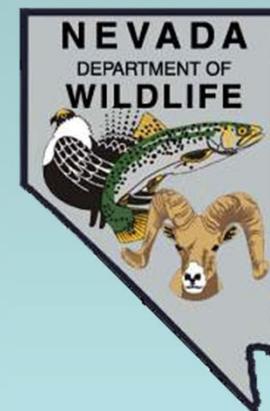


NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE'S
BIGHORN EWE, YEARLING RAM,
AND RAM LAMB IDENTIFICATION
PRESENTATION



Goal of Nevada's Bighorn Ewe Hunts

- Remove adult ewes
- Keep the herd size within the habitat's carrying capacity (water availability and forage)
- Reduce the risk of disease events with lower density of animals
- Manage sustainable bighorn sheep herds

Purpose of this Presentation

- Help tag holders have a successful hunt
- Teach bighorn hunters to recognize the differences between ewes, yearling rams, and ram lambs
 - Horn size and shape
 - Physiological differences between ewes and rams
- Test your knowledge through a series of “quiz” slides at the end of the presentation

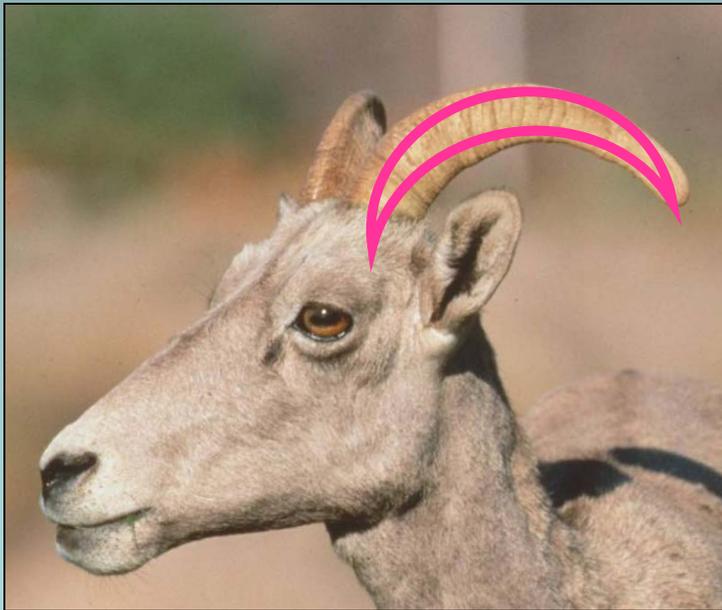
What's a Bighorn Ewe?



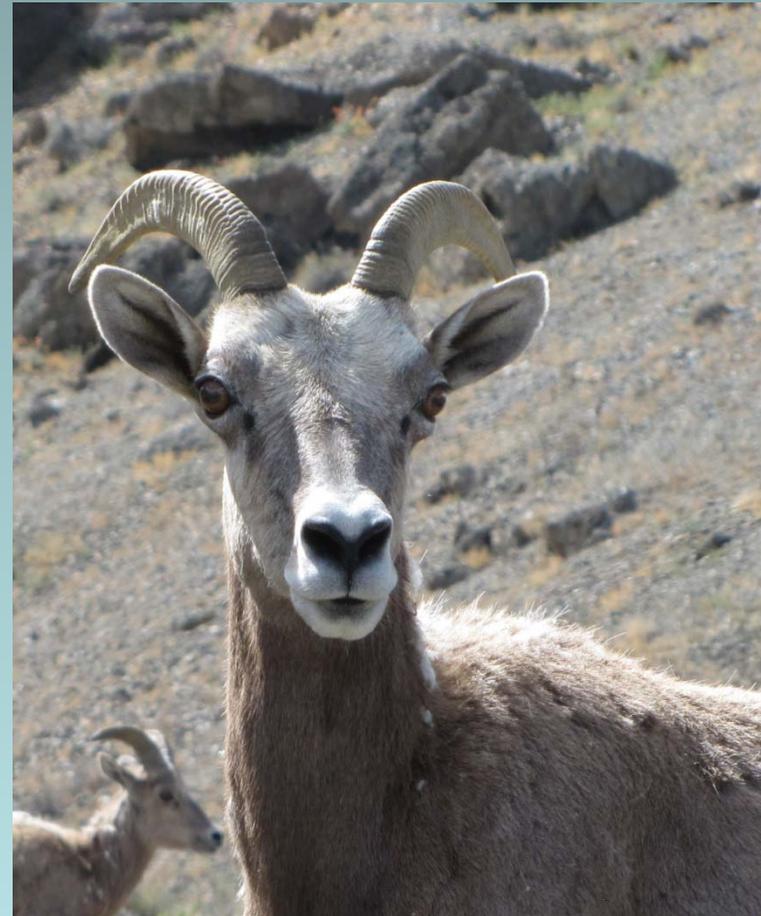
- **NDOW's Definition of a Ewe**
“Any female bighorn sheep having a horn or horns of at least 5 inches in length each as measured on the outside curve of the horn from the skull to the tip” (NAC 502.345)
- This definition specifically targets adult ewes and is designed to prevent yearling rams and ram lambs from being harvested
- During the hunting season, ewes will be in “ewe groups” typically consisting of:
 - ewes of all ages
 - current year lambs
 - a few young rams (yearlings, 2, 3 & 4 year olds)

