

SCOUT • MANAGE • HUNT

DEER & DEER HUNTING[®]

APRIL 2022

VOLUME 45 ■ ISSUE 9

**GROW BIGGER,
BETTER BUCKS!**
SEE PAGE 13

**BARTYLLA
REVEALS
HIS MASTER PLAN**
SEE PAGE 26

LET'S BUILD BETTER HABITAT!

- FOOD PLOT SEED SELECTION
- PRESCRIBED FIRE REALITIES
- WHAT'S IN STORE FOR CRP

**IS YOUR OLD AMMO
SAFE TO SHOOT?** SEE PAGE 10

**AMERICA'S
MOST
ELUSIVE
DEER**
SEE PAGE 61

**YELLOW BOOTS & A
WINCHESTER
RIFLE**
SEE PAGE 52

**BONUS:
TURKEY &
TURKEY HUNTING
PREVIEW**
SEE PAGE 75

©2021 O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc.

MOSSBERG | 450 BUSHMASTER

**A WINNER
BY
KNOCKOUT.**

Straight-walled 450 Bushmaster cartridges deliver devastating knockdown power and open up whitetail hunting opportunities in an increasing number of locales.



Patriot
450 Bushmaster
Threaded Barrel
Walnut

SAFETY TIP 
Store firearms securely,
inaccessible to children
and unauthorized users.

VERSATILE PATRIOT RIFLES IN HEAVY-HITTING 450 BUSHMASTER.

Patriot rifles are durable, accurate, and loaded with features. Modern innovations, traditional styling, and the stopping power of 450 Bushmaster rounds combine to keep you in the hunt — whatever the game, whatever the season.

Mossberg — Makers of dependable, hardworking firearms for more than a century.

LEARN MORE AT
MOSSBERG.COM

MOSSBERG
SINCE 1919



LIMITED EDITION!

2022 DEER HUNTERS' ALMANAC

30TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTOR'S EDITION

- UNBELIEVABLE HUNTING STORIES
- RUT SEASON INFO
- DEER ACTIVITY PATTERNS
- UNUSUAL DEER BEHAVIOR
- DEER AGING • FIELD DRESSING & BUTCHERING • AND MORE!

**AVAILABLE ONLINE OR
MAIL-IN ORDER BELOW**

**SHOP.DEERANDDEERHUNTING.COM/
2022-DEER-AND-DEER-HUNTING-ALMANAC**

AMERICA'S FAVORITE WHITETAIL DIGEST SINCE 1992

- 208 PAGES
- COMPACT SIZE IS PERFECT FOR BACKPACKS
- INFO FOR BOW, CROSSBOW, RIFLE, SHOTGUN AND MUZZLELOADER HUNTERS



YES! SEND ME MY
2022 DEER HUNTERS' ALMANAC

(PRICE INCLUDES SHIPPING)

\$14 EACH

5 OR MORE ALMANACS

CONTACT FOR PRICING AND AVAILABILITY
SUSIE.MELUM@MEDIA360LLC.COM

BECAUSE QUANTITIES ARE VERY LIMITED, WE ARE ONLY ACCEPTING MAIL-IN ORDERS PAID WITH CHECK OR MONEY ORDER. CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED ONLINE ONLY. NO CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS CAN BE MADE ON MAIL-IN ORDERS AT THIS TIME.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: MEDIA 360, LLC
FOR PROMPT SERVICE, SEND THIS COUPON AND PAYMENT TO:
MEDIA 360, LLC
ATTN: 2022 ALMANAC
P.O. BOX 548, WAUPACA, WI 54981

PAYMENT:

Check ☐ or Money Order ☐

QUANTITY: TOTAL ENCLOSED:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

**MEDIA
360** LLC

LEADING OFF

(SEE PAGE 8 FOR DETAILS)





FEATURES

10 | ROUNDING A BEND

There's nothing like a deer hunt on a crisp November day to put our thoughts in perspective as we continue on life's mysterious trail. by Tom Carpenter

14 | CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?

If you have trouble hearing and have not tried a hearing enhancement device designed for hunting and shooting, you should read this article. by Bob Robb

20 | RESEARCH: FRAGILE FAWNS

Here's a look at what researchers have learned about newborn fawn mortality in relation to human interaction. by John J. Ozoga

26 | MASTER THE PLAN FOR BIGGER BUCKS

Pressured bucks, when desperate for limited food, tend to repeatedly expose themselves to danger. Here's how you can take advantage. by Steve Bartylla

32 | READ BEFORE YOU SEED

Understanding food-plot seed labels is a main key to getting your crops to grow and produce maximum forage for hungry deer. by Glenn Helgeland

40 | BURNING QUESTIONS (AND ANSWERS)

Considering prescribed fire for your property? It's best to know the ins and outs of controlled burns, especially before planning one. Here's everything you need to know to get started. by Josh Honeycutt

46 | THE FUTURE OF CRP FOR DEER HUNTERS

Deer habitat is dwindling with the expansion of rural neighborhoods, and man's desire to farm every inch of productive agricultural land. The good news? Habitat managers and deer hunters alike can reverse this trend. by Paul Annear

52 | MODEL 70 MEMORIES

The year was 1958. America was buzzing for all sorts of reasons, including this relatively new thing called "deer season." by Daniel E. Schmidt

58 | DEER BEHAVIOR

The whitetail's abilities to trot, sprint, jump – and even swim – are among the reasons why it's America's greatest athlete. by Charles J. Alsheimer

61 | IN SEARCH OF SPOTTED GHOSTS

Mature chital – otherwise known as axis deer – are as alluring as they are mysterious. Here's where you can find free-ranging populations of these fascinating deer. by Daniel E. Schmidt

65 | BUTCHER SHOP: MAXIMUM MEAT YIELD

Here are five ways to make sure the meat you put in the freezer is not only the max but also the best for your family. by D&DH Staff

69 | BOW SHOP: PRACTICE LIKE YOU MEAN IT

Want to be a much better bowhunter? Ditch those field points and invest in quality practice sessions – with your broadheads. by Bob Robb

70 | IS IT OK TO SHOOT OLD AMMO?

It's a question gun shop owners get all the time. Do you know the answer? This veteran gun-hunter has top insights. by Mike Hanback

71 | THE WHITETAIL TRIFECTA

Ryan Salmons was on a mission: Hunt three states in one season and fill his buck tags in all three states. He not only accomplished the goal – he secured three racks that most guys can only dream about. by Josh Honeycutt

96 | STORMS

True friends are always there for you, even when life deals out bad weather. by Zeke Pipher

ON THE COVER – Photo: Dustin Reid/DDH

Page 4 – Photo: Charles J. Alsheimer

Page 5 – Photo: Bob Zaiglin

DEPARTMENTS

6 | EDITOR'S STUMP

8 | D&DH COMMUNITY

58 | DEER BEHAVIOR

65 | BUTCHER SHOP

69 | BOW SHOP

70 | GUN SHOP

71 | BUCK SHOTS

73 | GROW 'EM BIG

74 | TURKEY HUNTING BONUS

90 | NEW TURKEY HUNTING GEAR

94 | WHERE TO GO

How to Contact Us

Visit us online:

WWW.DEERANDDEERHUNTING.COM

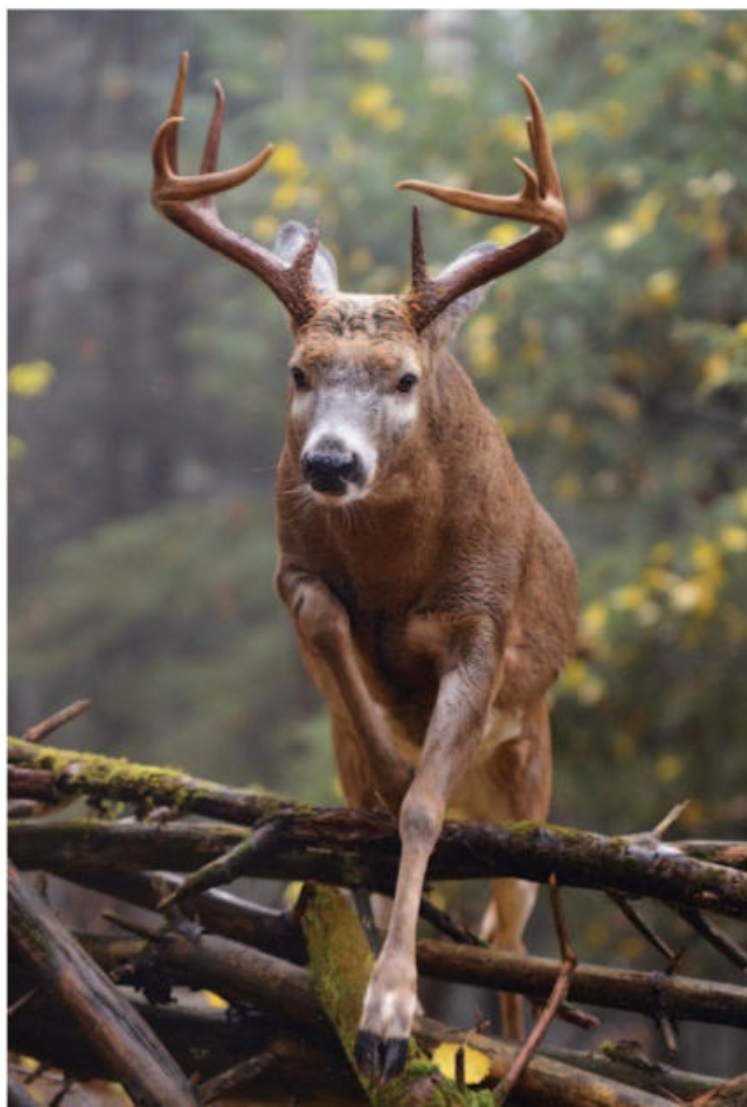
- Sign up for our free newsletter.
- Participate in deer hunting forums.
- Participate in deer hunting surveys.
- Renew your magazine subscription.
- Share whitetail insights with other members of the prestigious Stump Sitters Whitetail Study Group.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES: Visit us on the web at www.deeranddeerhunting.com, or call **(386) 246-3414**

Deer & Deer Hunting Magazine publishes 11 issues per year, which may include an occasional special, combined or expanded issue that may count as two issues toward your subscription.

ADVERTISING: Call Brad Rucks at (920) 284-8732 or send an email to him at brad.rucks@media360llc.com. For a media kit write to: Deer & Deer Hunting, P.O. Box 548, Waupaca, WI 54981.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: Send letters to Daniel E. Schmidt, D&DH, P.O. Box 548, Waupaca, WI 54981. Or send an email to dan.schmidt@media360llc.com.







THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

DANIEL E. SCHMIDT

If you've read or watched any "news" reports on hunting over the past 20+ years, you have been conditioned to believe that hunting in America is on the decline. Here's a newsflash based in facts: Hunting is not on the decline. In fact, it is more robust today, especially for state coffers, than it has ever been.

According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, more than 15.2 million people bought a hunting license of some sort this past hunting season. That compares to 14.96 million hunters in 2004. That is correct — those are the actual hunters, per the USFW. In 2021, there were 38.59 million hunting licenses, tags, permits and stamps in the U.S. — more than twice the number of total hunters (all species, big and small game).

Now, the rest of the story, as Paul Harvey would have said. When you look at total dollars generated by hunting license sales, you could look at the following numbers as great or bad, depending on your outlook. They are great if you believe the states are using these dollars wisely for wildlife conservation. Long story short, states collected nearly \$1 billion in license fees alone in 2021. The economic impact is many, many times more than that. For example, deer hunting alone in Wisconsin contributes more than \$1 billion in economic impact annually. Texas deer hunters contribute at least three times that much.

The other side to this story is that U.S. hunters spent \$656.9 million in licenses and fees in 2004. So, while there was a modest gain of 1.5% in hunter numbers over that 17-year span, the states took in nearly 40% more in licenses and fees (just shy of \$262 million).

How much do deer hunters contribute? Plenty. If you look at states like Pennsylvania, Michigan, New York, Georgia, North Carolina and Wisconsin, you'll see a ton of money being spent on deer licenses and extra permits. However, even bigger money is being spent by Western hunters who pursue coveted elk, moose and antelope tags, plus Southern and Midwestern hunters who chase migratory waterfowl.

It all adds up to a bright future. This lifestyle is something that we not only cherish, but we live it on a daily basis. Stop the anti-hunters and unsuspecting nonhunters in their tracks with the facts.

We have more hunters today, and we are spending billions of dollars on this lifestyle so we not only pass it down to the next generations but also so we preserve these precious natural resources.

DAN.SCHMIDT@MEDIA360LLC.COM

DEER & DEER HUNTING®

"THE ORIGINAL STUMP SITTERS MAGAZINE"

Established In 1977

WWW.DEERANDDEERHUNTING.COM

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Daniel E. Schmidt

SENIOR EDITOR

Chris Berens

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Rebecca Vogel

ONLINE CONTENT SPECIALIST

Sara Gilane

DEER RESEARCH FIELD EDITOR

John J. Ozoga

FIELD CONTRIBUTORS

Steve Bartylla, Bob Zaiglin,
Dr. Stephen Ditchkoff, Steve Sorensen

ADVERTISING SALES

PUBLISHER

Brad Rucks

brad.rucks@media360llc.com

SALES ASSOCIATES

Casey Lenz

casey.lenz@media360llc.com

ADVERTISING COORDINATOR

Lisa Richter, lisa.richter@media360llc.com

OFFICE MANAGER

Susie Melum, susie.melum@media360llc.com

TELEVISION & ONLINE VIDEO

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

David Gilane

PRODUCER

Ian Sanchez

Deer & Deer Hunting (ISSN 01647318) is published 11 times per year: February, April, June, Summer, Equipment Annual, August, September, October, November and December by Media 360, LLC, P.O. Box 548, Waupaca, WI 54981. Periodical postage paid at Iowa, WI 54945, and at additional mailing offices. Canadian Agreement No. 40665675.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Deer & Deer Hunting, P.O. BOX 37180 BOONE, IA 50037-0180

Copyright 2022 by Media 360, LLC. | Printed in the U.S.A.

