



All the members of the Cumberland County 4-H Wildlife Habitat Judging teams, back row, from left, John Creek, Robert Glennon, and Leanne Haycock. Second row, from left, Jackle Noss, Matthew Creek, and Eric Noss. First row, from left, Morgan Creed and David Isaacs.

Cumberland 4-H Wildlife Habitat Judging Team Takes State Honors

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NEWBURG (Cumberland Co.) — The members of the Cumberland County 4-H Wildlife Habitat Judging Team really know nature. They have proven their talents twice now in statewide judging events.

If the rules were different, two of the team's members, Leanne Haycock and Bob Glennon, would get a chance to demonstrate their talents in a nationwide competition also.

The team members showed their stuff when they successfully defended their state champion title during the statewide judging contest that was held at Penn State's Rock Springs Farm.

The team, whose members are Haycock, Glennon, John Creek and Jason Mowery, who are all from Shippensburg Area School District, won that championship for the second time with a score of 280 points out of a possible 300.

On top of that, Glennon was the first place individual with 84 of a possible 90 points. Haycock was fourth and Mowery was seventh in the senior division while John Creek was second his brother, Matthew, was third in the junior division.

However, because they went to the national judging competition at a national park in Eufaula, Ala., last year, Haycock and Glennon are not eligible to go to the nationals again this year.

Jason Mowery may get to go to the nationals in Utah, however, because he is the first alternate for the four-person Pennsylvania team. The nationals are scheduled for this month.

Robert Glennon, the team's coach, said the national contest can be very challenging because the competitors have to become familiar with the types of wildlife that live in the state where that judging will be held.

"If Bob and Leanne were eligible to go to Utah it would have been quite a challenge because the

wildlife habitat is much different than it was at states," Robert Glennon said.

The habitat judging contests are comprised of five parts.

First, the youths must recognize wildlife foods and indicate which animal species eat each food item. They must indicate the habitat management practices that are appropriate for certain species on that particular piece of land.

They must judge habitat for given species by looking at aerial photographs as well. After that, they must work as a team to develop plans for a rural and an urban situation.

They must make their recommendations based on information they are given about the landowners' goals for certain species and constraints such as land use restrictions or limited funds available for the project.

Finally, the team must walk the property assigned to them, develop a written management plan, draw plan maps, and defend their plan orally.

All that takes a lot of preparation.

Robert Glennon said his team begins practicing its skills each January and continues working right up to the time of the state contest in May. Local state game lands and farms are used as practice sites, he said.

Although habitat judging is demanding, it is not the only 4-H activity that occupies the time of the team members, Coach Glennon said.

They have all been members of other 4-H programs, such as livestock, cooking and sewing clubs, and found that they were ready for a new kind of challenge, he said.



The state champions of the 4-H Wildlife Habitat competition are, from left, John Creek, Robert Glennon, and Leanne Haycock.

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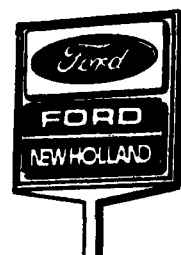
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