Ewe Characteristics

Narrow horn base, sickle (crescent) shaped



Ears = 4 to 4 ½ inches



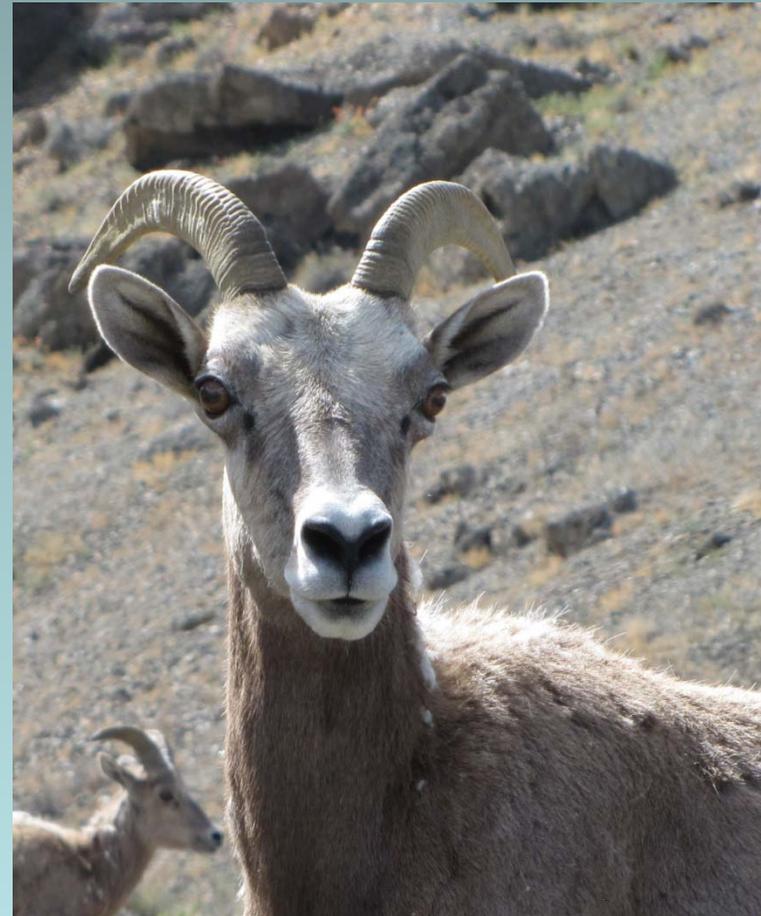
Ewe Characteristics

Multiple rings indicating adult age

Urination Posture (primarily squat rear legs)



Ears = 4 to 4 ½ inches



Yearling Rams

Wider horn base, wider than the eye

Larger pronounced forehead

Testicles and belly spot or penis

Urination posture (primarily stretch legs)