Deer & Deer Hunting and its logo are registered trademarks. Other names and logos referred to or displayed in editorial or advertising content may be trademarked or copyright. D&DH assumes no responsibility for unsolicited materials sent to it. Publisher and advertisers are not liable for typographical errors that may appear in prices or descriptions in advertisements.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 800.250.9159 (U.S. and Canada)

P.O. BOX 37180 BOONE, IA 50037-0180

Outside the U.S., call 386.246.3414

MEDIA360

1990 Godfrey Drive | Waupaca, WI 54981

Brad Rucks, **PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER**

Daniel Schmidt, **VICE PRESIDENT**

FIND DEER & DEER HUNTING ON:

FACEBOOK: [FACEBOOK.COM/DEERHUNTINGMAG](https://www.facebook.com/DEERHUNTINGMAG)

YOUTUBE: [WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/DDHONLINE](https://www.youtube.com/DDHONLINE)

TWITTER: [TWITTER.COM/DEERHUNTINGMAG](https://twitter.com/DEERHUNTINGMAG)

INSTAGRAM: [WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/DEERANDDEERHUNTING](https://www.instagram.com/DEERANDDEERHUNTING)

PINTEREST: [PINTEREST.COM/DEERHUNTINGMAG](https://pinterest.com/DEERHUNTINGMAG)



THE CULMINATION OF 30 YEARS OF ARCHERY INNOVATION.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE **V3X** AND OUR NEW **INTEGRATED**
LINE OF ACCESSORIES AT **MATHEWSINC.COM**

DDH Community



CONNECT WITH D&DH ON SOCIAL MEDIA AT:

FACEBOOK: WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DEERHUNTINGMAG

YOUTUBE: WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/DDHONLINE

INSTAGRAM: WWW.INSTAGRAM.COM/DEERANDDEERHUNTING

TWITTER: @DEERHUNTINGMAG

PINTEREST: WWW.PINTEREST.COM/DEERHUNTINGMAG/

It's 4 a.m. at Deer Camp

Way back in 1991, Deer & Deer Hunting co-founder Jack Brauer commissioned artist Frederick A. Schmidt to paint a series of hunting-camp scenes. The first print, "4 A.M." depicted the original Stump Sitters hunting camp. Among the painting's details:

- A grizzled camp cook, prepping the morning's fire ... while wearing a belt over his long johns, complete with a scabbard and hunting knife.
- Wool socks and heart-emblazoned briefs hanging above the coffee pot.
- An 8-point buck mount with cobwebs and flies buzzing around it.
- A Deer & Deer Hunting Whitetail Calendar® featuring a big buck on the November date pad.
- The Stump Sitters Hunting Camp sign above the door. This is a scaled-down version of the real sign that hung in the original Stump Sitters camp, accurate down to the font.
- The clock's time is accurate: It's 4 a.m.!
- Just outside the front-door window stands a 12-point buck, staring at the dimly-lit shack.
- Behind the buck is an old beater pickup truck, left rusting by a tree - the same make and model that Jack and Al used when they incorporated the Stump Sitters.
- Five bolt-action rifles, presumably Winchester Model 70s, in and around the gun rack.
- Outside the side window is a buck buck pole with the season's first deer hanging from it. A skunk walks by as one of the camp members "pledging allegiance" to another day.
- Back inside the shack, we see someone's dentures soaking in a water glass on the window sill. They're going to be in for a surprise, however, as the water is froze solid.
- A can of gasoline (or possibly kerosene) sits atop an economy-sized case of baked beans.
- Snowshoes, of course, a hunting jacket and an American flag. Next to the flag is an exact replica of this entire "4 AM" scene.
- On the bed post, we find several more Stump Sitters references: 8 bucks on the board for 1980; Al (Hofacker) and the notation of his 12-pointer from 1986; and Jack's bear sighting notation from Oct. 3, 1971.
- The fellow on the bottom bunk is none other than Al himself. Looks like he's found something not quite perfect with that recent issue of Deer & Deer Hunting that he's reading via flashlight.



- Poor fellow by the kitchen table seems to have slept there overnight. Looks like it was quite the poker game, as evidenced by the cards, chips and empty mugs. Notice that guy's boots - old-school leather. Also notice the catalog. The Deer Shack, another creation of the Stump Sitters, was way ahead of its time. Hmm ... is that the ace of spades on the floor?
- Onward, we see the hand-crank water pump is frozen, but the cast-iron pan is ready for the bacon-and-egg breakfast. Those two chipmunks are hoping for some scraps, as is the trusty camp dog.

Frederick Schmidt (1922-2006) was a self-taught career artist and WW II vet who served in the 220th Regiment in Normandy, France and Rhineland.

The "4:00 A.M." print was the first of a scheduled eight prints to be drawn by Schmidt (no relation to Daniel E. Schmidt). A second print with the same characters in it was titled "Buckville," which illustrated the excitement in a small town the afternoon before the opening day of deer season. The other six prints were never finished, as the Stump Sitters sold their business (1992) before artwork was commissioned.

Deer & Deer Hunting was brought back to private ownership in 2019 when it was purchased by Media 360 LLC of Waupaca, Wisconsin.

D&DH TV IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



Hornady

hornady.com



STRAIGHT THROUGH IT.

sevrbroadheads.com



TENPOINT

CROSSBOW TECHNOLOGIES

tenpointcrossbows.com



outdooredge.com



eastonarchery.com



walkersgameear.com



cuddeback.com



huntstand.com



sigsauger.com



mathewsinc.com



banksoutdoors.com



wildlife.com



Gear That Protects- As Hard As It Hunts!



Our ElimiTick Series Protects You From
Ticks & Chiggers So You Can Focus On
Punching Your Tag!



(888) 267-3591 Gamehide.com

Save On Bundled ElimiTick Items!

Mens Deep Woods Bundle



Bundle Price!
\$187.95

Womens Lightweight Bundle



Bundle Price!
\$163.97

Elite Bib Bundle



Bundle Price!
\$169.97



It has always taken words typed on a page to crystalize thoughts trying to get out of my heart and flow from my soul. When it comes to deer hunting, that premise rings as true as the noon whistle in town down the valley on a brisk November day.

Maybe it's time to climb down and warm up on a walk back to the farmhouse, get a little lunch, perhaps even take a little nap before an afternoon sit.

There was a time when such a break from the hunt would not even cross my mind, let alone be acted upon.

I gotta stay here, fight off these shakes and chills from sitting here since before dawn, wolf down a cold sandwich, pee in a bottle, fight to stay awake: Suffer through. Bucks like to cruise at high noon, the neighbors are getting down for

lunch and might move deer ... this is as good a witching hour as any. And then I might as well stay put for the rest of the day.

But instead my thoughts now, after five decades in and across deer country, flow a little different:

That was a good sit. Maybe I should have taken a crack at that doe early on, but it was just a little dicey across the draw. Well, if something passes my stand while I'm gone, I had other business to attend to: Taking a break, putting something into my rumbley stomach, seeing what the other guys did or didn't

get, maybe teaching one of my kids to start to skinning a deer if one of the shots I heard was theirs, taking a little snooze so I can stay awake for an afternoon sit.

And so it was, just last season.

Opening day of gun season had dawned clear and crisp, and though by mid-morning the temperature was quite mild compared to some years past, a 6:15 a.m.-to-noon sit produced the following experiences: the moon and Venus disappearing in the west, the sun rising to the east, two whitetails ghosting through at different times without

ROUNDING A BEND

DEER HUNTING DOWN THE
EVER-WINDING TRAIL OF LIFE.



offering surefire shot opportunities, good birdwatching, the chance to figure out plans for a few of life's conundrums that had been bothering me as of late, and a mind slowed down from the pressures of everyday life these days.

And I thought that was all pretty good. So after my stroll I made and ate a sandwich in my friend Craig and Carolyn's sunny kitchen, felt sleepy (better here than in a deer stand!), laid down on the couch, and woke up an hour later feeling like a new man.

I didn't even wonder or worry or

care about what had transpired in front of and around the stand I had been occupying all morning.

As I walked back out in mid-afternoon – which is really already getting to be late afternoon at this time of the year in Wisconsin – I even thought:

You know, that's a great stand I was on. But I've seen that view enough for today. I think I'll head to the South Woods, get some new scenery, finish the day there.

It was an afternoon that, as I like to say, God had made. November perfection. Orange sun even now

at 2:00 p.m. raking in lower and from the west. Cool enough to wear your good jacket, mild enough you weren't going to get chilled before dark. No real breeze, but just a little flow in my face.

And quiet: Only chickadees and nuthatches and woodpeckers for company, along with the occasional squirrel shuffling in the leaves, a sound that makes my heart still jump – for though you may think I am getting a little soft I am still a deer hunter.

That's why my heart *really* jumped when a different kind of



leaf shuffling reached my ears from the west. Soon I could see them trotting along – a nice little group of four whitetails, angling up the sidehill on a path to pass directly in front of my perch.

I inched the binoculars up to survey the headgear they did not wear. It was decision time: Take a shot or wait for the buck that might be pulling up the rear.

My decision was an easy one and it may or may not surprise you.

The lead doe was a big one. She had probably mama'd a lot of good deer for this Adams Township countryside, and would make more. Two little shavers pulled up the rear. It was the second doe – mid-sized for a little more meat, easier to drag out, not the herd's matriarch – where my crosshairs settled.

Sitting there in the quiet after the *boom*, I was overjoyed and planning out the rest of my day. Prime venison on the ground, some work to do and plenty of light in which to do it, a nice drag out for a little exercise, and have the deer hanging and cooling by dark ... just in time for chili with The Crew and the Wisconsin Badgers football game on TV.

Then, a wrench.

More shuffling in the leaves.

Along the same route came four deer. It was a problem: All wore headgear.

In this country where you can shoot more than one whitetail, a buck would still be legal. As bucks are wont to do, they sensed enough amiss to pause.

The shot would have been easy. I went from a nice, wide-racked buck that was by far the biggest of the bunch but would get even bigger next year, back to a weird-racked little fellow that (as a confirmed shooter of small and weird-racked little bucks) tickled my fancy.

I watched. They settled down. The too "tweener" bucks jousting, as horny teenagers are wont to do. The big buck held back. The little one stood there begging me to shoot him.

It wasn't a watershed moment. I don't see life, or our life as hunters, working like that. We travel paths, we round bends, we evolve.

There was a time in my life when I would have shot again, dealt with the aftermath and carnage and doubled workload of two whitetails on the ground, and wondered what to do with more meat than I needed for now, especially with a late season hunt or two still in the plans.

The rifle inched back to my lap. The bucks walked off after a few minutes. Then I climbed down to kneel next to that perfect doe so graceful there even in death, say my thanks, and set to work.

The guys in camp laugh at me and think me somewhat strange for sometimes still dragging a deer out even though I could go get an all-terrain vehicle for the task. And though I am no doubt evolving to somewhere new as a deer hunter after all these years, I still have the power and the legs and the heart to pull my own whitetail out.

I tied the rope to the whitetail, knelt down and slipped into the harness, stood up, and down the tote road trail we went, my beautiful doe skimming over russet, fallen oak leaves.

It was the only sound in the November sunset as we rounded another bend.

— Tom Carpenter is a longtime D&DH contributor from eastern Minnesota.



Field Dress For Success

The hunt for the perfect outdoorsman knife is over. There's only one tool you need: the Whitetail™ Hunting Knife—now **ONLY \$49!**

The consummate outdoorsman never goes on deep woods hunting trips without the essentials. Not just the basics for every hunting trip, but the items he's come to depend on over the years.

Our new **Whitetail™ Hunting Knife** will quickly become your go-to blade for every expedition. The Whitetail™ is a premium fixed-blade hunting knife that's perfect for skinning. With the Whitetail at hand, you'll be ready for field dressing in only seconds, and you'll never need a separate gut hook tool ever again. The Whitetail™ boasts a mighty 420 high carbon, full tang stainless steel blade, meaning the blade doesn't stop at the handle, it runs the full length of the knife. According to *Gear Patrol*, a full tang blade is key, saying "A full tang lends structural strength to the knife, allowing for better leverage ...think one long steel beam versus two."

The comfortable handle is made from pakkawood—moisture-resistant and more durable than hardwood. If hunting is your life, then the Whitetail™ Knife was designed to make your life easier.

With our limited edition **Whitetail™ Hunting Knife** you're getting the best in 21st-century construction with a classic look inspired by legendary American pioneers. What you won't get is the trumped up price tag. We know a thing or two about the hunt—like how to seek out and capture an outstanding, collector's-quality knife that won't cut into your bank account.

**EXCLUSIVE
FREE**

Stauer® 8x21
Compact
Binoculars
-a \$99 value-
with purchase of
Whitetail™ Hunting
Knife



This knife can be yours to use out in the field or to display as the art piece it truly is. But don't wait. A knife of this caliber typically cost hundreds. Priced at an amazing **\$49**, we can't guarantee this knife will stick around for long. So call today!

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. Feel the knife in your hands, wear it on your hip, inspect the craftsmanship. If you don't feel like we cut you a fair deal, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item sale price. But we believe that once you wrap your fingers around the **Whitetail's** handle, you'll be ready to carve your own niche into the wild frontier.

What customers are saying about Stauer knives...



"Good value. Great looking. Sufficiently sharp. Overall an "A" purchase and I ordered three."

— B. of Maryland

Whitetail™ Hunting Knife ~~\$79~~*

Offer Code Price Only **\$49** + S&P **Save \$30**

PLUS Free Stauer Compact Binoculars

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: **WHK347-01**

You must use the insider offer code to get our special price.

Stauer® 14101 Southcross Drive W., Ste.155, Dept. WHK347-01
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

*Discount is only for customers who use the offer code versus the listed original Stauer.com price.



BONUS! Call today and you'll also receive this heavy duty sheath!

Not shown
actual size.



Rating of A+



• 5 1/4" 420HC stainless steel blade • Full-tang design with gut hook • Pakkawood handle with brass pins • Bonus heavy duty nylon sheath

Stauer... *Afford the Extraordinary.®*

CAN YOU



HEAR ME NOW?

IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE HEARING AND HAVE NOT TRIED A HEARING ENHANCEMENT DEVICE DESIGNED FOR HUNTING AND SHOOTING, YOU SHOULD.

As a predator — humans are predators, make no mistake about it — our eyes are set in front of our skulls to allow for binocular, or stereoscopic vision, which allows us to see and judge depth of field.

Thus, the eyes are our number one source of information when hunting. A close second, however, is our hearing. The sound of a distant turkey gobbling or elk bugling helps us locate game. So does the telltale crunch of a deer walking on leaves, the clack of antlers during a fight or against a tree, the distinctive grunt of a buck trailing a doe. Those who can hear and identify those sounds, and hundreds of others, are at a distinct advantage in the woods.

I couldn't hear any of them for decades, because I was all but deaf, and too proud to admit it.

THINGS CHANGE

As we age, there are some hard truths that become difficult to admit. For many of us, the truth is we just can't hear like we used to. According to the National Institute of Health (<https://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/statistics/quick-statistics-hearing>), about one in eight Americans over the age of 12 years has hearing loss in both ears, based on standard hearing tests. That's nearly 30 million people! Also, age is the strongest predictor of hearing loss among adults aged 20-69.

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

I've been exposed to loud noises since I was a teenager who shot trap and skeet without hearing protection, listened to loud rock music, and got exposed to some things that go boom! We didn't really know better back then, but no matter. The fact of the matter is, for decades my hearing has sucked. For nigh onto 40 years it has been difficult, if not impossible, for me to hear distant elk bugling or turkeys gobbling. I rarely heard a deer stroll up from behind my treestand through the leaves. Basic conversations with others were garbled so badly I became a fairly proficient lip reader.

So imagine what it's been like for me the past couple of years, with everyone wearing a face mask so I can't read their lips? Conversations go something like this: "You know the time?" "No, I don't have a dime?" "Sure, I'd like a glass of wine." Embarrassing stuff.

