

The Bandera PROPHECY

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The View From Dry Creek Hill

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I was coming home from the grocery store today and had to wait while a herd of Axis moseyed across the driveway. They have been hanging out in shade in the dry creek bed you see in the theme photo for this column, and they are getting comfortable with our comings and goings. We always have Whitetail at the water tubs we keep filled, but it's been a few years since we saw this many Axis.

I suppose the hot, dry weather is drawing the Axis to the shade in the draw and to the water tubs. I know they're making good use of the water because I have to fill the tubs in the morning and evening now. When it was just the Whitetail I only needed to do an evening fill. I could sometimes get away with skipping a day. Now the popular tub is getting drained twice a day and the other tub is getting a lot of use.

I can tell an Axis from a Whitetail and a buck from a doe, but I'll be darned if I can tell one individual deer from another. They seem to keep each other straight, though, at least as far as I can tell. But we have managed to name one of this season's Whitetail fawns and keep him (or her?) identifiable as we watch her (or him?) grow.

Zipper and Mom show up every evening about the same time and always have another doe with them. She may be just a friend or she may be Grandma, I suppose. She looks older than Mom, but I'm not an expert deer ager. I'm more of a beer ager, and I try not to let it get too old. I've been doing pretty well at that job this summer, just like the Axis and Whitetail have been doing a good job on their libation of choice.

Despite the pandemic hoopla, doom predictions, and social-political food fights going on, it looks like a pretty normal Texas Hill Country

August up here on Dry Creek Hill. The grass and trees want rain, the Axis and Whitetail want water, and I want to sip a cool one and enjoy the day. I'll be working on my deer identification skills while I ponder it all. I hope the deer don't start wearing masks.