Ram (male) lamb Characteristics

Horn base wider than the eye

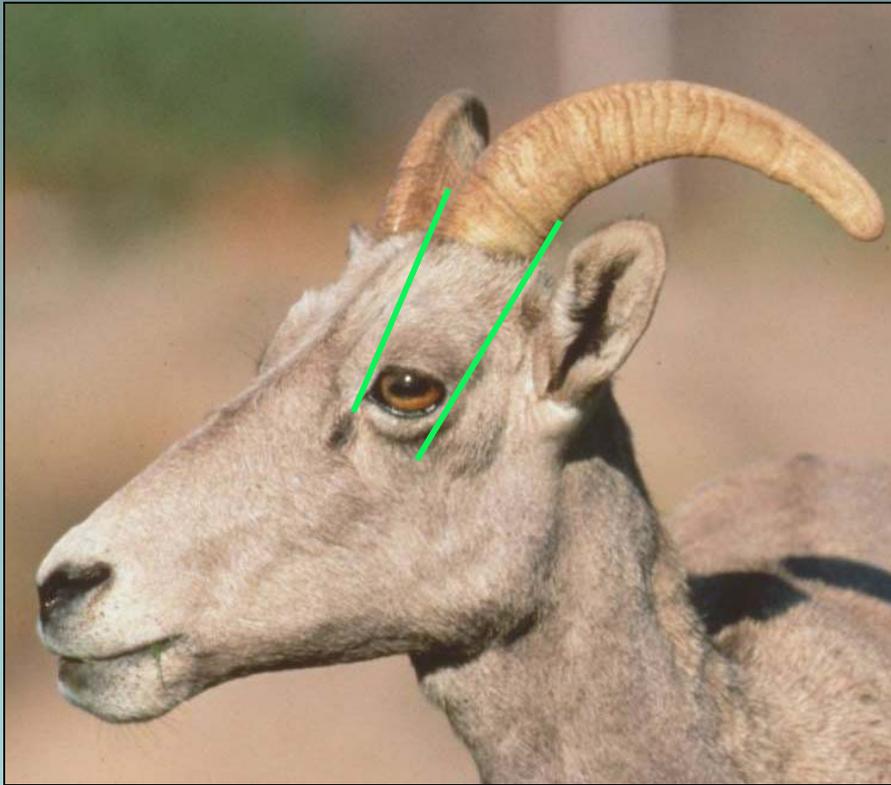
Darker gray horns than ewes

Urination Posture (squat rear legs)

Belly spot or penis and testicles

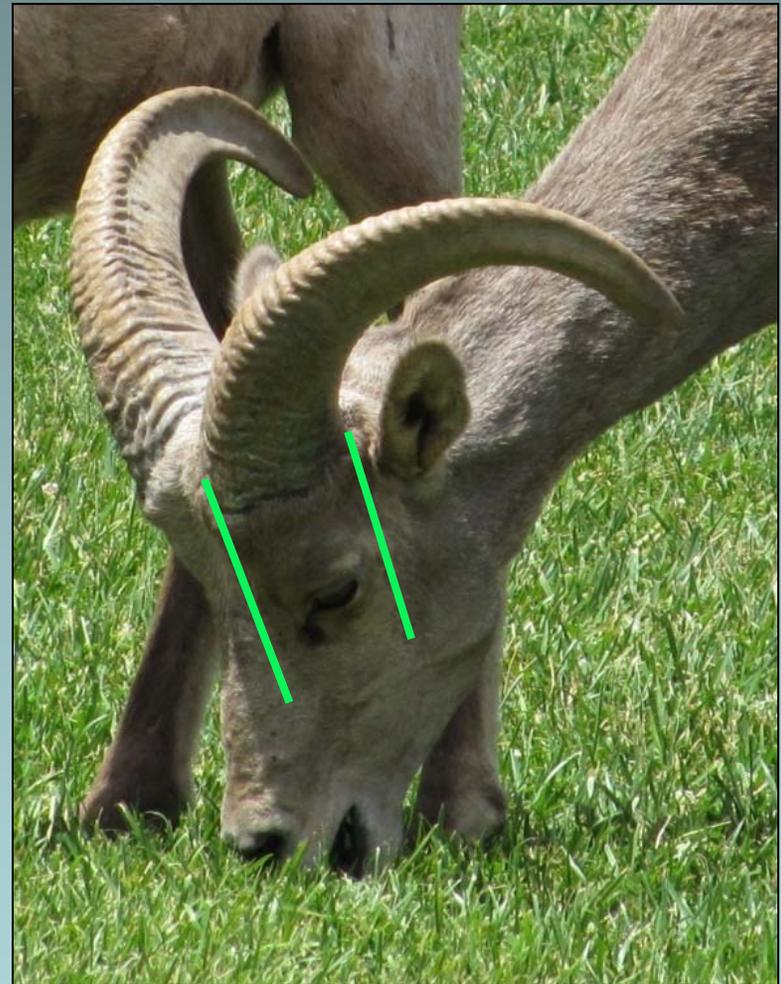


Ewe



Base of ewe horn is roughly the same width as the eye.