Life as an outdoorsman changed dramatically for me when, in the early 1990's, I met the late Bob Walker among the chaos of a large outdoor writer's turkey camp. All the press guys were jockeying for position to hang with some of the "big name" professional gobbler

amplify high frequency sounds, the kind most game make in the wild – and the kind most of us have a hard time hearing.

When I took that Game Ear to the woods, I started hearing sounds I had not heard since the Nixon was president. I could hear turkeys gobbling, birds chirping, the trickle of a stream, the wind ruffling the leaves in the trees. It was a cathartic experience, to say the least.

It took time for Walker's products to catch on – after all, what "Stud Muffin" is going to admit he or she can't hear worth beans? – but once

to converse normally and hear most sounds yet cancel out loud noises, like gun shots. Some products are pretty simple, and some pretty sophisticated. Custom fit options are available, too.

KEY ADVANCEMENTS

In the beginning, hunting hearing aids essentially just amplified sound, making it easier for you to hear subtle sounds. They could not be tuned for specific ranges of hearing loss, nor did they offer any protection against the loud and dangerous sounds produced by gunfire.

Fortunately, today that's changed, and in many cases hearing enhancement and ear protection are not mutually exclusive, as some hunting hearing aid manufacturers now incorporate ear protection into their hearing aids. They work so that once a weapon is fired, the amplifier circuit reacts immediately and limits the volume that enters your ears to a safe level, preventing instant damage to your hearing. When the loud sound is over, the hearing aids resume their task of amplifying ambient sounds. With one gunshot ranging from 140 to 190 decibels (enough to cause immediate, permanent damage to your hearing), this is an important area of innovation.

I have prescription hearing aids, too. My latest hearing test was in December, 2021, and it showed that I am on the edge of being legally deaf. Some high-pitched sounds I will never hear again, even with the high-dollar, behind-the-ear hearing aids I now wear daily.

I've worn this type of prescription hearing aid afield in the past, and of course they work. And truthfully, unless you get a professional hearing test you won't know exactly what frequencies your ears need help with and have a product that has been tuned specifically for your own hearing issues.

THEY'RE NOT FOOLPROOF

But there are two big issues. First, if you wear eyeglasses like I do, then add a face mask for bowhunting or turkey hunting (or flying on an airplane), it's hard to get the behind-the-ear hearing aid comfortably in place. Plus, when



getters, but for some reason Walker and I just hit it off. His company, Walker's Game Ear (now Walker's), begun in 1989, was just starting to gain traction.

Bob gave me one of his early Game Ears to use, but being a little too full of myself and a tad hard-headed, I poo-pooed the thing. I mean, my hearing was fine, right? I didn't know until much later that Walker was, in fact, a Pennsylvania-licensed hearing healthcare specialist who combined a passion for both his profession and hunting to start his game ear business.

ONE OF A KIND

Bob's company was the industry's first to offer compact hearing enhancement and protection devices to prevent hearing loss, as well as

they did, the company continued to grow on the strength of new product innovation and a superb marketing program based in no small part on the friendships Walker made with many key industry media members.

Today there are several companies in the business of helping hunters hear better, including Walker's (www.walkersgameear.com), WildEar (www.wildear.com), SportEAR (www.sportear.com), Soundgear (www.soundgear.com), Tetra Hearing (www.tetrahearing.com), Tactical Hearing (www.tacticalhearing.com), and Pro Ears (www.proears.com). They range in price from less than a Franklin to more than a grand.

Products range from everything to simple, single in-the-ear hearing aids to headphones that allow you

This Is Our Happy Place

Illuminated Wall Clock

Artisan hand-crafted, 3-D log cabin getaway invites you to sit back and relax

WINDOWS
LIGHT
UP!

Wilderness sounds play and windows light up every hour

Here's the escape you've always dreamed of, captured in an exclusively designed log cabin wall clock that lights up and plays wilderness sounds hourly. The message on the clock face says it all! A swinging pendulum, pine cone weights, accurate quartz movement and more make it a rare find in fine limited-edition décor.

Great design, great value! Order now.

Order now in four installments of \$36.25, for a total of \$145.00*. Send no money now. Just return the Reservation Application promptly!



ORDER TODAY AT
BRADFORDEXCHANGE.COM/LOGCABIN

Where Passion Becomes Art

RESERVATION APPLICATION

SEND NO MONEY NOW

The Bradford Exchange

9345 Milwaukee Avenue, Niles, IL 60714-1393

YES. Please reserve the *This Is Our Happy Place* Illuminated Wall Clock for me as described in this announcement.

Limit: one per customer. Please Respond Promptly

*Plus a total of \$19.99 shipping and service; see bradfordexchange.com. Limited-edition presentation restricted to 295 crafting days. Please allow 4-8 weeks after initial payment for shipment. Sales subject to product availability and order acceptance.

An Adirondack chair, fishing accessories, a rack of antlers and more capture rustic, happy-place charm

Almost
1½ feet
high!

Shown much smaller than actual size of about 17½ in. H x 8½ in. W. Requires 1 "AA" and 3 "AAA" batteries, not included.

One-of-a-kind illuminated cabin clock is sure to draw compliments in any setting



©2021 BGE 01-33082-001-BIP

Mrs. Mr. Ms.

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address

City

State

Zip

Email (optional)

01-33082-001-E40201

you take the mask off, I promise you that more often than not the hearing aid is coming with it. I lost a very expensive prescription unit this way once while hunting. And second, they offer no protection against loud noises like gun shots. So, when bowhunting I'll often use a single behind-the-ear device like a Walker's Game Ear in my left ear (in my right ear it interferes with my anchor point.)

When gun-hunting, a muff-type hearing aid that cancels out gunshot noise is the ticket for me, since I don't want to spend the dollars necessary for a custom pair of in-the-ear noise-cancelling hearing aids. Which, of course, are outstanding.

If you have trouble with your hearing and haven't tried a hearing enhancement device, I strongly encourage you to do so. First, though, go get your hearing tested by a professional. Many audiologists

do it for free in the hopes of selling you hearing aids, but there's usually no obligation. At least then you'll know what you're up against. After all, people have been trying to assist their hearing since before Columbus discovered America, using everything from non-electric means like ear trumpets, acoustic urns, and speaking tubes to a bone conduction device that appeared in 1812. The first electric hearing aid, called the Akouphone, was created by Miller Reese Hutchison in 1898. It used a carbon transmitter, so that the hearing aid could be portable. The carbon transmitter was used to amplify sound by taking a weak signal and using electric current to make it stronger.

CONCLUSION

Bob Walker passed away too soon at age 62 in February, 2016, after a two-year battle with leukemia. Though physically small in size,

Walker had a big personality and a mind that was constantly thinking outside the box. He was fun, he was smart and hard-working, and he loved helping people. He was always going a million miles an hour, full of life, smiling, ready to tackle the next challenge.

Can you hear me now? You bet I can! Thank you, Bob Walker. With your vision and innovation, you were a man that made a difference in many sportsmen's lives, including mine.

— Bob Robb is one of North America's most-traveled whitetail hunters. He has worked in the outdoors industry for more than 40 years.



ENRICH Your Land

Planting soft and hard mast orchards is a great way to significantly increase available wildlife nutrition for an extended period of time. As the industry's leading nursery, Chestnut Hill Outdoors is the trusted provider to help you reach your land stewardship goals.



chestnuthilloutdoors@gmail.com • 855.386.7826
CHESTNUTHILLOUTDOORS.COM

SINCE 1981
**CHESTNUT HILL
OUTDOORS**

THE COMPLETE NORTH AMERICAN BIG GAME "SUPER 29" COIN SET



SPECIAL
\$199
5 EASY PAYMENTS
OF \$39.80

THE GREATEST NORTH AMERICAN HUNTING CHALLENGE CELEBRATED IN A COMPLETE SET

The North American Big Game "Super 29" is the ultimate quest for a big game hunter. Fewer than 300 hunters are known to have legally taken all 29 officially recognized species of big game animals native to North America — making this one of the rarest feats in hunting.

To celebrate each of these magnificent big game trophies, American Mint has created a comprehensive 29-coin collection of 24k gold-layered coins. Available exclusively from American Mint, the coins in this limited-edition collection are in "Brilliant Uncirculated" condition and luxuriously layered in 24k gold with a full-color image of the featured animal.

Premium Wooden Collector's Box is included for FREE!

- "Brilliant Uncirculated" condition
- Layered in 24k gold
- 33 mm in diameter (1.3")
- Specially designed with a full-color image of one of the North American Big Game "Super 29"
- Strictly limited to only 9,999 complete sets worldwide
- Presented together for the first time as a complete set in a specially fitted wooden box
- Available exclusively from American Mint



ACT NOW TO GET YOUR EXCLUSIVE SET FOR JUST \$199!

3 easy ways to order:

• Mail in your completed order form and payment

• Call us toll-free at 877-807-MINT (6468)

• Go to americanmint.com/817.09

Yes! I want to order the *North American Big Game "Super 29" Coin Set* (Item #987-516-1) for just \$199. I will be billed in 5 convenient monthly installments of just \$39.80 each. My first payment is due with my order. In addition, I will receive FREE shipping and a FREE 2"-long vial of gold flakes with my order!

Name

Address

City State Zip Code

Phone Number Customer Number (if known)



Mail to:
P.O. Box 10, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Your Keycode:

817.09

PLEASE REMIT PAYMENT IN ORDER FOR SHIPMENT TO BE PROCESSED

Please charge my: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Credit Card Number:

Card Valid Through: Order Date:

X SIGNATURE REQUIRED ON ALL ORDERS

☐ Check / Money Order enclosed (made payable to American Mint)

Satisfaction Guarantee: To ensure that you are delighted with the items you receive from American Mint, all of our items are backed by our unconditional satisfaction guarantee. If you are not completely satisfied with your purchase, you may send it back within 90 days at our cost for replacement, credit, or refund — no questions asked. For questions, please contact us toll-free at 1-877-807-MINT.

All orders subject to applicable sales tax and acceptance by American Mint. ©2022 American Mint LLC



FRAGILE

FAWNS

HOW HUMAN INTERVENTION CAN AFFECT
MORTALITY RATES OF NEWBORN WHITETAILS.

Researchers routinely capture and mark newborn fawns for study. Well-meaning individuals also sometimes handle newborn fawns, thinking they're abandoned. Both cases involve certain questions and risks. For example, will such meddling contribute to abandonment and increased fawn mortality? Do marking devices (radio collars and ear tags) and frequent human observation of the marked young attract predators and lead to increased mortality?

Research-induced fawn mortality has been well documented. In fact, similar studies have also been done on beavers, waterfowl, sea otters, black bears, polar bears, small mammals and upland game birds.

How significant is marking-induced mortality among newborn white-tailed fawns? And, most importantly, do such studies yield false, inflated newborn fawn mortality rates from natural causes?

A REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

Fawn-mortality concerns led researcher Kent Livezey to review the scientific literature on marking-induced abandonment of wild ungulates in North America. His search produced 64 articles. He also tracked down 28 researchers who had experience with marking-induced abandonment of newborn ungulates. Livezey's findings were published in 1990 in the Wildlife Society Bulletin.

Livezey's purpose was to:

1. Alert biologists of marking-induced abandonment occurrences,
2. Present methods to minimize losses and encourage their use,
3. Emphasize the importance of considering abandonment mortalities in data analysis, and
4. Motivate consideration and testing of suspected causes.

MARKING-INDUCED ABANDONMENT

Livezey defines abandonment as "The permanent separation of mother and young, causing the death of the young." Clearly, however, marking-induced abandonment is extremely difficult to identify. Abandoned fawns are often killed by predators or die from malnutrition and other causes, and are generally scavenged before examined.

Marshal White, who has tagged more newborn whitetails than any other researcher, warns "most cases of (marking-induced) abandonment probably go unrecorded and are masked by resulting predation, disease and accidents." As a result, he acknowledges that the true rate of induced mortality in his studies was probably higher than the 1 percent (9 of more than 800 tagged fawns) he documented, because many carcasses were scavenged by coyotes before they could be examined. In one of these studies, 22 percent of fawns died from unknown causes.

Another 297 newborns were captured, handled, and marked in Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and South Carolina. In these studies, research-induced abandonment ranged from 2 percent to 4 percent. In all, only 8 fawns (2.6 percent) were known to be abandoned.

Although abandonment was not documented in another South Texas study, 15 of 120 (12 percent) radio-collared fawns died from starvation and unknown causes, some of which could have been due to handling and marking. Likewise, in a Virginia study, marking-induced abandonment could have accounted for some of the 13 of 165 (8 percent) ear-tagged fawns found dead or never seen again.

Even with all these uncertainties, it appears whitetails are somewhat less prone to research-induced abandonment than other ungulates.

In elk and moose, for example, such losses average about 9 percent, whereas caribou and mule deer abandonment losses average 6 percent and 5 percent, respectively. In several studies involving moose and caribou, more than 20 percent of the marked young were abandoned due to human disturbance.

Because most abandoned fawns die within three to four days, frequent observations are necessary to determine whether a newborn is abandoned. Motion-sensitive radio collars aid in this regard because they emit a distinct signal when the animal stops moving.

A doe typically moves her fawns several hundred feet from one bedding site to the next. Conversely, abandoned newborns typically remain near their capture sites for two or three days. Then, in desperation, they might travel several hundred feet before dying. Their stomachs might contain water, twigs, leaves and other material, but usually little or no milk. If fawns bawl during this final searching move, they become easy prey for alert predators, thus masking the real cause of death.

BONDING AND IMPRINTING

A doe spends from three to six hours following parturition at the birth site with her fawns. Isolation of the mother and newborn and the doe's grooming of the fawn shortly after birth are essential in establishing the mother-infant bond. Any disturbance during this period can lead to a breakdown in the imprinting process and contribute to fawn abandonment and death.

Therefore, astute researchers avoid disturbing a doe with newborn (still wet) fawns and refrain from handling the fawns until they are more than six hours old. In the case of twins or triplets, it's wise to wait until the doe moves them to separate bedding sites. This might also be good advice for photographers who sometimes are overly anxious to document the early stages of this fascinating but precarious and potentially dangerous event.

Although does generally imprint upon their fawns within a matter of

hours, it might take fawns several days to imprint upon their mothers. In the meantime, fawns might be inclined to follow any moving object, including humans. Therefore, fawns should not be allowed to follow researchers (or photographers) away from the release site.

CONFUSING THE DOE

Some researchers contend that ear tags and collars attached to newborns — or human odors — sometimes alarm does and contribute to fawn abandonment. In fact, deer, elk and antelope mothers have shown "hesitant acceptance" or outright "avoidance reactions" to their newly marked newborns. In rare instances, the mothers have struck their newly marked fawns, sometimes killing them.

Colored ear streamers or collars sometimes prevent recognition of the fawns by their mothers. In one study with pronghorns, researchers tested four types of collars and found a positive correlation between collar size and abandonment rate.

In another study, researchers suspected the re-use of uncleaned collars transferred the scent of one caribou calf to others and contributed to an exceptionally high abandonment rate — 32.8 percent.

