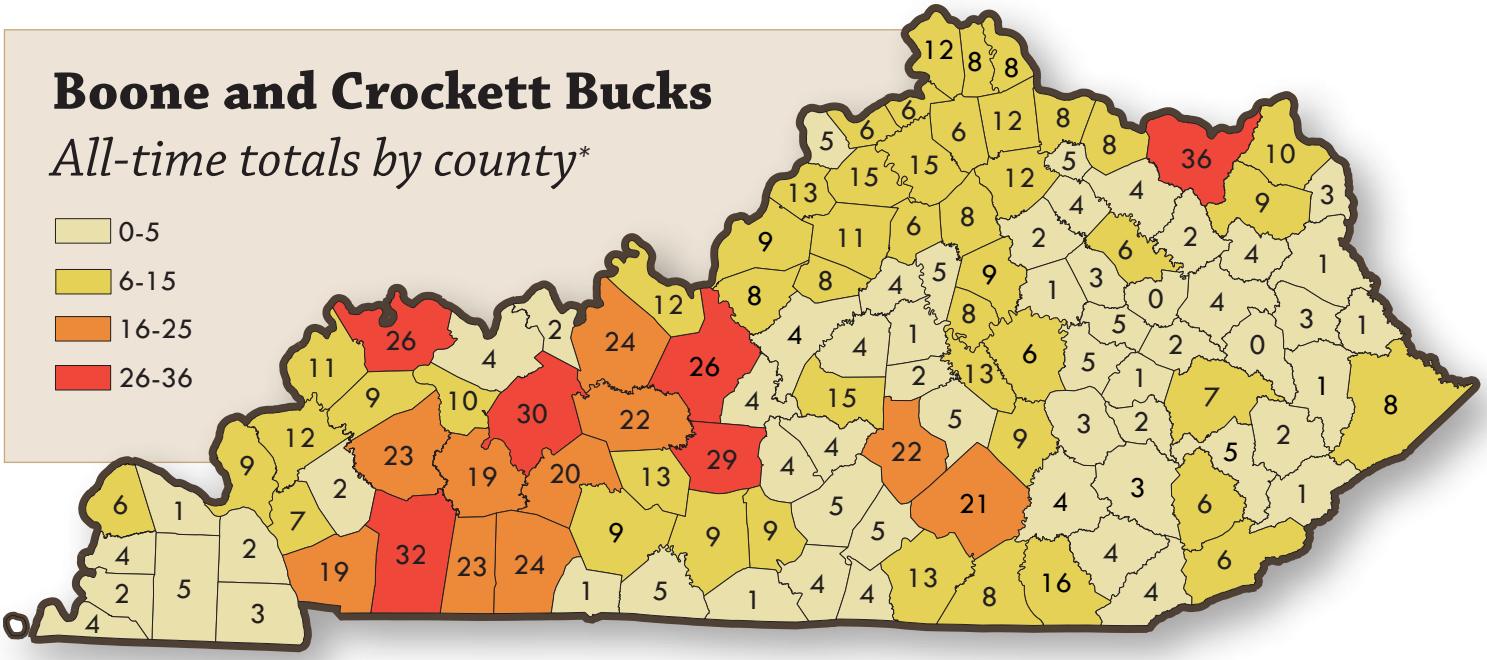
Only two counties lack a Boone and Crockett buck • By Kevin Kelly



*Not all measured deer appear in B&C record book.

Trophy State

THE 2013-14 DEER season in Kentucky set another overall harvest record and saw hunters take a number of trophy-class whitetails.

The Kentucky Hunting and Trapping Guide annually features a list of big bucks harvested the previous season that met qualifications for entry into the Boone and Crockett Club's record books. Forty-one of Kentucky's counties are represented in the 34 typical and 20 non-typical whitetails that landed on the list in this year's guide.

"We're getting them from all regions of the state," said David Yancy, deer biologist for the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources.

Lewis and Casey counties led the way during the 2013-14 deer season with each yielding three trophy-class bucks each.

Represented on the list for the first time were Lee and Monroe counties. Only Menifee and Magoffin counties – both located in Zone 4 – lack a Boone and Crockett-class buck, according to records maintained by Kentucky Fish and Wildlife.

"There could've been one taken (in those counties) and it wasn't measured," Yancy said. "It could also be that it's harder to get antler size there because it's more rugged, although we've harvested them in every other eastern Kentucky county. It may be that it's so rugged and forested that it's harder to connect with deer there because it's harder to pattern than it is in farm country. I think it's probably a whole bunch of things."

Kentucky ranks fifth behind Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa and Minnesota for Boone and Crockett Club bucks since 1830, and with 432 entries trails only Wisconsin and Illinois over the past decade, according to "Boone and Crockett Club's Complete Guide to Hunting Whitetails."

The volume of trophy-class bucks and their distribution across the state speaks to successful herd management practices.

"We've had record harvests the past two years," said Gabe Jenkins, wildlife biologist for Kentucky Fish and Wildlife's deer and elk program. "That's definitely reflective of a good herd that's stable to slightly increasing."

Kentucky Fish and Wildlife has made it easier to find places to hunt through a new web tool at *fw.ky.gov* that allows users to search wildlife management areas and public lands by county. To access it from the department's homepage, click on the "Wildlife" tab, choose "Wildlife Management Areas" from the dropdown menu and click "Public Lands Search." Search results are displayed in map or list view, and each property has its own page that includes helpful information such as directions, maps and area hunting regulations.

For more information about the 2014-15 deer season, be sure to check out the Kentucky Hunting and Trapping Guide. It's available online and wherever licenses are sold. ■