;06 - 00;11;56;17

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And what the limiting factors are. You can go through there and score your property and identify, Oh, I'm deficient in bedding cover or I'm deficient in food resources during the summer. And that can help the landowner decide what management actions to take.

00;11;56;24 - 00;12;17;28

Dana

Okay. And so we'll have a link to that fact sheet in the show notes. So if anybody's interested in that, so a lot of people will own land solely for the use of hunting, but a lot of people also own it and manage it with cattle. So let's talk about that, blending those two enterprises and how cattle can complement a deer enterprise.

00;12;18;03 - 00;12;48;04

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yeah, the two worked together really well because as I mentioned earlier, deer and cattle don't have a lot of diet overlap. The only time where they start to really overlap is if stocking is really high in cattle and cattle being forced to consume, you know, plants, they might not always go for. And then of course in the late winter, if someone has their livestock on a wheat field at the time of year where or deer food availability is low, there might be some conflict during that period.

00;12;48;07 - 00;13;19;13

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

For the most of the year. If you have cattle stocked appropriately, moderate stocking rates, you're not going to have a lot of conflict. In fact, having some cattle grazing in a grass dominated pasture actually can increase deer food availability because it creates canopy gaps in the grass where you might get some forms. Okay, So you might actually, depending on the stocking rate, you might actually increase food availability for white tailed deer under moderate stocking density.

00;13;19;16 - 00;13;34;27

Dana

Okay. And so so just from the cattle thing, what if we're hay? Okay, I know of kind of a time in the year where we should not, hay, maybe a meadow or a native grass field if we're thinking about that. What what's the guidelines as far as that goes?

00;13;35;00 - 00;13;48;19

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So if it's a native pasture, we generally recommend folks look at the first week or two of July as the period the hay, you know, the general recommendation is not to hay native pastures more than once.

00;13;48;23 - 00;13;49;13

Dana

Right

00;13;49;13 - 00;14;13;19

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And the if you wait till July, you're kind of optimizing forage, quality and quantity. If you do it earlier, you don't have a lot of quantity. If you do it later, the quality starts to decline and it works out pretty good for wildlife to wait till that first or second week of July, because at that period most deer fawns are up mobile so they can escape.

00;14;13;19 - 00;14;31;27

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yeah, most, you know, a lot of ground nesting birds have completed their clutch so those birds can escape the equipment. So you're not going to have as much direct impact by waiting till July versus in June. You know, if you've ever hayed in June, you've hit deer fawns, run on over rabbit nests.

00;14;31;28 - 00;14;32;14

Dana

Oh, my goodness.

00;14;32;14 - 00;14;56;26

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yes. It's just inevitable. And from a native grass standpoint, it's not the optimum time either. If you're talking about like, you know, Bermuda pastures where you might be able to get multiple hay hops a year, it's going to be much harder to avoid wildlife. However, Bermuda, for most wildlife is not good habitat, so we don't typically don't see deer fawning.

00;14;57;08 - 00;14;59;14

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

They don't they're not dropping fawns in Bermuda pasture.

00;14;59;14 - 00;15;03;06

Dana

Well, and it's shorter and there's not a lot of places to hide that sort of thing. So there's.

00;15;03;06 - 00;15;06;19

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Not as much direct impact in a Bermuda pasture or fescue pasture, for that matter.

00;15;06;19 - 00;15;26;14

Dana

Well you're speaking my language from cattle kind of nutrition, like we want quality and quantity kind of balance there. And so I agree. Best time. So let's get good if we're going to if we're going to hay at all native grass, I think there's better ways to harvest native grass and haying. But if we do that, let's, let's balance all the good things, Right?

00;15;26;16 - 00;15;36;02

Dana

Okay. So great, great topics there. Anything that I left out, Duane, that you can think of as managing Habitat now going forward?

00;15;36;02 - 00;15;57;14

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Well, I would just say it can be really daunting for somebody to start managing white tailed deer on their property. And there's a lot of folks out there that can help them. So, you know, they can call me, they can call Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation. There's a lot of private land biologists that would be happy to assist. So don't feel like you have to go on on your own.

00;15;57;23 - 00;16;17;28

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And the final thing, there's kind of three components of deer management, and we've really talked more about nutrition, which is an important one, right? There's also managing age, which would be through harvest. Yeah, and that's a really broad topic, but, but that matters. And then there's genetics, right? And that's the one that we really don't have control over.

00;16;17;28 - 00;16;30;03

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

In an open population where deer all over the landscape, you know, that's the one that landowners have little to no control over. And so really need to focus on the age of the animal through harvest and the nutrition.

00;16;30;12 - 00;16;44;10

Dana

Yeah. So okay, so, so jumping into that, let's talk about that from a person that doesn't know much about it, I assume that we're trying to develop a larger deer, you know, maybe hopefully with a larger antlers.

00;16;44;13 - 00;16;45;13

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

That's what most people want.