Most researchers minimize the transfer of human or strange deer odors to marked animals. Preventive measures generally involve using plastic gloves and coveralls, as well as washing and air-drying collars, nets, weighing sacks and other fawn-handling equipment. Some researchers store collars and other gear in scented plastic bags containing sage-brush, soil, moss or other vegetation.

CAPTURE-RELATED STRESS

Newborn whitetails are hidiers. They seldom flee from danger until they are more than seven or eight days old. However, they become surprisingly strong runners within two weeks. Hence, most fawns captured for marking are handled during their first week of life.

If handled gently, most fawns less than four days old can be captured and marked with minimal struggling and bleating. In such cases, the fawn isn't overly stressed



and its mother may or may not be aware of the disturbance. However, older fawns invariably try to escape handlers and bawl in the process, which normally causes the mother to rush to the site to investigate.

Most researchers need less than five minutes to attach a radio collar and record a fawn's sex, age and weight. Logically, the less time involved, the less likely a researcher will disturb the mother and induce abandonment. However, some fawns have survived after being detained for nearly an hour.

POPULATION DENSITY

Marked fawns in densely populated herds tend to experience a higher rate of abandonment than fawns in more sparsely populated herds. This tendency has also been observed among caribou, particularly in larger post-calving herds, because the mother is more inclined to flee with other cows.

In enclosure studies, I observed a direct relationship between herd density and the rate of fawn abandonment. As deer numbers went up, so did fawn abandonment rates among first-time mothers. Because fawn-rearing whitetails are territorial for four to six weeks, high deer density limits fawning space. This contributes to high abandonment rates (possibly 50 percent or more at densities in

excess of 100 deer per square mile) among fawns dropped by young does. This occurs whether or not fawns were handled and marked, because psychological factors and limited fawning areas create enormous stress.

THE ROLE OF NUTRITION

Some studies have shown does malnourished during pregnancy are more apt to abandon their young within a few days after birth.

This phenomenon of fawn rejection by malnourished does — referred to as a “maternal rejection syndrome” — is similar to that resulting from cases of crowding and high deer densities. In either case, such abnormal behavior stems from the mother's insufficient production of prolactin, a hormone produced by the pituitary gland, which induces milk production and promotes the maternal instinct.

Therefore, higher rates of marking-induced abandonment can be expected in areas of poor forage production, most commonly a by-product of high deer density. Increased newborn fawn abandonment can also be expected on Northern range following severe winters.

THE MOTHER'S AGE

Maternally experienced does are normally good mothers. Even if

they're disturbed during the critical period shortly after giving birth, does imprint upon their fawns and defend them. In contrast, first-time mothers are more apt to abandon their fawns when threatened, in favor of saving themselves. In other words, abandonment rates might be inflated if the majority of the marked newborns are progeny of young, first-time mothers.

MY RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

During a nine-year study, I captured and handled 76 newborns. All were ear-tagged, and most were fitted with radio-collars. Although I took no special precautions to minimize human odor, only two of these marked individuals were abandoned; both were born to a first-time mother and were handled when about an hour old.

In this study, I determined doe pregnancy rates using X-rays. As a result, I knew exactly how many fawns were born annually. I also knew how many survived, because I live-trapped the entire population each winter.

In all, 344 fawns were born during the study, 55 of which died (16 percent) when less than a month old. Fawn mortality rates ranged from 2 percent to 38 percent annually, being highest when black bears entered the enclosure and killed an undetermined number of

fawns. Forty-one of the dead fawns were never marked, whereas 14 were marked with ear tags and/or radio-collars when less than 2 weeks old. Overall, captured and tagged fawns suffered less mortality than the unhandled fawns (9 versus 18 percent).

Because marked fawns suffered a mortality rate only half that of unmarked fawns, many unmarked individuals apparently died when less than 2 days old. As a result, I probably marked the healthiest fawns.

Therefore, I concluded that capture-induced mortality among healthy white-tailed fawns is minimal. Furthermore, it appears that use of newborn fawn capture and tagging data might grossly underestimate newborn fawn losses — not overestimate, as some propose — especially wherever pregnant does are malnourished.

CONCLUSIONS

Clearly, human disturbance can contribute to increased newborn

fawn mortality, but identifying human-induced abandonment of newborn fawns isn't easy. Predators probably kill many, whereas others die from dehydration, malnutrition or hypothermia and are soon scavenged.

I believe, however, that handling fawns too soon after birth can interrupt the initial bonding and imprinting process and contribute to higher-than-normal mortality rates. Also, first-time mothers and malnourished maternally experienced does are more likely to abandon their fawns, even if the fawns are not handled by humans. This is especially true if deer density is high.

The risks of marking-induced abandonment can probably be minimized by not handling fawns too soon after birth and by reducing the time involved in handling fawns. And as Livezey concluded, "Using efficient, nonodorous, less visually obtrusive methods of capture and marking can encourage successful reuniting

of young and their dams after marking."

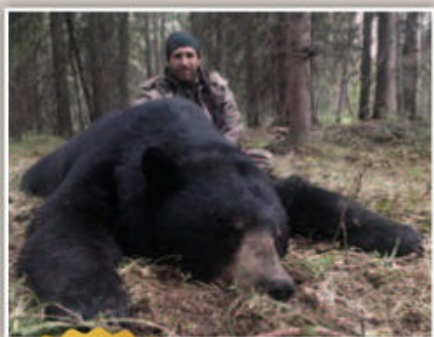
— John Ozoga earned bachelor and master of science degrees in wildlife management and was a professional deer researcher for more than 30 years. He has been D&DH's research editor since 1994.

LITERATURE CITED

Livezey, K.B. 1990. "Toward the Reduction of Marking-Induced Abandonment of Newborn Ungulates." Wildlife Society Bulletin. 18:193-203.

Ozoga, J.J. 1996. Whitetail Spring: Seasons of the Whitetail, Book Three. Willow Creek Press. Minocqua, Wis. 144 pages.

Ozoga, J.J. and R.K. Clute. "Mortality Rates of Marked and Unmarked Fawns." Journal of Wildlife Management. 52:549-551.



**WE HAVE
GIANT
BEARS**

WHERE TROPHY DREAMS BECOME REALITY

Book the Hunt of a Lifetime!

157,000 acres with two separate lodges. We offer: Bow, Muzzleloader or Rifle Hunts for Whitetails. Extremely low hunting pressure, many stands go untouched for seasons!

LIMITED SPOTS REMAIN FOR 2022, RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY!

Give me a call, check out our website and be sure to look at our references. We strive to make sure you have a hunt of a lifetime.

RYLEY'S PHONE: **306.549.7501** | EMAIL: **Ryley@saskatchewanbigbuckadventures.com**

www.saskatchewanbigbuckadventures.com

**PURSUIT CHANNEL DELIVERS THE OUTDOORS STRAIGHT
TO YOUR TV AND DEVICES WITH THE CLICK OF A BUTTON.
DOWNLOAD OUR APP TODAY AND NEVER MISS AN EPISODE.**



- DISH CHANNEL 393 •
- DIRECT TV CHANNEL 604 •
- VERIZON CHANNEL 818 •
- CENTURY LINK 1677 •
- ATT U-VERSE 1644 •
- ROKU SEARCH PURSUIT CHANNEL •
- WWW.VIDILLION.TV/PURSUITCHANNEL •

pursuit^{UP}
We Deliver the Outdoors

WWW.PURSUITUPTV.COM



FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

[FACEBOOK.COM/THEPURSUITCHANNEL](https://www.facebook.com/thepursuitchannel)

[INSTAGRAM.COM/PURSUITCHANNEL](https://www.instagram.com/pursuitchannel)

[@PURSUITCHANNEL/TWEETS](https://twitter.com/pursuitchannel)





CREATE A MASTER PLAN FOR BIG BUCKS

EVEN HIGHER PRESSURED BUCKS, WHEN DESPERATE FOR VERY LIMITED FOOD SUPPLIES, TEND TO REPEATEDLY EXPOSE THEMSELVES TO DANGER. HERE'S HOW YOU CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE.

In life, I'm an extremely lucky man. I somehow tricked a very smart, pretty and funny girl into marrying me, only for her to become my best friend. All of my children and loved ones are relatively healthy, safe and productive members of society. I've got a dream job that you all literally empowered me to have, good health, a roof over our heads, food in the stomachs and, though we'll never be rich in finances, we are rich in what truly matters and have enough to not sweat the bills each month. Heck, I can make a legit case that I'm the luckiest man in the world, in no small part due to all of you!

When it comes to hunting, I'm also very lucky. As with life, there are many things one can't fully control. Sure, we can impact our health, but if we are born with failed immunities, well, such are the cards we're dealt. That said, even then we can take steps to minimize the bad luck we were dealt. Also like in real life, the more thorough and solid our plan for dealing with issues are, the more we tend to make our own luck.

Here is how I strive to plan for both season and habitat improvements. Not surprisingly, the better my plan the luckier I consistently get.

FLAWS OF ONE SIZE FITS ALL

Pooling resources can be truly awesome. Most that hunt or improve the habitat have real jobs and lives that don't allow for near limitless time to invest in

researching, studying, planning and implementing said plans, all for what is generally a hobby. Yes, this may be a true passion for many of us, but it doesn't pay the bills, help with homework, clean up around the house or put clothing on our loved one's backs. Learning from others is a way to reduce these limitations.

The issue lies in every person, property and resident deer herd being at least somewhat different. A stark example of this was when I planted dwarf essex rape at slam dunk location in Northern Missouri. The following spring, the plot looked like it belonged on the cover of Farm Digest Weekly. The only issue was that the deer were supposed to clean it up the previous fall and early winter. Unlike the many locations the deer had done just that for me in Central and Northern Wisconsin, the Northern Missouri deer completely



WINDIGO IMAGES

ignored it. After all, they had corn and bean wastes laying in fields, acorns not covered in snow in the woods and even had greens to eat in January. The Wisconsin deer I'd fed had sticks, buds, dead grasses and weeds or my plot. There's a bit of a difference there.

There in lies the rub. Though one can easily understand how deer two states apart may act differently, it's also the case between adjoining states, adjoining counties, adjoining townships and even adjoining properties. Habitat and topography are comparatively rarely a constant across an entire property, much less from property to property. Will the differences be as pronounced as the rape plot's experience? Occasionally, sometimes less and sometimes even more so.

That same area, I arrowed a 4.5 year old buck that had busted me cold in stand, at less than 20 yards. He caught me or the camera person moving and literally stared holes in us for a minute or two, before dismissing us as harmless and started making a scrape, when the Easton vanished in his boiler room.

Simple question time. How many believe they could pull that off on a buck half his age, where you hunt? I've hunted a bunch of places and can only think of two areas that I believe I could pull that off. Why

could one do that a handful of years back, in that specific area? The true answer is that the overwhelming majority of hunting in that area was done inside trucks creeping along back roads and through fields. The deer hadn't been trained to fear idiots like me sitting in trees.

That said, seemingly minor details can make the world of difference, as well. One property I managed had been over ran with hunters. They literally blew up their deer cover, starting a couple weeks before bow season on through gun. After gun hunting, they'd hang it up for the year.

Simply because of their actions, the neighbors had much better hunting on through the rut. After all, the hunters on the ground I eventually managed were essentially doing four or five deer drives a week, starting before season ever began. When the neighbors aren't exploding their grounds, the deer have a very strong tendency to shift to areas of lower pressure.

Now, what they did have was some truly prime north country bedding. A stand of evergreens on a southern exposure was in its prime age range to offer thermal cover, but had just enough grassy openings to also allow the deer to sun themselves, when they desired,

as well. Historically, as soon as our group of hunters left the woods for the year and the temps would really drop, the deer would filter into their bedding and the quality of the neighbor's hunts would drop hard.

In that situation, merely the differences in hunting tactics or the prime bedding spot alone is enough to cause these deer to act differently than they otherwise would. Add them both together and it becomes even more impactful differences.

Sorry for wasting so many words on this, but this actually is the most critical portion of this entire piece to grasp. Every person and property are different. Because of that, no cookie cutter, one size fits all plan will ever be as effective as catering one's plans to accentuate our personal, habitat's and resident deer's strengths, while minimizing our collective weak points.

Learning from others can be extremely beneficial in a bunch of ways. Just always realize that what worked great for your buddy down the road may actually be a dismal failure for you to employ. When making changes, keep that in mind and start small, evaluate, adjust and proceed, repeating that as many times as required to hit our own personal sweet spots.

CRACK THE CODE WITH

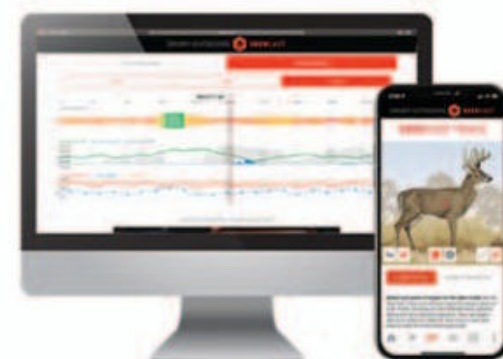


DEERCAST



DRURY OUTDOORS | **DEERCAST**

With DeerCast, harness over 70 years of Mark and Terry Drury's whitetail hunting expertise through real-time, algorithm-driven deer movement forecasts based off of up-to-date weather information for your precise location. See inside your shot, track & recover your deer with the revolutionary DeerCast Track tool. Enjoy the entire catalog of classic & current DOD videos, share your kills, and get daily hunting articles. There's so much more to discover in DeerCast. Go check it out now in your app store or at DeerCast.com!



WWW.DEERCAST.COM



HUNTING PLANS

With all of that in mind, this is how I try to plan out the season as a whole. Please keep in mind that I am huge on planning, but even a bigger fan of being rigidly flexible and adjusting on the fly, when the deer or my lack of success are suggesting I do so. Plans are awesome, but flexibility is what truly makes them sing!

I approach about every season with the same general foundation of a plan. That is to hunt stands that are hot for what the deer want that specific day, during that specific phase of season. Very generally speaking, I follow the same formula every year:

Start hunting food and water, as that's what the deer want and need, before the rut.

Shift to specifically hunting the hottest scrapes offering good odds of daylight visits for about 10-14 days before breeding begins.

Once breeding starts, I hunt the does concentrations, as that's what Mr. Big is hunting.

Post rut, I hunt prime food in the PMs and the most dominant doe group bedding in the AMs, as I'm trying to catch Mr. Big checking on the doe fawns, and the PM food is what both the doe fawns and Mr. Big need, where as bedding is where he'll find them in the AM, most often.

Then, I take it a step further. I need stands for each of those phases that work best in very windy, hot, wet and cold days. The weather is going to impact their movements and I want to be able to capitalize on that.

There is also a theme as it applies to aggressiveness through the season. I again match that to what's going on in the deer world.

