Habitat is where it’s at!

Green River hunter Waleon Strange harvested this mountain goat from hunt area 2. Strange also drew a Wyoming bison license. Mountain goat licenses are a once-in-a-lifetime license in Wyoming. Waleon was thrilled with his good fortune and hunting success this fall. Congratulations, Waleon!
All Green River personnel are busy with hunting seasons in one way or another; especially game check stations. Green River Wildlife Management Coordinator Mark Zornes (left) and Green River Wildlife Supervisor Todd Graham (right in photo to the left) check in a mountain goat from Green River hunter Waleon Strange. In addition to mountain goats, GR personnel often check in black bears, mountain lions and big-horn sheep at the office.

A new mobile app makes collecting big game harvest and Chronic Wasting Disease data much quicker. Green River personnel are using the new app as part of a statewide effort to make data collection more efficient and easier. Fort Bridger Wildlife Biologist Jeff Short is seen in the left, center photo using the new app checking in a pronghorn antelope from the Evanston area. The deer seasons were shorter and had an antler point restriction across southwest Wyoming due to severe winter conditions from the 2016/2017 winter. Deer hunters were still able to find success, including a first deer for Bailey Bettinson (below) and a nice buck for one Utah hunter. (below, left)
Baggs Wildlife Biologist Sam Stephens checked in what he referred to as a “pretty unique buck” in hunt area 57. The lucky hunter's name is Brent Arrant and the horns measured 24" wide. Mountain View Game Warden Allen Deru snapped some cell phone photos of successful pronghorn antelope hunters in his district and a couple of moose taking a walk. (Photos below)
GR Wildlife Biologist Patrick Burke received a call that a doe deer had some decorative fencing around her neck that was impeding her movements and cutting into her hide. Burke was able to dart the deer, while GR Wildlife Supervisor Todd Graham and GR Wildlife Management Coordinator Mark Zornes removed the fencing. Burke administered the reversal drug and waited until the doe could walk again.
Baggs Game Warden Kim Olson took this photo of the aspen trees changing color in Aspen Alley. Olson also reminds hunters that there is a new walk-in hunting area in Carbon County. Olson is pleased that people are parking in the designated parking areas (photo below center) and following access area rules. Carbon County #2 Walk-in Area is open 9/01 to 12/31 and offers access to 2405 acres to hunt big game, sage grouse, dove and rabbits. All vehicles must park in designated areas. For more information go to the Wyoming Game and Fish Website and click on the Public Access Tab. https://wgfd.wyo.gov/Public-Access/Walk-In-Hunting/Carbon-County/Carbon-County-Walk-In-Area-2

Olson also spotted a sage grouse drinking from a puddle.

Green River Game Warden Levi Wood received a report of an elk that appeared injured. The cow elk was just fine and Wood was able to photograph her as he rolled up. Wood also checked deer hunters, including these happy deer hunters below.
Wyoming Game and Fish Department Green River Game Warden Gary Boyd is seeking information to solve two elk poaching cases that occurred in Elk Hunt Area 31, Little Mountain, between October 4 and October 6.

“The first elk discovered was a cow that was shot and left on the east side of Little Mountain, south of Rock Springs,” Boyd said. “The cow elk had a GPS collar on it and was collared as part of the D.E.E.R Project going on in the area.” Warden Boyd believes whoever shot this elk may have been scared they did something wrong when they saw the collar. Shooting a collared animal is not illegal, but it is a wildlife violation to leave any game animal to waste.

Game and Fish asks that if you harvest a radio collared animal try to remove the collar intact. Radio collars are expensive and hold important data on that animal’s movements. Cutting the band can damage electronic components and the collar must then be repaired before it can be put on another animal. Once the collar is removed Game and Fish requests that the person in possession of the collar call and arrange its return to any Game and Fish Regional Office or Game and Fish employee.

“The second elk poached was a six-point bull elk shot and left on the west side of Little Mountain,” Boyd said. “The bull was field dressed, but the head and antlers were left attached. It appears the hunter tried to drag the bull out of the area, but gave up, and left the whole animal to waste.”

Hunters have a legal responsibility to properly field dress and care for the animal they harvest. As part of their hunt, hunters should be prepared to remove the edible portions, regardless of where it was harvested.

Anyone with information on this wildlife violation may call the Stop Poaching Hotline at 1-877-WGFD-TIP (1-877-943-3847). Tips may be reported online at wgfd.wyo.gov, directly to game warden Gary Boyd at 307-875-3325, or by calling the Green River Game and Fish Office at 1-307-875-3223. Poaching information may also be texted; text keyword WGFD a message to TIP411 (847-411). Callers can remain anonymous and may be eligible for a cash reward if the information leads to a conviction.