Yearling Ram



Notice base of horn is much wider than width of eye

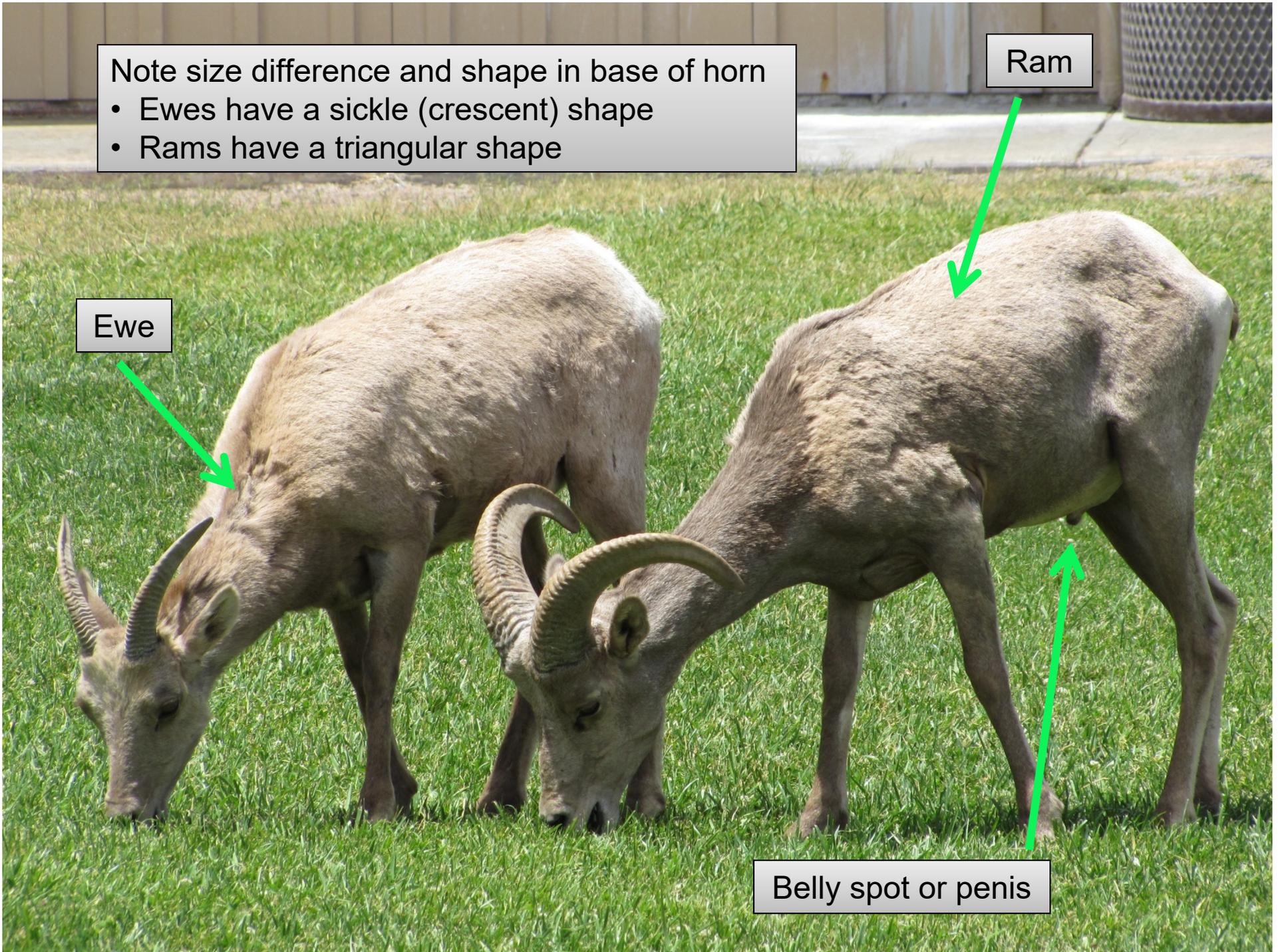
Note size difference and shape in base of horn

- Ewes have a sickle (crescent) shape
- Rams have a triangular shape

Ram

Ewe

Belly spot or penis



Rear View to See Testicles



- When in doubt as to gender, be patient and wait for a rear view of the animal. Keep in mind, that testicles on ram lambs are not as easy to see.



If in doubt...DON'T shoot.
Horn length is questionable.