During early season, there is a comparative surplus of food and the deer have little incentive to tolerate pressure. So, I strive to hunt lower impact food related stands. As we near the peak scraping phase, the testosterone levels in bucks are rising and driving them to be less cautious. That allows us to get more aggressive, with decreased risks, as we go through the rut. After all, during breeding is the one time that

most any of us can be busted by a buck, only to have a doe lead him past us ten minutes later. Safety is still a concern, just maybe not as much as perpetuating the species, when the buck's testosterone levels are truly rocking.

Once the peak breeding has gone, Mr. Big realizes that there are still doe fawns to be had, but the true frenzy has waned. That said, they've lost 25-30% body weight and, at least for the Midwestern and points north herds, are facing their seasonal low point for food. They are running negative energy balances, meaning they burn more calories to heat their bodies and enduring daily tasks than they get from their food stuffs.

No, these deer are not as sensitive to pressure as they are earlier, specifically as it applies to abandoning prime food by getting bumped. Even higher pressured bucks, when desperate for very limited food supplies, tend to repeatedly expose themselves to danger, even after busting a hunter a time or two. So, one can comparatively be a bit more aggressive than in early season. The catch is that most all the deer are on high alert at this point of season. So, make doubly sure that one is careful with movements, sounds and odors.

NAILING A HUNT

When it comes to planning an individual hunt, I merely modify the seasonal approach.

The first task is always to ID how much pressure the area receives. If it's high pressure, I'm seeking out the areas no one else goes and then trying to apply the tactics for that phase of season and the habitat's specifics.

When hunting low to moderate pressure, I'm merely looking for the hot spots for that phase of season.

In both cases, let's say I have nine days to hunt. I'll start by hunting the highest odds stands in what I consider the low impact group, meaning I feel safe getting to, hunting and from stand, without spooking deer. My goal is to get it done from the low impact group, leaving the deer ignorant to my hunting efforts.

If we get to day 3 and low impact just isn't cutting it, I'll shift to the best of the more mid-range impactful stands. By day 7, if I still am not getting it done, I'll shift to the most promise, higher impact stands I have available.

In my experience, too many go straight for their best stands on day one of a trip. Unfortunately, those are often not well suited for the phase of season and/or very impactful stands. We tend to repeat on day two and three and four, until we aren't even half way through our hunt and have already told every deer we're hunting to stay away.

Instead, by targeting the hot stands for that phase and then gradually ramping the aggression as required, we have much higher odds of the hunt getting better, not worse with each passing day

CONCLUSION

I love my hunting plan. It works extremely well for me in the areas I hunt. That said, please don't follow what I do to the letter. It's my hope that it becomes a starting point, but I can all but promise that the best place for each of us to land will be at least somewhat different. So, adjust on the fly, tossing what doesn't work well and replacing it with what simply works best for you, in your unique situation.

Finally, never forget that deer are the only true experts on their own behaviors. We are lucky to accurately ID their overall tendencies, which by default means there will be all sorts of exceptions. When deer are telling you, through sign, pictures or sightings, to break the rules of your plan to tag them, listen and forget about what any expert has to say about it. They are the only true experts on what they do, when and why. The rest of us just make educated guesses and try to sound smarter than we really are.

— For more tips and tactics, be sure to check out Steve's "Hunt 'em Big!" video series at our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/DDHOnline





THE SHOOTING STICK THAT GOES FROM **8 INCHES TO OVER 60 INCHES** (and everything in-between)

Serious shooters know the value of shooting sticks, but for many years hunters have avoided using them due to their bulky nature and clumsy design. The new Solid Aim Shooting stick eliminates these flaws, giving you a sturdy solid shooting platform in a quickly deployable and ultra-compact design. At only 8 inches, the Solid Aim shooting stick will easily fit into a pocket or pack, yet still allows you to adjust from 8 inches to over 60 inches in an instant. Best of all it works with rifles, shotguns, pistols, and crossbows. Use it while stalking, in blinds, and even in tree stands.

► **EXTENDABLE**

Pull the foot to extend length

► **ADJUSTABLE**

Adjusts from 8 to over 60 inches

► **AIMABLE**

Head pivots 180 degrees left/right for easy aiming

► **RETRACTABLE**

Press the trigger to retract to 8 inches

► **PACKABLE**

The only stick that fits in your pack



AVAILABLE AT AMAZON

SOLIDAIM.COM

THE BEST SEED DOESN'T NECESSARILY RESULT IN THE BEST FOOD PLOT. RATHER, THE BEST SEED FOR YOUR SITUATION IS WHAT WILL ULTIMATELY DETERMINE YOUR SUCCESS.

Seed bag tags can throw you for a loop if you fail to pay attention to what they're telling you, because they tell you everything that's important about your bag of seed. When you look at a seed label, you'll see numbers, many numbers. All those numbers are significant; the Federal Seed Act and all state seed laws require a seed label. In fact, the U.S. has some of the most stringent seed laws in the world. The seed label reflects those laws.

Many people don't even pay attention to bag tags. That is a mistake. With food plots and other conservation practices, you need to know **WHAT** to plant, but maybe more important, **HOW MUCH** to plant. And you want to be sure the bag or bags don't have seeds you don't want. Understanding the seed label will allow proper decision-making when planning and installing any seeding.

**READ
BEFORE
YOU SEED**



It is essential to know and properly interpret what is in the bag. One of the most important parts of establishing desired plant growth for any food plot or other conservation practice is making sure that the correct species, variety and amount of seed is planted.

For instance, seed bags hardly ever have 100 percent pure live seed — known as PLS — so when instructions tell you to plant ‘X’ pounds per acre of a specific seed, you need to calculate the number of pounds a bag has of pure live seed, and then work from there to find out how much more contents from additional bags you may need to plant to get the desired ‘X’ pounds of pure live seed of the species you intend to plant.

More than one factor is involved in these calculations, so hang in here.

COMPONENTS OF THE SEED LABEL

The law requires that each seed lot offered for sale must be truthfully labeled. This is regulated by the Federal Seed Act as well as state seed laws. In addition, all state certification agencies comply with the minimum requirements and standards of the Association of Official Seed Certification Agencies (AOSCA) to insure uniform testing methods and minimum standards of seed quality.



The format of seed labels may and probably will vary, but all labels will have some semblance of the following as required by the Federal Seed Act for seed in interstate commerce. Some of this information is from Pat T. Miller, director of state affairs for the American Seed Trade Association, and Mike Stahr, Seed Lab Manager of the Iowa State University Seed Laboratory, and some is from “A Simplified Guide to Understanding Seed Labels” Technical Note No. 2 by John M. Englert, manager of the USDA-NRCS National Plant Materials Center, Beltsville, Maryland.

Here’s the list:

- Product name** — the brand name and/or species name, so you, the consumer, know what you are getting; this is sometimes called the variety and kind.
- Lot Number** — a series of letters or numbers assigned by the grower so the seed can be traced to its origin.
- Origin** — state where the seed was grown.
- Net weight** — how much material is in the bag/ container.

Expect **MOTZ** from your food plot equipment.

MADE IN AMERICA. BUILT TO LAST.



G3 ATV MODEL

G3 MODEL



The Firminator G-3 models feature 16-inch or 18-inch ground turning discs, a seed hopper featuring the precision Accurate Seeding System, and a true agricultural-grade, cast-iron cultipacker. The G-3 is available in a compact ATV unit and 4-foot, 5-foot, 6-foot or 8-foot tractor units for premium results.

FIRMINATOR
By Ranew's Outdoor Equipment®

THEFIRMINATOR.COM

678.544.4400 / WYANCY@RANEWS.COM



•**Pure seed** — percentage by weight of the desired seed(s), based on the weight of the entire contents of the bag.

•**Inert matter** — Percent by weight of material in the bag that is plant debris or other materials that are not seed; in other words, whatever is in the bag that doesn't grow.

•**Other crop seeds** — percent by weight of seeds not considered weed seeds.

•**Weed seeds** — percentage by weight of weed seeds, unless they are considered restricted noxious weed seeds by law where the seed will be sold.

•**Names of restricted noxious seed** (with number per pound of seed). Noxious weed species vary by state. There are two types of noxious weeds — restricted and prohibited. Restricted weeds are listed as seeds per pound of material in the bag (usually around 0.25%).

Prohibited noxious weed seeds are not allowed.

•**Germination** (germ) — the percentage of seed in the bag that is expected to grow (based on a lab test).

•**Treatment** — coatings generally used to enhance germination, protect the seed, or assist in growth.

•**Hard seed** — seed which does not germinate readily because of a hard seed coat.

HANES GEO COMPONENTS

WI DOT MIX #40
LOT# SLIAX16560

	PURITY	GERM	H SEED	Total	ORIGIN
Kentucky Blue grass	33.48	85	00	85	WA
Boreal Creeping Red Fescue	28.84	90	00	90	MN
Perennial Ryegrass	19.77	85	00	85	CAN
Inert Matter	14.92	85	00	85	OR
Other Crop Seed	2.33%				
Weed Seed	0.42%				
Noxious Weed Seeds	0.04%				

Tested 10-20
Net Wt.: 50#(22.68kg)
AMS # 46
**Variety Not Stated

HANES GEO COMPONENTS, MENOMONEE FALLS, WI 53501

Reliable Seed Company
123 Production Way
Seedville, VA 12345 USA
Phone: (123) 456-7890

'Rumsey' yellow indiangrass
Sorghastrum nutans

NET WEIGHT:	25 lbs	PURE SEED:	93.80%
LOT #:	1B097	OTHER CROP:	0.00%
DATE TESTED:	January 2006	INERT MATTER:	5.60%
ORIGIN:	PA	WEED SEED:	0.60%
		GERMINATION:	32.00%
NOXIOUS:	21/lb Giant Foxtail 15/lb Wild Garlic	HARD SEED:	0.00%
		DORMANT:	61.00%

DO NOT USE FOR FOOD, FEED, OR OIL PURPOSES
IMPERIAL WHITETAIL WINTER PEAS PLUS MIXTURE
Lot # WPPJIL

Ingredients	Kind	Germination	Hard Seed	Origin
87.64%	WINA 204 Peas	80%	5%	ID
06.48%	Whitetail 105069 Oats	85%		ID
02.93%	WINA 412 Radish	85%		ID
00.99%	WINA 210K Kale	85%		ID
00.05%	Other Crop Seeds			
00.33%	Inert Matter			
01.53%	RainBond Polymer Coating			
00.05%	Weed Seeds			

AMS 535

Test Date: April 2021
Noxious Weed Seeds: None Found
Net Weight: 11 LBS

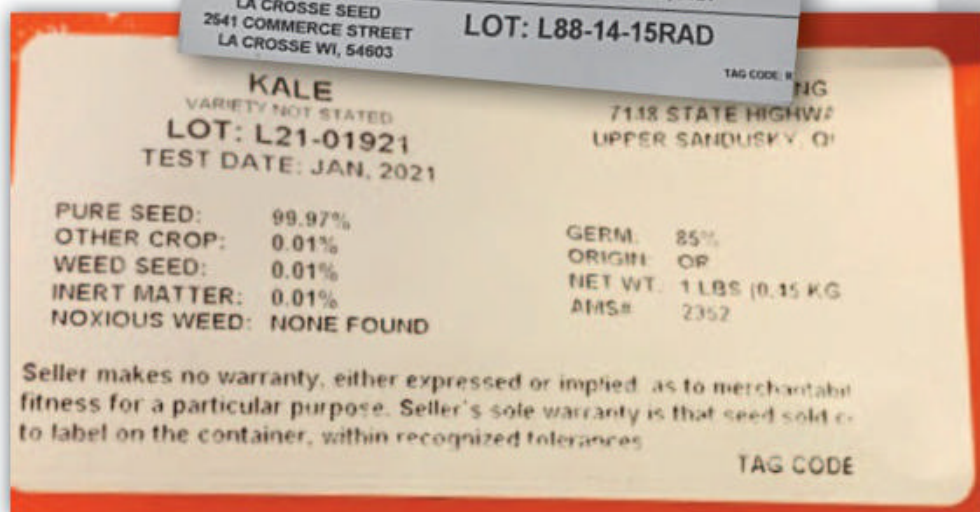
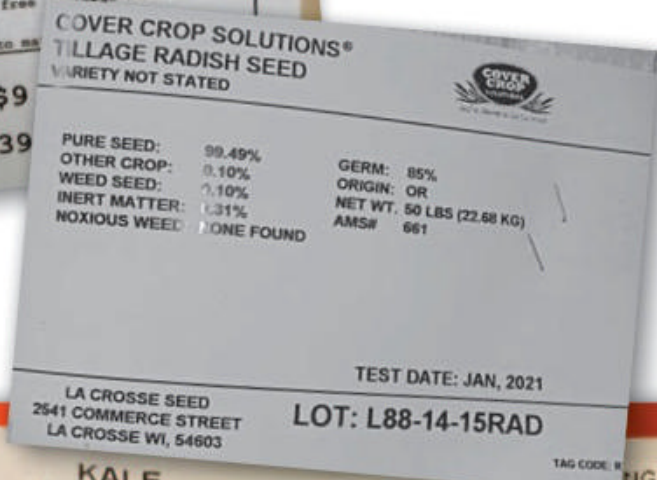
Whitetail Institute
239 Whitetail Trail
Pittsboro, AL 36043

Wildlife Sunflower

Ideal Ph: 6.0 Seeding
Rates Pure Stand: 20-25 lbs per Acre
Mixture: 5-8 lbs per Acre. Best Planting Time: Summer

- Annual
- Plant this about the same time as soybeans
- Deer will eat all parts of the sunflower
- Good for Does to fatten up after raising Fawns

\$2.00 per lb.
50# Bag \$70.00



Seed	Origin	Purity	Germ
Evergraze	OR	65.90%	90%
Noxious	0.00%	Weed Seed	0.05%
Lot	13161	Other Crop	0.05%
Test Date	12-20	Inert Matter	34.4%
		Germination	90%
		Hard Seed	%
		Total Germ	90%

Warranty & Disclaimer
 Dry seed are warranted only that the seeds are as described on the bag or tag, within recognized tolerances. This warranty is subject to the Purchaser's proper handling, storage and use of this product. In any event our liability will be limited only to the purchase price of the seed.

All Seeds are Inoculated
 P.O. Box 516
 Omro WI 54963
 Phone: 920-685-2929
 Fax: 920-685-6727
 www.kestersnursery.com

•**Dormant seed** — seed which does not germinate readily because it requires a pre-treatment or weathering in the soil. (Some suppliers may combine hard and dormant seed on the label.)

•**Germination test date** — Month and date this lot was tested. This should be within 12

months of the planned date for using the seed. The date of the standard germination test must be listed, even if it is different from the dates of other tests done.

•**Name and address** of the company providing the seed.

•**Other items** deemed necessary by your state.

RESEARCH EQUALS RESULTS

WE STARTED THE FOOD PLOT REVOLUTION AND OVER 30 YEARS LATER, WE CONTINUE TO LEAD

WHITETAIL INSTITUTE
 Since 1988

WHITETAIL INSTITUTE ~ 239 Whitetail Trail, Pintlala, AL 36043 • 800-688-3030 • www.whitetailinstitute.com



This list is not all-inclusive. It may vary from state to state. You may also see the following additional information on the label:

•**Total Viability** and/or Germination — this may or may not be stated. To get total viability, add Germination + Hard Seed + Dormant Seed. Total viability may not equal 100%. This just means that some of the seed is not viable and will not germinate.

