

Axis Deer Tissue Collection



To better understand the ecology of free-ranging axis deer in the Texas Hill Country, wildlife researchers from the Department of Natural Resources Management at Texas Tech University are seeking tissue samples from harvested free-ranging axis deer. Tissue samples will be used to isolate DNA from the individual which in turn will be used to assess the genetic diversity of axis deer in Texas. Information gathered on the genetic diversity of axis deer will be used to assess population structure, inbreeding potential, and potential susceptibility of disease. Additionally, leftover samples will remain in storage at the Natural

Sciences Research Laboratory at the Museum of Texas Tech University for any future research on axis deer.

Specifically, researchers are seeking a piece of skin at least $\frac{3}{4}$ inch x $\frac{3}{4}$ inch. This can come from anywhere on the hide. In circumstances where the hunter intends to preserve the hide for mounting or tanning, samples can be collected from a part that will be discarded (i.e. lower leg). The location that is often easiest and fastest to collect is from the ear. Either a piece of, or the entire ear can be collected. In circumstances where knives are being used to dress multiple animals (axis or other species) without cleaning in between, please collect a larger sample to provide an area in the center that is free of cross-contamination.

Individual samples should then be **frozen** in a Ziploc bag labeled with county, date of harvest, and the deer's sex (Sharpie markers work best for marking ziplocs). Arrangements can be made to deposit the samples with TPWD biologist Joyce Moore (Contact #830-285-0872 or joyce.moore@tpwd.texas.gov) or ship directly to Texas Tech University by contacting the researcher, **Matt Buchholz**, Ph.D. student in the Department of Natural Management at [715-204-8680](tel:715-204-8680) or matthew.buchholz@ttu.edu. Thank you for your assistance with this research.