Quiz

**What is
each
animal?**





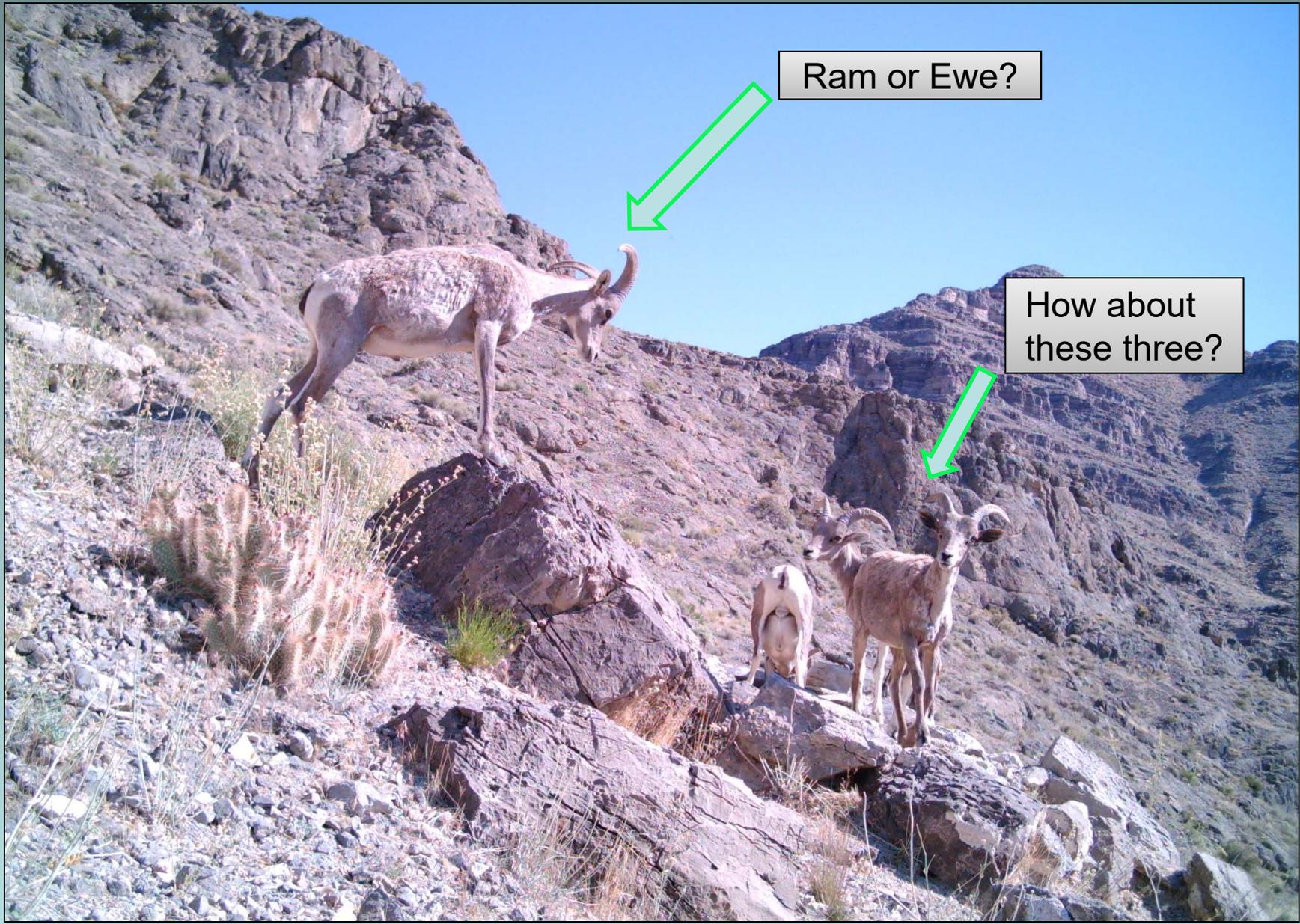
Yearling Ram



Ram Lamb

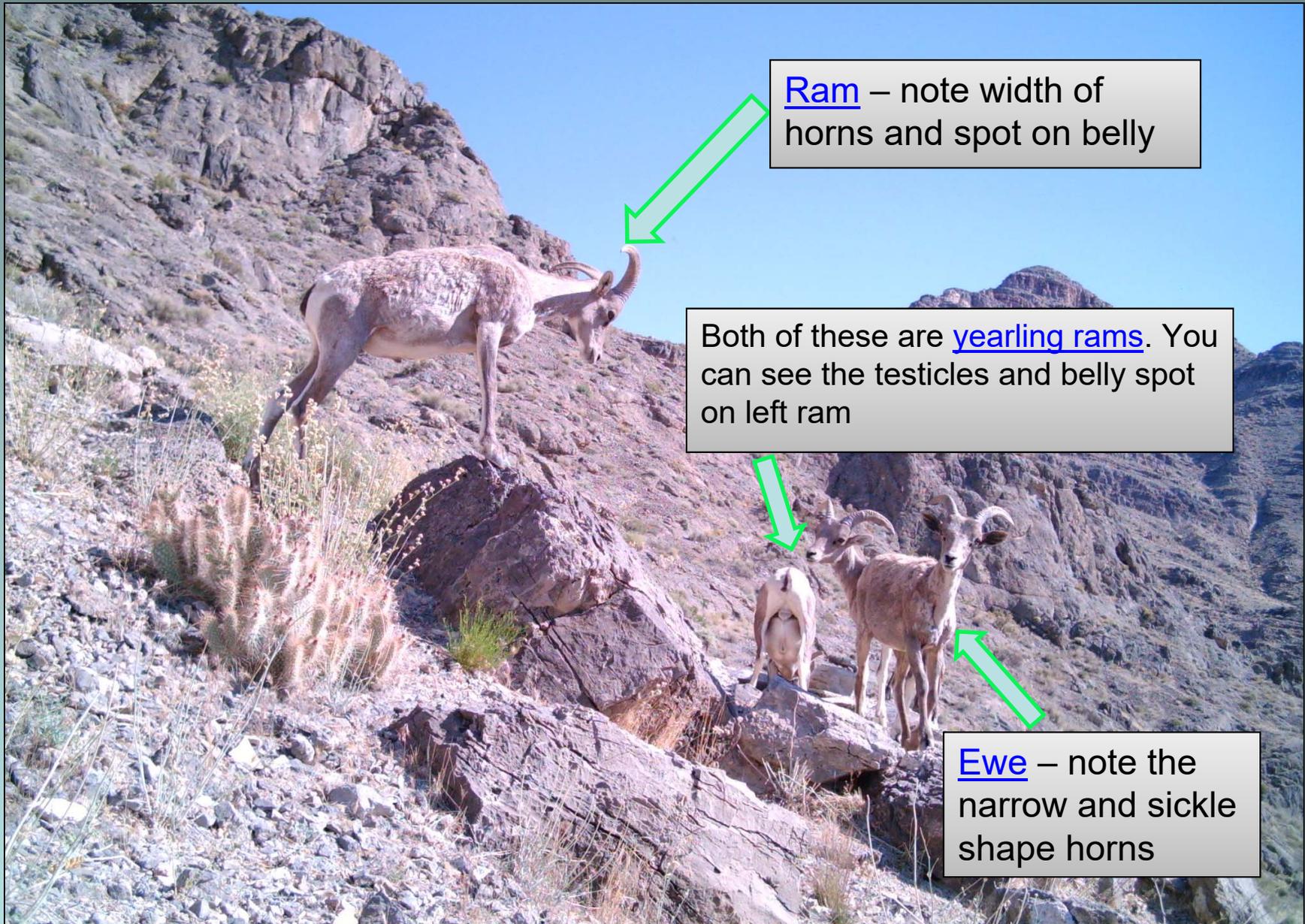


Ewe



Ram or Ewe?

How about these three?



Ram – note width of horns and spot on belly

Both of these are yearling rams. You can see the testicles and belly spot on left ram

Ewe – note the narrow and sickle shape horns

Which one is a ram?





Ram – note the width of horn bases compared to eye & the length of horn.

Ram or Ewe?



Ram – width of
horns compared to
eye & visible penis.



Ram or Ewe?



Ewe, narrow horn base
and no belly spot



Identify these three animals.



This is a photo taken in the summer of Rocky Mountain Bighorn.
Note the wider base horns on the yearling ram and visible penis.

Yearling Ram

Lamb

Ewe





How many ewes can you see in this photo?

One



Note: This is a photo taken in the Fall of Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep.

Things to Remember on Your Hunt

- Be patient and use good optics
- Confirm which animals are ewes
- Allow your target animal to show a front, side, and rear view before taking the shot
- Look for all characteristics that define a legal ewe
- If in doubt...DON'T Shoot