EVEN MORE INFO

In addition to the seed analysis label, there may be a second label indicating the certification class of seed. The most typical second label would be blue and would indicate it as **CERTIFIED SEED**.

Certified seed is the progeny of seed that has been handled to maintain genetic identity and purity and has been approved by a state certifying agency. Certified seed should be the first choice for any seeding project, especially when cultivars are used. (A cultivar is a plant that is selected for

desirable characteristics that can be maintained by propagation.

USING THE SEED LABEL

•The total of Pure Seed, Other Crop Inert Matter and Weed Seed should always equal 100%.

•If the purity or germination is very low, you may not want to use the seed.

•If there are noxious weeds, you should know what they are and whether they will be a problem on your planting site.

•Always purchase and use seed based on Pure Live Seed (PLS). PLS is the amount of seed which will germinate and can be calculated using numbers from the seed label.

First, determine total viability.

Viability = germination + hard seed + dormant seed.

Viability is the percent of seed which will germinate, though it may not all germinate the first season. In our example above, total

viability = 93.00%.

Next, calculate the amount of Pure Live Seed (PLS).

$PLS = \% Purity \times \% Viability / 100$

In our example: $PLS = (93.8 \times 93) / 100 = 87.23\%$

•PLS can be used for calculating the amount of seed you will need to buy for a planting or when calibrating the output of a drill.

$Bulk\ seed/acre = lbs.\ PLS\ recommended/acre/Percent\ PLS$

If you want to seed 10 acres at 8 lbs. PLS/acre, then:

$8\ lbs.\ PLS/acre = 9.17\ lbs.\ bulk/acre \times 10\ acres = 91.7\ lbs.\ bulk\ seed\ needed / .8723\ PLS$

•Most native plant seed is sold on a PLS basis because germination and purity can be so variable. Always specify buying seed by the PLS pound to make sure you get the amount of seed you need. Some of the cool-season turf-type grasses (fescues, orchard grass) and agronomic seed (oats, rye) are sold on the basis of bulk pounds

only because germination and purity are typically very high and minimums are regulated by the Federal Seed Act. Under the FSA, minimum germination rates are listed for each type of plant. These minimums include 65% for chicory, 75% for kale and 80% for turnips.

DISEASE DANGERS

Diseases occur with nearly all food plot varieties — caused by pathogens such as fungi, bacteria, viruses and nematodes. Depending on the particular pathogen, diseases can affect the leaves, stems, roots and crown, and are sometimes highly visible but other times not.

Weather conditions also affect the severity of diseases with some diseases being more prevalent in wet, humid or dry conditions. Most pathogens live in and accumulate in the soil, so the combination of the right environmental conditions along with the total number of pathogens present will relate to the severity of the disease.

While some pathogens can live

in the soil for many years, others die more quickly when the host plant variety is no longer present. Both clover and alfalfa can suffer from several fungal, bacterial and other pathogenic-caused diseases. Some of the common ones are root rot, leaf spot and wilts.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Seed labs can conduct more than 50 types of tests. Many of these are not used to provide information for the label but provide supporting information to the seed company.

The standard (or warm) germination test is conducted under conditions considered ideal and so its results are likely the maximum germination rate of that seed. It must be remembered that fields vary in soil type, fertility, fungal and insect population, environmental conditions, etc., so the germination percentage or the result of a vigor test may or may not match field emergence.

Vigor of a seedling isn't considered in the germination test,

but rather that the parts of a seedling are present and not badly damaged mechanically or by fungi or insects.

Also determined in the germination test is the percentage of dead seed, dormant seed (those that take up moisture but don't grow) and hard seeds (certain types of seeds that can have a seed coat that doesn't allow water to penetrate until later).

There's more to a bag of seed than meets your eye, but when you study the seed bag label you can find out all you need to know.

— Glenn Helgeland is a former hunting industry executive, book author and bowhunter with more than 60 years of deer hunting experience. For more than 30 years, he owned and operated Target Communications, founders of deer and turkey expos across the Midwest.



WELCOME WILDLIFE WITH A WELL-CRAFTED FOOD PLOT

GREAT PLAINS COMPACT DRILLS

With over 45 years of seeding experience, Great Plains is the industry leader in compact seeding systems for food plots, wildlife management, rental fleets, and more.

Great Plains compact drills are available in no-till and min-till models and are engineered to achieve better results than broadcast seeding. Simple to operate and quality built, a Great Plains compact drill is sure to fit your needs with tough, rugged dependability.



Explore compact drill solutions at GreatPlainsAg.com/FoodPlot.



©2022 Great Plains

DDH TV

SEASON 18

GET READY FOR 13 BRAND-NEW
EPISODES OF AMERICA'S FAVORITE
DEER HUNTING SHOW!

DDH-TV WILL AGAIN ANCHOR
THE 2-HOUR SATURDAY NIGHT
DEER CAMP ON PURSUIT CHANNEL

pursuit
We Deliver the Outdoors

pursuitUP
We Deliver the Outdoors

WILD
TELEVISION NETWORK

PHOTO BY CHARLES ALSHEIMER

BROUGHT TO YOU BY OUR SPONSORS:

WALKER'S



TENPOINT
CROSSBOW TECHNOLOGIES

SEVR
STRAIGHT THROUGH IT.

HuntStand

MUD

**OUTDOOR
EDGE**
KNIVES/TOOLS

Hornady

Cuddeback
Digital

WILDLIFE
RESEARCH CENTER

EASTON

Mathews

BANKS
Outdoors

SIGSAUER

FIRE



Prescribed fire can be just what your property needs, if used correctly.

DUP

**CONSIDERING PRESCRIBED
FIRE FOR YOUR PROPERTY?
IT'S BEST TO KNOW
THE INS AND OUTS OF
CONTROLLED BURNS,
ESPECIALLY THE FREQUENCY,
BEFORE PLANNING ONE**

BY JOSH HONEYCUTT

Fire is good. It's helped mankind achieve many things it otherwise wouldn't without it. In some ways, that's also true for wildlife management.

Once regarded as completely unsafe for land management implementation, prescribed fire has been led by a headwind the past few decades. Once again, it's being used to manage wildlife habitat. But ironically, it isn't a new thing, as the Native Americans used it in this manner, too.

Controlled burns aren't for everyone, though. Some should

use them, and others shouldn't. Furthermore, frequency is a very big topic to consider, too. We'll cover that and then some below.

PRESCRIBED FIRE: WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

Those who don't quite understand prescribed fire should understand that this is used for numerous reasons. First, it's primary purpose is to reset the

SAFETY FIRST

“Each state is different, but in general, you need to acquire prescribed fire certification to be able to get your own burn permit and be covered from a liability standpoint,” Adams said. “Many states (and private consultants) provide this service to landowners for a fee, so there are options to using prescribed fire.”

If you're thinking about conducting a controlled burn, there are certain things to do. While this isn't a complete list, these are among the most important safety factors:

- Consult with your state forestry agency
- Create a controlled burn plan
- Bring in professionals to help plan and execute the burn
- Get a prescribed fire permit
- Create firebreaks to minimize the risk of fires getting out of hand
- Wait for ideal conditions
- There are different burning techniques, but the best and safest is a backfire that works into the wind. When used properly, head fires, flank fires, and other techniques are sometimes part of the process, too.
- Put out remaining flames once the burn is over
- As always, follow all other safety protocols, too.

successional clock. And it's a very cost-effective tool for doing so.

“Deer can survive without fire, but prescribed fire can dramatically improve the quality of deer habitat from a cover and forage perspective,” said Kip Adams, chief conservation officer for the National Deer Association.

It also encourages new growth, which improves the overall habitat. This practice creates better, and more accessible forage and food sources at ground level. It does so by resetting the clock on the ground floor, and in some instances, can help open the tree canopy so new plants can grow. Much-needed grasses and forbs regenerate after a controlled burn within a year or so. Within three to five, you can have truly excellent bedding cover, including excellent fawning cover.

This method also excels at killing unwanted plant and tree species. This makes room for native species, such as big and little bluestem grasses, among others. Synonymously, these can reduce ticks and other unwanted pests, too. It even helps prevent catastrophic wildfires, as fires can destroy manmade structures, desirable trees, dormant seeds in the soil (especially with sensitive tree species), and more.

PRESCRIBED FIRE: WHO SHOULD USE PRESCRIBED FIRE?

It's important to note that controlled burns aren't for everyone or every property. To determine this, start by asking relevant questions. Is the property too close to burn-sensitive things, such as airports, subdivisions, etc.? With your personal goals in mind, will it benefit



SPRING CLEANUP • SUMMER MOWING • FALL CLEANUP

YOUR ALL-SEASON RAKE

Get Your **FREE INFO KIT** to learn more!
Call: **1-800-601-4252** or Visit: **CycloneRake.com**

The Cyclone Rake is shown with optional Mower Deck Adapter. Mower not included. ©2022 Woodland Power Products, Inc. • 72 Acton Street • West Haven, CT 06516



Conducting a controlled burn requires a team of people who know what they're doing.

the land? Do you want more cover? Do you already have enough cover, but lack food sources, such as forbs and hard mast? Are you managing the land for maximum wildlife or timber value (because these two things don't go hand in hand)? There are other questions to consider, but these are among the most important.

Of course, we never want to decrease the value of the property by burning it. If you're worried about damaging marketable timber, and it's a stand of mature trees in question, perhaps log that area prior to implementing prescribed fire. Of course, prescribed fire only works when adequate sunlight can reach the forest floor. If you have a thick forest canopy, and light can't reach the ground, there's no real need to burn just yet, as there won't be much forest regeneration anyway.

"Prescribed fire can be a very important tool to maintain and enhance deer habitat," said Charles Ruth, a certified wildlife biologist and big game program coordinator with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. "The importance of fire depends on the age and composition of

the timber stands on a property. Ultimately, however, most stands will need prescribed fire at some point to maintain adequate desirable understory vegetation for food and cover."

For those who haven't considered using prescribed fire, there might be signs throughout the property that express a need for it. These include invasive plant species, volatile shrubbery, dead brush, fallen logs, high levels of debris lifting fuel up off the ground, and more. A controlled burn can clean these things up.

All things considered, there are other questions to ask and things to consider, such as ideal burn conditions, and instances when you should call it off.

WHAT'S THE RIGHT PRESCRIBED FIRE FREQUENCY?

So, for the question you've all came for — how often should you use prescribed fire? As with most things, the answer varies. It's situational, but general rules do apply.

"Different habitat types and weather patterns require/support different fire regimes/frequencies," said Grant Woods, owner of

Growing Deer TV. "In general, in the eastern states, the use of fire every three (two to five) years is a good plan."

But how much is too much? Same answer. "Generally, a burn return interval of less than three to four years for deer," Ruth said. "Consult your state forestry commission."

Generally, cover is what deer lack the most. If you want cover, that requires longer intervals between prescribed fire events. It might take as much as four to six years to produce the thick, early successional cover deer need for quality bedding cover.

"Fire used too frequently can reduce cover for deer," Adams said. "For example, annual fires are preferred for quail management because it opens the understory and reduces overall height of cover. That's great for quail, but far too open for deer. Again, it will depend on the vegetation (herbaceous vs. woody)."

If the limiting factor is food, then one to three years should allot enough time for habitat regeneration. Those who consider longer intervals should know that, if the goal is to produce forage,

It's best to burn during the day, but once started, fires might carry over after dark.



IDEAL BURN CONDITIONS

"It's more important to burn during different times of year than the frequency," Woods said. "Growing season burns – late summer and early fall – result in more forbs growing and killing of undesirable saplings. A good plan is to burn the first time during the dormant season (before spring green-up) and three years later during the growing season. It's tougher to plan and implement growing season fires due to higher humidity during that time of year."

There are certain conditions that are best for safe, effective controlled burns. These aren't limited to this list, but include:

- Target proper timeframes (wintertime burns help reduce timber mortality / growing season burns increases the likelihood of killing trees)
- Monitor soil dampness
- Wait for the right wind speed and direction
- Fire it up during adequate temperatures
- Burn with adequate humidity levels
- Etc.

One to three-year burn cycles are great for creating deer food. If cover is the goal, it's best to space out burns every five to seven years, perhaps longer.





A good drip torch is perfect for starting controlled burns.

WHEN TO CALL IT OFF

There are certain times to call off a controlled burn. This isn't an exhaustive list, but it covers many of the most important factors. Call it off if there is/are:

- Smoke sensitive areas within 5-7 miles
- A failing to notify the right authorities in advance of the controlled burn
- A failing to receive a burn permit
- A lack of a good, written burn plan
- Neighbors who haven't been notified
- Anyone who doesn't understand the plan
- A lack of reliable communication devices
- An absence of the proper, required equipment
- Too few people to watch the fire
- Inadequate firebreaks
- Bad burn conditions (current and forecasted)
- Etc.

anything longer than five to six years really reduces overall production of low-level food sources. Of course, this excludes mast crop viability.

Relative location is also of note. Prescribed fire is used less often (and needed less frequently) the further north you go. This is due to decreased need, but also limiting environmental factors, such as snow cover.

Absolute location is important, too. Strategic property planning impacts where you burn, and how often. Furthermore, south- and west-facing slopes are more suitable for burning, due to being drier.

Another factor is habitat type. For example, hardwoods are more sensitive to fire than pines and other evergreens. These might need longer intervals between burns. In contrast, longleaf pines are very tolerant, even at younger ages, and unwanted trees among them might need prescribed fire to keep them in check. Furthermore, grasslands oftentimes need controlled burns every two to three years, especially if you want to retain these at the

earliest successional habitat levels.

"[It] depends entirely on the vegetation you're burning," Adams said. "For example, fire frequency in old fields can be very different from prescribed fire in hardwood stands. You may choose to burn every two to four years in hardwood stands to encourage herbaceous forage and reduce woody encroachment, while you may only burn old fields every five to seven years to accomplish the same objectives."

Overall, due to the necessary intervals for bedding cover and food production, and how fire interacts with different habitat types, it's best to divide the property up into burn units. Devise a plan around wildlife needs and establish a direction. Every acre serves a purpose. Know what these are.

— *Josh Honeycutt is a full-time freelance writer and accomplished deer hunter from Kentucky.*



Best bring a good handkerchief or mask to minimize inhalation of unwanted particles.



CRP & DEER

IT'S NO SECRET THAT DEER HABITAT IS DWINDLING WITH THE EXPANSION OF RURAL NEIGHBORHOODS, AND MAN'S DESIRE TO FARM EVERY INCH OF PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LAND. THE GOOD NEWS? HABITAT MANAGERS AND DEER HUNTERS ALIKE CAN REVERSE THIS TREND BY ENROLLING GROUND INTO THE CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM.

