

Outdoor Recreation

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Outdoor Education

'Tis the Season - Shed Antler Hunting Season

Reading Shed Antlers

Shed antler hunting across the west has become very popular, mostly because their value has increased over the years. They can range anywhere from \$2 per pound for chalk white sheds to \$16 per pound for brown elk sheds. Shed antlers are used for many things from dog chews to knife handles, but did you know that a shed antler can tell you a lot about the animal's health and habitat?

There's a quick way to look at a shed antler and tell whether the buck that dropped it was in good health back in the fall during the rut. No, it's not mass. It's not tine length or count. And it's not beam length, color or character. New science from the University of Nebraska at Kearney (UNK) is teaching us more about sheds as a window into deer and habitat health, especially at the point where the shed was once attached to a buck's skull.

"This science involved one of my favorite annual activities – shed hunting," said Lindsay Thomas Jr., with the Quality Deer Management Association. Someone had to collect a lot of shed antlers for this study, and science hasn't discovered a better way to do it than a good pair of hiking boots or a shed-hunting dog.

Brian Peterson, a researcher at UNK and one of the co-authors of the new study, is also an avid deer hunter, so this part of the research was not drudgery to him.

For more information on this study, check out [this article](https://www.qdma.com/how-to-read-shed-antlers-for-health-and-habitat-clues/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2020-03-26) from Quality Deer Management: https://www.qdma.com/how-to-read-shed-antlers-for-health-and-habitat-clues/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=2020-03-26



How to Read Shed Antlers
for Health and Habitat Clues



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