

Middleton's monster 17-point is #1 Non-Typical

Marcus Middleton of Panama City, Fla. took the state's #1 non-typical buck (17-point) during the 2008-09 hunting season, using a bow while hunting on private land in Bay County in the Northwest Zone during archery season.

by Marcus Middleton
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On the next to last day of the 2008 archery season I went to my stand at 3 p.m. to sit for the rest of the afternoon. What happened next took me totally by surprise.

Like most hunters, I sat there thinking about the monster buck that I would love to see just walk in. I was imagining how when he did walk in, I would make that perfect shot, of course, after which he would only run a few yards, stop and stand for a few seconds before falling over in a heap within sight of my stand.

But, as each of you already know, most of the time things just don't happen like you want (or dream they will).

After an hour-and-a-half of watching and listening to squirrels and birds I heard something coming my way straight in front of me. It was a doe, so I said to myself, "Well, let's just see what she does."

Then I heard more leaves crunching, and in walked two spotted fawns. One tried to nurse on its mom, while the other just stood there with her ears sticking straight up and looking around.

Finally, after about 10 minutes, they walked back out the same way they had come. About 15 minutes later the same doe and fawns came back in, but this time they didn't stop. They came just past my stand to the left and got behind me about 10 yards to the left (my 7 o'clock) and stopped.

The doe started holding her nose up, making me pretty sure she was winding me, before she looked back in the direction they had come. I followed her cue and looked in that direction also

– and there he stood!

Only 10 yards in front of me and facing to my left, posing for a perfect broadside shot!

The only problem was that I was sitting down, and my bow was hanging on a tree limb.

I immediately started thinking, "Awwww, man! If I move he's gonna pick up on me and bolt!"

I ever-so-slowly reached up with my left hand and gently lifted my bow off of the limb. Then – moving in ultra-slow motion – I somehow managed to stand up without him hearing or seeing me. I couldn't believe it!

Now, here came that long draw-back every bow hunter has to go through at least once in his hunting career. Then the awful wait for the two steps the buck needed to make to give me a clear shot.

He finally made those two steps, and I triggered my release! My arrow made a clean pass through on his left shoulder, and the run was on!

The woods were so thick that I lost sight of him immediately, and all I could do was lean out over my stand and carefully listen.

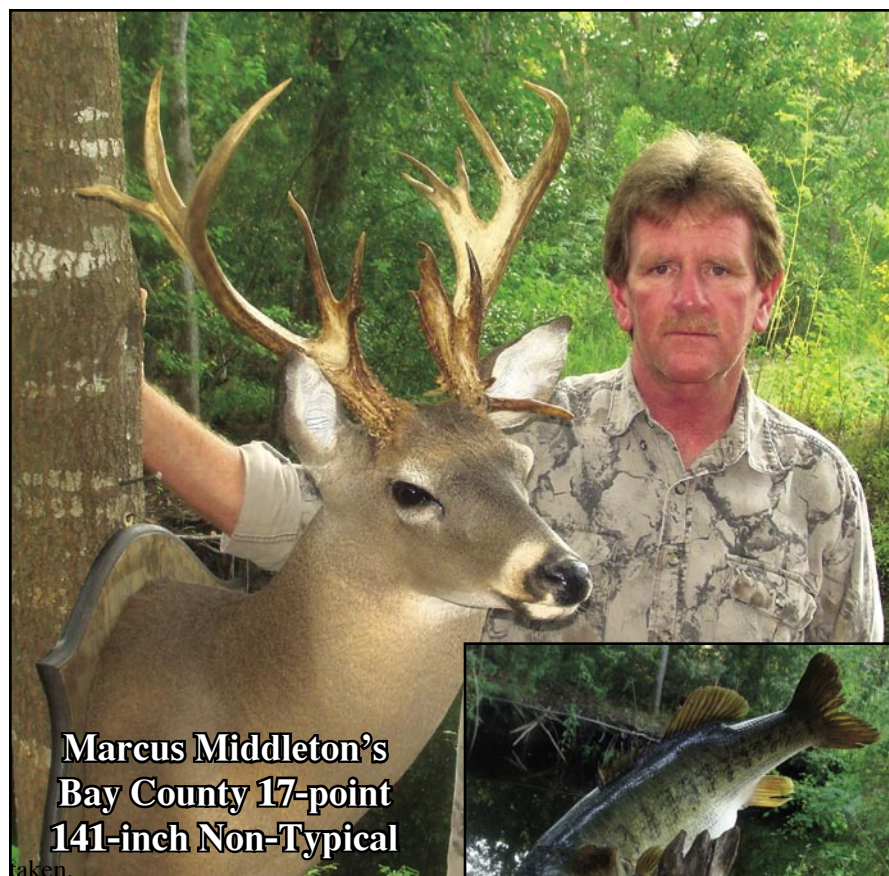
I eventually heard him crash way off in the distance, and I sat there for 25-30 minutes before climbing down and retrieving my arrow. Then I started looking for blood down on my hands and knees, finding a few small specks to the left and right of his tracks. I followed the trail for about 80 yards before coming to an area where deer tracks veered off in several different directions and could find no blood.

I began sweeping back and forth from left to right and finally found blood again about 40 yards away, where the trail picked up again. Here it was thick – almost like someone was dumping it out by the bucket. My search lasted 150 yards and three hours, but I finally recovered the biggest buck I have ever



2008-09 #1 Non-Typical Marcus Middleton Rack Stats		
Length of	Right Antler	Left Antler
Main Beam	19-7/8	19-3/8
1st Point	3-5/8	4-2/8
2nd Point	6-6/8	6-3/8
3rd Point	6-3/8	5-5/8
Abnormal Pts.	5-2/8	3-5/8
	3-3/8	4-3/8
		1-7/8
		1-2/8
		1-6/8
		2-4/8
		2-5/8
Number Points	6	11
Tip-to-Tip Spread	10-5/8	
Greatest Spread	18	
Inside Spread	15-1/8	
Total Abnormal Points	26-5/8	
Gross Score	143-6/8	
Deductions	2-6/8	
Net Score	152-3/8	

MARCUS MIDDLETON OF PANAMA CITY took the state's #1 non-typical – this unique 17-point – while bow hunting on private land in Bay County during the 2008 archery season. (See page 35).



I was so happy I just sat there in the dark woods for about 15 minutes with his head in my lap. I finally got him out of the woods, arrived home and had him dressed down in the cooler by 1 a.m.

It was the best hunt I've ever had, and the only one I've actually ever completed from start to finish all by myself!

The buck had 6 points on the right antler (including 2 abnormal) and a total of 11 on the left (including 7 abnormal

points). The total length of the abnormal points added up to 26-5/8 inches! The rack had a 15-1/8-inch spread credit (inside measurement) and only 2-6/8 inches in deductions as a non-typical.

The buck gross scored 143-6/8 inches and netted 141 as a non-typical.