It was circa 2006 when I first began to understand the significance of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) grasses that hold up to the harsh winters of the upper Midwest and provide critical cover to whitetails. I consider my Dad a thinker on many of the whitetail projects we've taken on at our family farm in Wisconsin, but none more so than the decision to enroll a large portion of our tillable

ground into the CRP program. Thanks to my Dad, we've accomplished checklist items on our property well before they make it on YouTube as a new "whitetail strategy." My Father isn't the most hardcore hunter, but our whitetails, stream water quality, and soils are better off because of his forward thinking. I consider our property a juggernaut in our area in terms of edge habitat and diversity.

The Conservation Reserve Program is administered by the Farm Service Agency. CRP was signed into law by President Regan in 1985 and has been at the forefront of conservation efforts ever since. In exchange for payment, landowners enrolled in the program remove sensitive or highly erodible land from agricultural production and plant species of plants that will improve soil health and quality. The FSA's main objective is to "promote native plant growth and improve soil health." In fact, by 2023 they hope to reach 27 million acres of enrolled CRP ground.

The good news for whitetail hunters? Conservation Reserve Program grasses improve whitetail habitat and add structure and edge to your property if added in conjunction to other whitetail habitat such as ponds, openings and food plots. This acreage will provide cover, create edge and bedding habitat, and also help to define movement in many cases.

Let's take a deep dive on how it benefits whitetails, and how you can contribute to conservation by enrolling qualifying land into CRP.

HOW WHITETAILS BENEFIT

While many whitetails bed in wooded areas, but the appeal of a thick, nasty CRP field with 5-7' tall grass is a desired hideout for an old mature buck seeking refuge from hunting pressure and predators alike. In fact, I know firsthand it is a desired escape.

I regularly walk my families CRP field during summer and fall months and quickly lose count of the number of deer beds. The trails I regularly follow through the CRP field are not unlike a sidewalk in a large city for humans—these trails see a plethora of hoof traffic.

The ideal CRP blend for whitetails would consist of switchgrass, Indiangrass, Big and Little Bluestem, among others. Many grasses in a CRP blend have been carefully selected to provide great summer nesting cover for birds, and species like Cave-N-Rock switchgrass are built to withstand the harsh winters and remain tall to provide winter thermal cover for whitetails. If you like to hold

whitetails and provide diversity throughout all months of the year, removing some agricultural land from production and enrolling acreage in CRP may be a wise move.

In my college years during the late 2000's, I distinctly remember pulling out of my parent's driveway on a sunny, cold October 25th day, only to see a mature buck standing over a bedded doe in their CRP field that met the edge of a planting of hazelnut bushes. I reluctantly put my car in drive and headed 60 miles west back to campus to catch a late morning lecture.

In the moment, I was more upset that I couldn't climb out of the car and put a stalk on this whitetail. Years later, it clicked for me. Deer crave security and edge habitat that is easily accessible and compliments their natural movement.

The resident does on our property regularly bed in the thick plantings of pine, hazelnut and plum plantings. It would only make sense that bucks would view our CRP field as a secure gateway to these prime doe bedding areas.

While shed hunting during the late winter months, some of the first areas I comb in our CRP field are the edges near our ponds and white pine plantings. As bucks head down off the ridge into our CRP field, they love to walk the edge of our pine trees in our CRP field. They regularly lose antlers in this location, as well as trails

around our two small ponds. Just a hundred yards from our ponds, we have a 10-acre crop field that rotates between corn and soybeans.

It took me a while to figure out, but I soon realized that bucks must be feeding in the cornfield at night and taking breaks to bed down in the CRP grass that provides thermal cover. Grassy edge next to a food source is one of the best areas to find buck beds and shed antlers.

I estimate we have found over 50% of our sheds in our CRP field since the year 2000. If you can't tell, the list of benefits CRP land provides whitetails is adding up quickly

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

I get it. If you don't fully understand the benefits of CRP, going from a productive agriculture field to an area full of 5-7' tall grasses isn't the easiest endeavor to commit to. It's sort of like viewing abstract art without knowing the meaning behind the painting. However, my last section should've opened your eyes to the advantages CRP acreage creates for whitetails.

Did you know that in some states and local regions you can be paid just as much through the CRP program as renting your land out for agriculture purposes? According to a USDA spokesperson "the Farm Service Agency has made several changes to the program, including increasing soil rental rates,



SUBSCRIBE NOW TO **THE BEST**



- **HOW-TO TACTICS TO HELP IMPROVE THE OUTCOME OF YOUR DEER HUNT**
- **7 OUT OF 10 READERS DO NOT READ ANY OTHER DEER HUNTING MAGAZINE!**
- **GAIN INSIGHT INTO THE BEHAVIOR AND BIOLOGY OF WHITE-TAILED DEER**
- **CHOOSE THE FORMAT THAT SUITS YOU: PRINT, DIGITAL OR BOTH (ALL-ACCESS)**
- **NEW GEAR AND HOW TOP HUNTERS ARE USING IT**

DEER & DEER HUNTING®



DEERANDDEERHUNTING.COM/DEER-HUNTING-MAGAZINES

MEDIA360

payments for practice incentives, and water quality practices.” While looking at the USDA’s website, there are currently around 20 million acres of land enrolled in CRP. The bad news is in September of 2021, just over 3 million acres under contract were set to expire.

To combat the loss of enrolled acreage, the USDA is aiming at increasing payments for water quality practices. Water quality practices include installation of buffer strips between crop land and sensitive waterways such as trout streams, installation of prairie strips, and restoration of wetlands. Buffer strips typically consist of a grass and clover mix or a “logging road” blend as many would call it.

The incentive rates for water quality practices are increasing from 10% to 20% over the next few years. For landowners and farmers who need more assistance, the USDA is working in conjunction with the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) to provide more technical assistance in completing these projects on a local level. While many benefits of the CRP program do not have to do with whitetails, it all circles back to habitat and diversity, which whitetails crave.

The CRP program is largely present in the Plains and upper Midwest regions of the U.S. States like Kansas, western Oklahoma, western Nebraska, northern Missouri, Iowa, South Dakota and North Dakota dominate the landscape when it comes to acres enrolled in CRP. The correlation? These states also produce some bruiser whitetail bucks. When you enroll your land in CRP, you will not only see the benefits from a whitetail perspective, but you may also see increases in other game such as pheasant and quail, and you will no doubt see an increase in pollinators and a stark increase in soil health if you were to pull up a clump of soil and observe its root structure.

If you own land, you know the benefits of diversity and edge for whitetails. Native grasses present in CRP mixes provides just that.

Maybe this is the year you plant a ten-foot-wide strip of native grasses to guide deer movement into your best food plot. Or perhaps you plant a wall of switchgrass to block the entrance of your favorite deer blind. If you aren’t eligible to officially enroll your land in CRP, you can still harness the benefits of that type of diversity.

CONTRIBUTING TO THE FUTURE

Over the last few years, the USDA has fallen 4 million acres short of their enrollment goal, and the

consequences are large. The shortfall of enrollment equated to a loss of 1.5 million acres of quality wildlife and pollinator habitat, an estimated 90 million pounds of nitrogen entering waterways, and over 30 million tons of soil eroded which leads to increased pollution and sedimentation in streams and rivers. When you have CRP ground, your water, air and whitetails benefit! Since the inception of CRP in 1985, the program has helped sequester an annual average of 48 million tons of greenhouse gases, the equivalent of taking 9 million cars off the road.

When soil is tilled over and over by large equipment, science tells us the soil loses carbon, becomes susceptible to erosion from wind and water, and kills earthworms that defecate and keep our soils healthy. If you want healthy whitetails and big racked-bucks, soil health is critical. Just look at the Pope and Young map next to a soils map. Nearly all record book buck areas have excellent soil. I commend farmers who have implemented no-till practices and question modern practices that could be damaging the soil and waterways.

IT ALL COMES BACK

My deer hunting has benefited greatly from croplands such as corn and soybeans, but there are many ways we can off-set the damage that farming can incur on our lands.

We need farmers, but we also need moderation and an understanding of our landscape’s needs. The planting of native grasses along creeks, cropland, and

waterways can greatly reduce nutrient run-off and keep streams and lakes healthy for years to come.

It’s clear the benefits of CRP plantings go way beyond whitetails, although for you and me, it’s hard to remove our whitetail hat when dissecting information about land and how it may affect our hunting grounds. Fortunately for you and me, the benefits of CRP land and whitetails go hand in hand.

— *Paul Annear is an avid whitetail hunter and land manager. His recent contributions to D&DH have included articles on scouting and big-buck tactics.*



BECOME A BETTER LAND MANAGER



- New and proven trapping strategies and tips
- Fur-handling secrets from longtime trappers
- Updates on local, state and federal laws affecting you
- State trapping association reports to help you stay current
- Choose your subscription: we offer print, digital or both (ALL ACCESS)



PREFER A DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION, OR WANT TO PAY WITH A CREDIT CARD? YOU CAN ALSO RENEW, OR GIFT A SUBSCRIPTION! HEAD TO OUR WEBSITE AT:
WWW.TRAPPERMAG.COM/MY-SUBSCRIPTIONS



WITH THIS FORM, WE CAN ONLY ACCEPT ORDERS PAID WITH CHECK OR MONEY ORDER.
FOR PROMPT SERVICE, SEND THIS COMPLETED FORM AND PAYMENT TO: **MEDIA 360, LLC.**
ATTN: THE TRAPPER SUBSCRIPTION, P.O. BOX 548, WAUPACA, WI 54981



**1 YEAR
8 ISSUES
\$18.95**

US \$18.95
CANADA (ADD \$11) \$29.95
INTERNATIONAL (ADD \$17) ... \$35.95

MONEY BACK GUARANTEE: If for any reason at any time you wish to cancel your subscription, we will send a refund for all unmailed issues. If the Postal Service alerts us that your magazine is undeliverable, we have no further obligation unless we receive a corrected address within one year. Please allow 4-6 weeks for your issue to arrive in the mail. The Trapper is published 8 times per year (January, February, April-May, Summer, September, October, November, December) by MEDIA 360 LLC.

SELECT PAYMENT ENCLOSED:

CHECK ☐ OR MONEY ORDER ☐

SELECT YOUR REGION:

US: ☐ **\$18.95**

CANADA: ☐ \$29.95

INTERNATIONAL: ☐ \$35.95

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____

**MEDIA
360** 

| DANIEL EUGENE SCHMIDT

MODEL 70 MEMORIES

WINDIGO IMAGES

A CLASSIC DEER RIFLE, NEW YELLOW BOOTS &
HIGH HOPES DEFINED DEER HUNTING'S GOLDEN AGE.



America was really coming of age by the time the calendar flipped to November in 1958. As a test, Bank of America mailed 60,000 California residents a small plastic “credit” card with a \$500 limit. The experiment was successful.

“An Evening with Fred Astaire,” the first TV show recorded on color videotape, was broadcast on NBC.

President Dwight D Eisenhower uttered his famous quote: “What counts is not necessarily the size of the dog in the fight – it’s the size of the fight in the dog.”

And American sportsmen were eagerly buying new guns, ammo, and clothing in anticipation of relatively new activity — a deer-specific hunting season. Not just “big game,” but deer — namely white-tailed deer.

It sounds far-fetched to imagine modern deer hunting is only 65-ish years old, but it's true. And, let me tell you, these were trailblazing times. It was well before tree stands. Way before food plots. Decades before scent-elimination products. And even before modern bowhunting (unless you count the 1,700 deer that were shot by traditional bowhunters that year).

Back then, it was a few days in November. Working-class guys turned their station wagons north (if they were lucky to have something other than a sedan) and headed to the Big Woods for a few days.

My dad was one of those guys lucky enough to partake in those landmark deer hunting days.

DAD'S JOURNEY

My dad, Dan Schmidt Sr., turned 23 in 1958, and although he grew up shooting cottontail rabbits and wild pheasants on the family farm in Waukesha County, Wisconsin, he had never gone deer hunting. In fact, merely seeing a deer was a big deal back then. Some counties didn't even have deer seasons.

Two of his brothers had gone deer hunting, however, and he wanted to experience it. So, he worked hard that summer to save up \$100 (equivalent in purchasing power to about \$961.76 today) so he could buy a Winchester Model 70 Featherweight in .308 from his friend, Emmett Green.

“It was a beautiful gun,” he recalls. “Included a leather sling and a Lyman Alaskan Scope. I traded it years later to your Uncle Clarence for \$100 and his old Remington bolt-action .30-06. That Remington had problems. Clarence had to use a rubber band to keep the safety on. It was one of those push-ahead safeties. Not nearly as nice as that Winchester; that was a beautiful gun. Gall-dang.”

With the deer rifle secured, his next order of business was to get a deer license (\$3), a box

of Remington Core-Lokt ammo (\$3.85) and pair of rubber boots (\$4). The deer season forecast called for steady rain. It should be noted that back then a deer license was merely a “big-game license,” and it allowed the hunter to shoot a black bear if they saw one. Few guys ever saw a bear, but it's neat to think that it was just included in the license.

“I didn't have much money, so I went with the cheapest pair of boots I could find. I bought them at Wendt's Shoe Store on Main Street in Menomonee Falls,” he recalls. “They were ugly, and cold as Hell, but they were rubber. I got them so my feet wouldn't get wet.”

DESTINATION DEER CAMP

The 1950s was just the start of the recreation boom in Wisconsin. Whereas today's North Woods is littered with second homes, cottages and cabin getaways, most folks were content with just visiting the forests and lakes toting meager camping gear. That included the frigid weeks of Wisconsin's traditional deer season — in mid-November.

“We all followed my older brother Eugene,” Dad recalls. “He loved to hunt and had previously deer hunted in the Black River Falls area. We left his house the Friday before the opener (November 15) and had his Mercury station wagon packed with pole tents, supplies and a cooler full of beef steaks he had cut at the Sentry Foods meat market where he worked in Menomonee Falls.

“There were several of us. Me, Uncle Eugene and his friends George and Harry Youngbauer. I also remember someone by the name of Timmy. He came along and was shooting a 2-22. It was such an odd caliber to be using for deer. That's why I remember his name,” he said with a laugh. “We met the other guys when we got there and set up near the Big Bear Creek campground.”

This wasn't just my dad's first deer season. It was really the first time he had done anything for himself. He started working full time for his dad when he was 14, married my mom when he was

18 and already had three kids at home in 1958. He had also spent the previous five years serving in the National Guard. Life was sure different back then.

Once at camp, all the guys gathered around to sight-in their rifles. No one had a target, so they picked out a 6-inch-diameter tree. Dad proudly pulled his .308 Win. out of its case, but his excitement dimmed when his older brother Eugene took one look at it and quipped, “This is Thirty-Five Rem country!”

Sibling rivalry? Probably. But when all was said and done, the .308 was the only rifle that shot clean through that hard maple! It was all in good fun, though, and the guys got their guns sighted in and then settled in for a night of grilling steaks, telling tales, and getting pumped for opening day of deer season.

Who would see the first deer? Would anyone get a buck? Perhaps most exciting: The group had two of the state's new “party permits” that allowed for the harvest of antlerless deer. Seeing this was Dad's first year hunting, the guys agreed to let him have first crack at a doe if he saw one on opening morning. If he didn't, then the tag holders (the Younbauers) would get to decide who got to shoot after that.