00;16;45;13 - 00;17;06;08

Dana

Okay. That's all you want. Okay. And then attracting them. So since we maybe we don't have a huge land area, so we're wanting to attract them to come through our property or that sort of thing. So what are some things we can do? And I'm thinking food plots and thinking feeders maybe. I mean, what are some of those things that we get to attract them to come through?

00;17;06;23 - 00;17;15;18

Dana

I don't know if we're training them or whatever, attracting them to our property to concentrate to come during that fall. So we're move through the summer now or, you know, maybe late summer.

00;17;16;05 - 00;17;22;22

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Food plots certainly can concentrate on this on a per acre basis. It's a costly.

00;17;22;22 - 00;17;23;06

Dana

Practice.

00;17;23;07 - 00;17;48;08

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Okay. Much more costly than saying don't prescribe fire. But if you're in my own 50 acres, you're pretty limited. What you can do. I mean, you should still try to improve the habitat for deer, but but having a one acre two acre food plot will attract animals. It will definitely concentrated. So if your primary goal is to make it easier to see and harvest deer food plots certainly work as can feeders.

00;17;48;19 - 00;17;55;13

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Now there are some drawbacks. Cost is a big one, right? They're expensive. Often were drought and it's hard to grow food plots.

00;17;55;14 - 00;18;01;05

Dana

You fail because you're because you're planting in like August, right. Or it depends on where you went. Okay, yeah, we.

00;18;01;05 - 00;18;02;03

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Can do spring or.

00;18;02;03 - 00;18;03;04

Dana

Fall. Okay. Okay. Yeah.

00;18;03;09 - 00;18;26;05



Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And feeders, one of the drawbacks to them there are some expense, but one of the potential issues is disease issues, especially like with Aflatoxins. And that's a real concern, and particularly with wild Turkey. So if you also care about Wild Turkey, right, you need to think about the grain. You're using the quality grain and keeping it dry, all those things.

00;18;26;05 - 00;18;45;29

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And we have a fact sheet on this. If anybody wants to read about reducing aflatoxin risk. And so those are some things to consider. There's tradeoffs, but there's no doubt that feeders and food plots do attract wildlife. Okay. Now, are you going to put enough of them out on the landscape that you actually increase the size of a deer's antlers?

00;18;46;26 - 00;19;06;22

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

In theory, you could do that. Okay. Practice. Very seldom is that happening. They mostly just attracting animals if you want larger antlered Deer. Okay. You need to think about nutrition across the entire spectrum of the deer's life. Okay? You also have to let that buck age a little bit.

00;19;07;03 - 00;19;15;11

Dana

Right? So we're getting to age. So talk a little bit about that age and the selective hunting. Is that what we're. Yeah, referring to those types of things.

00;19;15;11 - 00;19;48;22

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And I'm not saying that you have to care about large antler deer. Some people just want to harvest deer right for the freezer. And so if that's your goal, then, you know, you don't need to wait till an animal's four and a half and five and a half years old. But if you want to shoot a buck that has a large, large antlers and is close to its potential of what it could be in its life, you know, you've got to let those animals age and, you know, they start reaching, you know, kind of close to their maximum once they're four and a half and older, somewhere between four and a half and maybe seven, eight half year.

00;19;49;12 - 00;20;10;08

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So that's that's an older deer. And, you know, if someone is harvesting all of the bucks at age two, they're just not going to see those those larger antler deer, you know, or maybe just occasionally one will slip through. Yeah. And you have we talked about being realistic about, you know, what you have in your resources.

00;20;10;17 - 00;20;30;10

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

If you have 50 acres and you're not controlling what's going on in that deer life because it's spending a lot of time off your property. Right. Your neighbors, if they're not on board, if they're not on the same plan as you, then it's going to be really hard for you to consistently see and harvest older bucks. They're not kind of on the same game plan as you.

00;20;30;10 - 00;20;39;15

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

So that's something to think about is to talk to your neighbors. And if you can get in deer Cooperative that you can okay, Well, operatively, yes, that's going to help a lot.

00;20;39;17 - 00;20;56;13

Dana

That's what my husband said this morning when we were discussing this. He said something about, well, you could manage a deer for a couple of years and see the same thing, same one over and over again. And then your neighbor shoots it when it is in its prime time, which I think happens a lot. And is reality of the situation.

00;20;56;27 - 00;21;11;19

Dana

And that's part of hunting, I guess, right, If you have a small land area. But I think that that's so interesting. I read that work through that fact sheet this morning and said 90% of the potential by the time they're five, four and a half, five years of age.

00;21;11;25 - 00;21;35;08

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

I mean, it becomes a diminishing returns at some point, you know. Yeah. The difference between six and seven year old deer is much smaller typically, then the difference from a two and a three year. Okay. I mean, they're you know, their antler size is growing by leaps and bounds during those first few years. And then it becomes kind of small gains and eventually at some point, you know, dependent on the deer.

00;21;35;08 - 00;21;45;19

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

But probably around eight, 19 years old, they start declining if they. Right. If they've been lucky to survive that long, which very few do survive to that age. Yeah, that's.

