

2013 Youth Hunter Award-Female Chloe Slayter

On December 14, 2013 I was drawn for the Bayou Cocodrie WMA Youth Hunt. My Dad and Brother were hunting at Buckhorn WMA on a youth hunt as well and I was escorted to the Bayou Cocodrie Youth Hunt with my Uncle Billy Porche. I was excited to go to the youth hunt because of the success I have had while hunting on youth hunts. I was fortunate enough last year killing a buck at Red River WMA and being selected the female youth hunter of the year. I always get excited when I am lucky enough to be selected for a youth hunt that we put in for every year.

I spent the night with my Uncle Billy and woke up at 3 a.m. to have enough time to get ready and drive to Bayou Cocodrie WMA. We left his house at 3:30 and saw several deer on the way to the hunt. We both were excited that we were already seeing deer and hoped to see a deer after getting in the stand. We arrived at the headquarters where we would draw for our stands after a short meeting on safety while hunting. I drew stand six for the morning hunt and was brought to the stand by a biologist who works at the Management Area. We hunted in a ground blind that looked over a long shooting lane that had been cut in a field that had been planted with oak trees. It was a cold and rainy morning and the fog was so thick that you could barely see down the lane. We sat and I was very tired and even fell asleep at one point during the morning hunt. The wind picked up and was blowing straight into our face and made it even colder as the morning went on. We sat until 9 a.m. and our guide came back and picked us up and brought us back to our vehicle for lunch. We were told to be back to draw for different stands at 2 p.m. after eating lunch.

After eating lunch we went back to the headquarters and met as a group again to draw for the evening hunt. I drew stand two and was so excited because this is my favorite number. It has been my number when playing softball and my favorite number all my life. I looked to my Uncle Billy and told him "it's on" because of drawing stand two. He laughed and said "I hope so" as we got another escort to stand two. We started hunting at 2:30 p.m. and the wind was blowing so hard it would blow our hats off sometime. It was blowing in our face and I told my Uncle Billy that was a good thing because the deer couldn't smell us. My Uncle Billy told me that we probably wouldn't see anything because the wind was blowing so hard they probably wouldn't move. I told him that they would move because we were in my lucky stand. At 4:20 p.m. I looked down the lane and saw a deer coming out of the thicket. My Uncle Billy said "look at that big deer" and I said "give me the gun". I put the gun out the window and he was walking straight towards us as I cocked it back. He turned broad side and started walking back into the thicket as my Uncle said "shoot him". I pulled the trigger and he jumped straight up in the air. My Uncle asked me if I hit it and I told him "I think so". I told him that I usually gut shoot everything I shoot at and he started laughing.

We sat in the stand for five minutes or so and walked down to where we thought the deer was standing and could not find any blood. My Uncle said that we should walk a little farther and look some more and we did walk about ten more yards where there was blood everywhere. We both got excited and began walking through the briar's and thicket following the blood trail. My Uncle could not see the blood like I could and we hadn't waked very far off the shooting lane when I saw the deer lying on the ground in front of us. I told my Uncle "there it is" and he could not see it. I showed him where it was and he walked up and said "oh my goodness what a big buck". He drug it out to the shooting lane and started taking pictures of it with me. It was an eleven point that has a 17 5/8 inside spread and weighed 210lbs. when it was weighed.

I learned that when you shoot an animal that you should always mark where it was standing and

if you do not find where it was standing that you should always look a little farther than what you realize. I am so thankful to my Uncle for taking the time to take me on this youth hunt and giving me the chance to kill this buck. I am also thankful to all the people who work to put on these youth hunts for the kids of Louisiana and giving them the opportunities to kill deer. I do know that a lot of hard work goes into these hunts and am very appreciative of these hunts that are provided to me.