Evanston Game Warden Nick Roberts said hunting violations, hunter numbers and harvest were down in his district. Roberts did respond to a spotlighting report on the Bear River Divide HMA and contacted a Utah couple who were spotlighting for deer while in possession of an AR style rifle and a pistol. Both were cited for illegal spotlighting.

GR Wildlife Management Coordinator Mark Zornes and GR Habitat Biologist Kevin Spence place a GPS collar on an elk on Little Mountain, as part of the DEER Project-Deer Elk Ecology Research. Ridge Spence is the little boy supervising!
GR Information and Education Specialist Lucy Wold taught a hunter education class with the help from GR Aquatic Habitat Biologist Kevin Spence (top photo), GR Fisheries Biologists Troy Laughlin (photo, second from top) and John Walrath (photo, third from top), and Lincoln Middle School teacher Malcolm Robb (bottom). The students attend the Wyoming Hunter Education Course as a regular class offering at the school. Students come to the GR Region Office to participate in the firearms proficiency exam.
GR Information and Education Specialist Lucy Wold and Conservation Education Coordinator Ashley Andersen conducted a Project WILD workshop for 21 education students at the University of Wyoming. Their professors Kate Muir Welsh and Karen Cloud added the WILD workshop for their students so they could learn about some of the conservation education curriculum available for K-12 education and also practice some teaching methods. Students had a great time learning about nature via Project WILD activities and we are pretty sure the facilitators, Lucy and Ashley, had a great time, too!

If you are an educator, formal or nonformal, and you would like to attend a Project WILD workshop for PTSB and or STARS Credits please contact Lucy at: 1-307-875-3225, extension 18607.
Workers with G&F Spawning Crew are spawning kokanee at Sheep Creek and they also installed a fish trap on the Henrys Fork. The kokanee spawning operation is an effort to help bolster the Gorge kokanee population and to establish additional spawning runs in other waters across the state. Thank you Kristopher Holmes for taking the spawning photos!

If you find yourself fishing on Flaming Gorge Reservoir or the Green River, remember there are special regulations that apply to kokanee and general fishing. All kokanee caught from Sept. 10 through Nov. 30 on Flaming Gorge Reservoir must be released to the water immediately. Fishing on the Green River from the Fontenelle Dam downstream (one mile) to the USGS Gauge Station (Cable Crossing) is CLOSED Oct. 1 through Dec. 31.

Green River Fisheries Supervisor Robert Keith says fishing from shore has really picked up because of the cooler water temperatures. Keith says there are plenty of lake trout “pups” to catch and encourages anglers to keep the smaller lake trout to help in management of the Gorge trophy lake trout population. Make sure you pick up a free copy of the 2017 Wyoming Fishing Regulations so you know what limitations apply for Area 4 waters.

Adam Leiferman from the G&F Fish Culture Section planted 400 fall rainbow trout from Speas Hatchery into the Kemmerer City Pond. The fish eggs originated from Boulder Fish Hatchery brood stock. The fish were feisty when they arrived and local resident Art Playle stopped by to give Adam a hand. (below)
The intelligent raccoon is a medium to large furbearing species that is listed as a "predacious mammal" in Wyoming, and no license is required for harvest. In states east of Wyoming, this species is considered one of the most important furbearers, with significant numbers harvested on an annual basis.

Raccoons are native only to the eastern edge of Wyoming, and have expanded their range across the state, following agriculture and other human activities. Historically, they were likely found only in the counties bordering the states of Nebraska and South Dakota. The famous Brule Lakota warrior, tribal leader and statesman Spotted Tail (Sinte Gleska), was probably named for this species.

Raccoons are extremely abundant in suitable habitats across Wyoming, especially wooded riparian habitats, farms, and ranches. Equipped with their own bandit's mask, raccoons can often be a nuisance to producers of poultry, those that store unsecured livestock feed, and can be devastating to some crops.

Raccoons, who are remotely related to bears, have two closer relatives in North America; the "strangely assembled" coati mundi of the southwest and tropics, and the small, agile ringtail, also from the southwest.

Raccoons are a medium-sized mammal, with large males exceeding 50-60 pounds in the wild; females are typically much smaller at less than 20 pounds. Pet male raccoons can exceed 80 pounds!

Raccoons give birth to a litter of 2-6 pups or kits in late spring or early summer, and wean young in the fall.

A true omnivore, raccoons basically eat anything that won't eat them first. They are famous for "washing their food" prior to consumption if water is handy. Favorites are any kind of meat, fresh or otherwise, frogs, crayfish, mussels and clams, fruits, grains, and other vegetation. Raccoons are occasionally eaten by coyotes, foxes, mountain lions, and man (the meat is very similar to bear meat).