

BARN BUCKS



QDMA members Robert Kopp and his wife Maggie always seemed to jump three or four nice bucks every time they approached an old, abandoned barn on their 426-acre Ohio property. But they never suspected the deer were actually running *out of the barn* until they took a closer look last summer.

“I always thought they were just bedded in the tall grass behind the barn,” said Robert. “But when I finally looked inside the old barn, I found deer tracks and deer droppings. There was also a skeleton of a buck that went in there and died a long time ago.”

Robert said the interior of the barn is dark and cool in the summer, and numerous gaps in the boards allow a breeze to move through.

“We set up the camera and immediately noticed that this buck was spending a significant amount of his daytime in that barn based on the time and date stamp on the pictures,” said Maggie.

Robert and Maggie also captured photos of a doe and fawn entering the old barn. There are two entrances on opposite sides of the barn leading to separate sections, both used by deer. It appears the doe and fawn prefer one side while bucks use the other side, Robert said. Use of the barn by deer appears to be limited to the hot summer months.

“They’re in there up until September, then they don’t use it anymore,” said Robert.

Robert and Maggie bought the farm, located in Muskingum County, Ohio, in 2003 for their own deer hunting. In 2007 they started offering a limited number of outfitter hunts on the farm to help cover the cost of habitat improvements, food plots and deer management (You can see more of their trail-camera photos at www.robertsohiowhitetails.com).

“Quality Deer Management has worked phenomenally,” Robert said. “We are photographing so many more bucks now compared to when we first bought the land in 2003. Four years in a row I’ve shot a Pope & Young buck, and this past year we had a 160-inch 10-pointer on the farm.”

