

This is Kansas Profile. I'm Ron Wilson, director of the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development at Kansas State University.

There are six subspecies of wild turkeys in the world. Four of those are found in the U.S. and two are found only in Mexico. For a turkey hunter, an ultimate goal is to bag one bird from each subspecies. In the turkey hunting world, such a feat is called a World Slam. Perhaps three hundred people have achieved a World Slam in turkey hunting, but only ten of those have done so with a bow – and one of them lives in Kansas. It's today's Kansas Profile.

As we learned last week, Carlos Navarro is the founder and owner of Santa Maria Ranch, an outfitting service for hunters. Carlos grew up in Mexico with a love of hunting. As a little boy, he and the other kids would hunt rabbits with slingshots. Then he learned to hunt with a rifle and shotgun.

Carlos moved to the U.S. and became a citizen. When he wanted to go deer hunting, he found that rifle hunting licenses were hard to come by at the time, so he decided to try bowhunting and found that he loved it.

In 2000, Carlos bought a place named the Santa Maria Ranch south of Junction City and began operating it as an outfitting service for hunters. He now leases another 10,000 acres of privately owned land for his customers to use, plus he books hunts in Mexico through friends in that country. His customers primarily hunt whitetail deer and turkeys.

As mentioned, there are six subspecies of wild turkeys. Four of those are found in the U.S.: Eastern, Rio Grande, Merriam's and Osceola. A hunter who harvests a turkey from all four of these subspecies is referred to as having achieved a Grand Slam (like a clear-the-bases, four-run homer in baseball). A hunter who bags a bird from all six subspecies, including the Goulds and Ocellated turkeys which are found only in Mexico, is referred to as having achieved a World Slam.

World Slam hunters are in elite company. Maybe 300 hunters have achieved a World Slam, and of those, only ten hunters have achieved such a feat with a bow. One of those is Carlos Navarro.

"All those years of hunting with a slingshot helped my bowhunting skills," Carlos said. "It's the same physics, and it helps judge distances." Carlos continues to bowhunt and to guide other hunters through his outfitting service.

One day Carlos and his family were visiting relatives in Arizona. He took his baby daughter for a walk in the neighborhood and noticed a pickup truck with a bumper sticker which said, "Got Antlers?" Carlos was intrigued so he knocked on the door. There he met a taxidermist and fellow hunting enthusiast named Jake Pike.

Jake and Carlos developed a friendship. Ultimately, Jake became assistant outfitter for Carlos.

Carlos and his wife Audrey live in Shawnee, Kansas where Audrey is a real estate broker. The hunts take place in a picturesque rural setting in the middle of Kansas. The ground Carlos owns and leases is located south of Junction City and north of the rural community of Woodbine, population 205 people. Now, that's rural.

Do hunters like hunting in rural Kansas? Yes. Carlos estimates that eighty percent of his customers are repeat customers.

“Every (deer hunter) in the U.S., whether they’re in California or Maine, wants to hunt deer in Kansas,” Carlos said.

Santa Maria Ranch offers guided whitetail deer and predator hunts (primarily for coyotes and bobcats), as well as turkey and shed antler hunts. In Mexico, Carlos has access to 20,000 acres near Durango and 20,000 acres near Campeche.

Carlos has hosted hunters from Pennsylvania to Arizona and has had hunters from as far away as South America, Australia, and Russia. Wow.

For more information, go to [www.santamariaranch.com](http://www.santamariaranch.com).

Of all the hunters who have achieved a World Slam by bagging all six subspecies of turkeys, only ten have done so with a bow, including Carlos Navarro. We commend Carlos, Jake Pike, and all those involved with Santa Maria Ranch for making a difference with outdoors entrepreneurship. The success of such businesses should be a slam dunk.

For the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, this is Ron Wilson with Kansas Profile.