00;21;45;19 - 00;22;01;04

Dana

Rare that I would I would think so. Okay. So that's is just me being naive. So I just think it's very fascinating that the deer lose their antlers every year and then grow them back. Yeah. Bigger you know, until they get their mature size.

00;22;01;08 - 00;22;01;16

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yeah.

00;22;02;04 - 00;22;05;12

Dana

That's just so interesting isn't it just wild. Okay.

00;22;05;12 - 00;22;26;11

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

It's the fastest growing animal tissues in the world. I mean, it's really remarkable. I mean, if you watch, like, a time lapse of a deer in captivity over the summer, I mean, you can almost see the antler growth. Remarkable how quickly it grows. And you can imagine their nutritional needs during that time are huge.

00;22;26;12 - 00;22;27;13

Dana

I would think so, yeah.

00;22;27;13 - 00;22;51;17

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

That is the most nutritionally demanding time in a bucks life is when it's growing Antlers. If you're planting a food plot, thats something to think about. Like how much food does an animal does this animal have during May and June when it's growing these antlers and similar with those that are lactating? Okay fawns often to fawns at once. Their nutritional demand is huge during May and June when they're having to nurse these phones.

00;22;51;21 - 00;22;58;28

Dana

Yeah. So we say for cattle it's like double triple the amount of energy during lactation. So I would say it was a similar I mean.

00;22;58;28 - 00;23;00;29

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

They're they almost eat constantly.

00;23;01;01 - 00;23;01;12

Dana

I would.

00;23;01;12 - 00;23;03;15

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Say can't hardly consume enough. Yeah.

00;23;03;15 - 00;23;03;25

Dana

I think.

00;23;04;05 - 00;23;04;16

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

00;23;04;16 - 00;23;09;08

Dana

I think of deer as a small animal and then if she has two babies like that's yeah, I would think that.

00;23;09;09 - 00;23;10;03

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Sometimes three.

00;23;10;04 - 00;23;12;26

Dana

Sometimes three. Now how often does that happen.

00;23;12;27 - 00;23;13;11

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

It's rare.

00;23;13;17 - 00;23;13;28

Dana

Okay.

00;23;13;28 - 00;23;30;24

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yeah. And some of it, a lot of it is nutrition. Like if you if you see a lot, you know, animals that have two and three, they're they're they had a lot more food resources typically. And there's some genetic relationship. Right. But a lot of that is nutrition.

00;23;30;28 - 00;23;40;11

Dana

Okay. And that's what you say. It's more about the nutrition for larger any larger deer. You know more about the nutrition than genetics. Yeah.

00;23;40;11 - 00;23;48;14

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

And as far as the antlers go, nutrition and age. Okay. And genetics is I'm not saying genetics doesn't matter.

00;23;48;14 - 00;23;48;26

Dana

Right.

00;23;48;26 - 00;23;58;27

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

But we just can't really control it very well in an open population, let's say open population, I mean, deer that have free access to the landscape. Now if you put them in captivity.

00;23;59;08 - 00;23;59;19

Dana

Okay.

00;24;00;02 - 00;24;14;02

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

You can control genetics. Yeah, but I mean think about like a cattle herd closed hard versus I mean, if you just let your your cattle mix across the landscape. Right. Would any livestock producer worry about their genetic line?

00;24;14;02 - 00;24;15;15

Dana

You have no control. Yeah.

00;24;15;15 - 00;24;39;07

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

No control. Well that's what most people are dealing with. So. So idea of culling animals or selectively harvesting to favor certain genetic characteristics. Even if we were naive enough to think that we can see that see those genetic characteristics, we we really don't have much control over it. Right. So it's not something that the average landowner should be focused on, the focus on age and the animal nutrition that that animals getting.

00;24;39;13 - 00;24;44;02

Dana

Okay, very good. Such good information. Dwayne, any any final thoughts?

00;24;44;15 - 00;24;44;24

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Oh.

00;24;45;03 - 00;24;46;18

Dana

00;24;46;18 - 00;24;55;05

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

It's just a big thing. Yeah, there's a lot I'd say just, you know, take baby steps and, you know, connect with somebody, a resource professional that can help you meet your goals on your property.

00;24;55;08 - 00;25;07;25

Dana

I would think some of our extension educators probably are interested, equally interested in the wildlife portion, at least I know several of them. And so they'd be helpful in getting contact with you or kind of a go between

00;25;07;25 - 00;25;14;18

Dr. Dwayne Elmore

Yes, especially if you know, if you're thinking about food plots and you need soil samples and things. So yes. Yes. Reach out to your county extension educator.

00;25;14;25 - 00;25;34;19

Dana

Thank you, Duane, for letting me come and talk to you about this and understanding my lack of knowledge for deer and right questions. Yeah. Thank you, listeners. I hope you've enjoyed this segment. All the links that we've talked about today and in quite a few more fact sheets will have listed in the show notes. Thank you for joining us and we hope you join us in the next couple of weeks.