SUNRISE IN THE SWAMP

Few of the guys knew how to hunt deer back then, but those who did were tough-as-nails dudes. One thing my dad learned right away was that he needed to be persistent, sit still and not give up.

That deer season was one of the turning points in Wisconsin and the Midwest. It was the first year the state allowed 16 days for deer hunting (Nov. 15 to 30), and also the first year that harvests were recorded by deer management units (in northwest and northeast only). Party permits were introduced the previous year, and gun-hunters registered 95,234 deer at check stations, of which 44,987 were taken by party permit. More than 335,000 hunters bought big-game licenses.

It wasn't particularly cold (58 degrees at sunrise), but it was foggy, and rain was in the forecast.

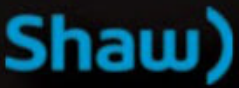
“They took me out and told me

YOUR #1 SOURCE FOR OUTDOOR ENTERTAINMENT



TELEVISION NETWORK

CALL YOUR SERVICE PROVIDER NOW TO ENJOY WILD TV!

 TELUS  Bell  SaskTel  Shaw)

 COGECO  ROGERS



A DEER RIFLE FOR THE AGES

Winchester introduced the Model 70 bolt-action rifle to the American market in 1936 (when my dad was 1 year old). The Model 70 was based on the Model 54, and is today still highly regarded by shooters and is often called “The Rifleman’s Rifle.” In 1999, Shooting Times Magazine named the Model 70 the “Bolt-action Rifle of the Century.”

The pre-1964 Model 70s were manufactured from 1936 through 1963, after which time significant changes in the design and manufacture of the rifles were made. Pre-1964 Model 70s bring a substantial price premium due to a public perception that they were better, as they had several desirable features (Mauser-type controlled round feed, cut checkering) that the post-1964 version did not.

The best way to identify a pre-1964 Model 70 Winchester rifles is the serial number and the fore-end screw to secure the barrel to the stock.[5] Model 70 rifles with serial numbers below 700,000 are the pre-1964 variety. The receivers of these Model 70s were machined from bar-stock steel.

—Courtesy of Winchester Arms

to sit in this one spot,” Dad recalls. “I had no idea where I was. I just remember sitting there, waiting quietly for daylight.

“When daylight finally came, there was a deer just standing there in front of me. It couldn’t have been more than 30 or 40 yards away. I never heard it. It was just there.

“Slowly, I raised my rifle and saw its throat patch through the scope. I pulled the trigger. Bang! The deer was still standing there, so I chambered another round and shot again.”

The other guys were hunting nearby, so Dad sat patiently for a while. Eventually, he couldn’t take the suspense, so he got up and walked over to his first deer.

Um ... make that his first *two* deer.

“I had no idea there were two of them, but I dropped a big doe and a yearling doe right there in their tracks. It was OK, though, because we had those two party-permits.”

GETTING SOME GRIEF

The Younbauers were happy for my dad, even though he filled both of the party permits. Hey, they got some deer! That’s how everyone in my family’s camp viewed

it back then — it wasn’t my deer or your deer ... it was “our” deer. Everyone shared.

There was a problem, however, when the boys went to tag the deer. In the spirit of helping her husband prepare for deer camp earlier that week, Harry Younbauer’s wife took the two metal party permit tags and locked them together so he “wouldn’t lose them.” The tags were made in such a way that once affixed to the deer, the metal tag locked in place. Only thing is, you were supposed to do that after killing a deer, and certainly not with two separate tags!

“The warden at the check station was understanding, but he did give Harry quite the look” Dad recalls. “He registered both deer but added, ‘And say you’ve been hunting how long?’”

The guys had quite the laugh over that one.

HEADING HOME

The rain started late in the morning on opening day and never stopped. Despite my dad’s insistence that they cover the deer on the meat pole, some of the guys told him not to worry about it. Sixty degrees and steady rain? Yeah, you can guess what happened to those deer by the time they got home Sunday night.

On the way home the boys stopped at a tavern to celebrate. My Uncle Clarence and his crew had been hunting farther north and were a few hours behind Dad and his group. The two hunting groups didn’t know how each other had fared, but Clarence was excited to get an update. When he stopped at the same tavern, he asked the barkeep if another group had stopped by earlier that day.

“They were driving a Mercury station wagon,” he told the barkeep. “Did my brother get a deer?”

“Don’t know,” the barkeep replied. “But if he was the one wearing those bright yellow boots, yeah, he got two of them.”

CONCLUSION

Dad will be 87 this March, but his memory of that first hunt are as vivid as the first time I heard the story when I was a kid. It warms my heart to know that the details of our hunts never fade, and it also gives me hope that future generations will be able to experience the same excitement, albeit in different versions, with their kids and grandkids.

Author’s note: *My first deer camp was spent at my Uncle Clarence’s cabin in November 1983. As a tribute to my late Uncle Eugene, I changed my byline to include my middle initial, E., when he passed in 1998. Their influence on my family’s deer hunting roots is a constant source of pride and motivation to this day.*



GIVE THE GIFT OF DEER!

ACT NOW...LIMITED TIME OFFER!

- Our annual Whitetail Calendar is the perfect gift for the deer hunter on your list (or for yourself!).
- The new 2022 Whitetail Calendar® features the incredible photography and rut predictions of Charles Alsheimer. Use it to plan your vacation days and to pinpoint when deer will enter the seeking, chasing and tending phases (both North & South) in 2022.
- This collector's edition calendar is only available on national newsstands and through this limited-time sale direct from Media 360 LLC.



PREFER A DIGITAL DOWNLOAD, OR WANT TO PAY WITH A CREDIT CARD?

HEAD TO OUR ONLINE STORE AT: SHOP.DEERANDDEERHUNTING.COM/2022-WHITETAIL-CALENDAR



YES! SEND ME MY

2022

**WHITETAIL
CALENDARS**

(INCLUDES SHIPPING/HANDLING)

1 TO 4 CALENDARS \$11.50 EACH

5-9 CALENDARS \$9.50 EACH

10+ CALENDARS \$8.50 EACH

QUANTITIES ARE LIMITED, PLEASE NOTE
WE CAN ONLY ACCEPT MAIL ORDERS
PAID WITH CHECK OR MONEY ORDER.

MAKE CHECKS OUT TO: MEDIA 360, LLC.

FOR PROMPT SERVICE, SEND THIS
COUPON AND PAYMENT TO:

MEDIA 360, LLC
ATTN: 2022 WHITETAIL CALENDAR
P.O. BOX 548, WAUPACA, WI 54981

PAYMENT: Check ☐ or Money Order ☐

QUANTITY: _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED: _____

NAME: _____

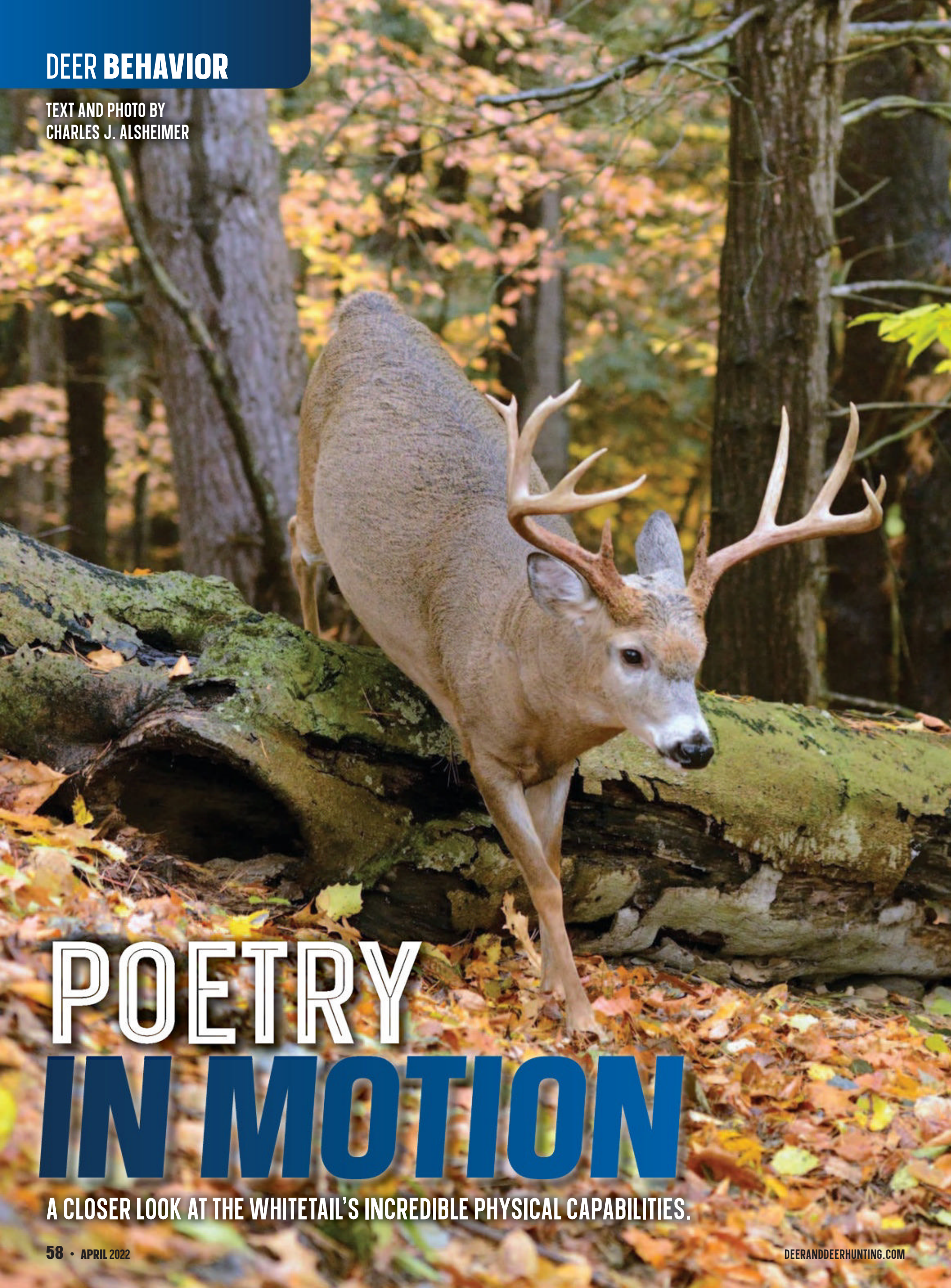
ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____

**MEDIA
360**

DEER BEHAVIOR

TEXT AND PHOTO BY
CHARLES J. ALSHEIMER



POETRY IN MOTION

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE WHITETAIL'S INCREDIBLE PHYSICAL CAPABILITIES.



When it comes to wild animals there is a friendly debate as to which animal ranks as North America's most athletic. Some argue that squirrels, big cats or mountain sheep are the best all-around when it comes to athleticism. Others say antelope, bears, or birds of prey top the list.

There is no question that some animals can run faster, jump farther and see better than white-tailed deer. No matter how hard you try, you'll be hard-pressed to find one that can offer the whole physical package like the white-tailed deer. Few animals can live with man and beast and still survive. The whitetail can. In short, it can outmaneuver, outjump, outrun and outsurvive anything walking the continent – including man.

ULTIMATE SURVIVAL MACHINE

In nature there are no gold medals for achievement. An animal's ultimate award is its ability to survive to see another sunrise. For this to happen, whitetails must utilize all of their physical and sensual abilities. Every ability, be it running, jumping, seeing, hearing or smelling, must work together for a whitetail to elude danger. When it comes to surviving, very few animals on planet Earth can stack up to a whitetail. Its speed and jumping ability are legendary, but few outside the hunting fraternity know of its fine-tuned senses.

SCALE TALL BUILDINGS?

Over the years I've heard all kinds of statements concerning how high a whitetail can jump. Some say a deer can clear a seven-foot-high fence from a standing position. Others say it can easily clear an eight- to 10-foot high fence if it has a running start.

During the last 25 years of observing and raising whitetails up close and personal I have to admit that I've never seen one clear an eight-foot high fence. I have seen many that have tried, but none made it. My guess is that the right deer under the right conditions may be able to clear an eight-foot fence, but I've never seen it done. In every case where I've seen a buck or doe try to leap a high fence they've hit it between 6-1/2 and 7-1/2 feet high.

Whether they can clear eight-, nine- or 10-foot-high fences is immaterial. What impresses me most about the whitetail's jumping ability is that it stands only 36 to 42 inches high at the shoulders but is capable of catapulting its body over obstacles more than twice its height. That's impressive! By comparison, Olympic high jumpers cannot clear an eight-foot-high bar and most are well over six feet tall.

In my mind a whitetail's horizontal jumping prowess surpasses its ability to clear high fences. A deer's ability to chew up yards of ground with each bound is legendary. During the rut two years ago I photographed an incredible breeding-party sequence (see Chapter 4). An estrous doe was being pursued by a dominant buck and several lesser-racked bucks. In one exchange the dominant buck chased an intruding subordinate buck. With the dominant buck bearing down on him the subordinate buck turned on a dime

and ran for his life. Unfortunately a four-foot-high cattle fence stood in his way.

At full throttle the subordinate buck cleared the fence in one fluid motion. As impressive as this was, the amount of ground the airborne buck covered was even more incredible. When things calmed, I measured the distance the jumping buck had flown through the air. It was just shy of 30 feet. I've seen a lot of running, jumping and bounding from whitetails in my life but nothing like that scene. It's something I'll never forget.

HEAVYWEIGHT CONTENDERS

When confronted, whitetails will nearly always attempt to outrun their enemy, be it man or beast. However, there are times when they will choose to stand their ground and confront their opponent. Simply put, they can dodge and weave or stand their ground and duke it out with the best of them. Even the biggest buck has cat-like reflexes that allow him to elude slashing antler tines.

Of course there are times when "attitude bucks" opt to brawl rather than slash and jab when confronted by an adversary. During these confrontations fighting can resemble Greco-Roman wrestling matches, where opponents try to outmuscle each other by pushing and trying to throw each other to the ground. During these skirmishes it's usually a given buck's gift of strength, balance and leverage that wins the day.

— Charles J. Alsheimer was *Deer & Deer Hunting's* contributing editor on deer behavior for more than 30 years.



Few animals are as graceful as a whitetail. They are the ultimate gymnast.



In Search Of

GHOSTS



**FREE-RANGING CHITAL –
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS
AXIS DEER – ARE AS ALLURING
AS THEY ARE MYSTERIOUS.**

Daylight is a good 30 minutes away, and I'm trying hard not to laugh out loud at the circus show taking place in front of my South Texas deer blind. Let me just put it this way: If you've never seen an Eastern lubber grasshopper at work (or is it play?) you're missing out on one of the most colorful and comical insects of North America.



The orange-green-yellow-and brown hoppers are everywhere — crawling the walls of my blind, flipping over themselves in the caliche dirt in the distance and literally falling from the shrubs. They're harmless, or so I'm told, but they are making this blistering hot predawn tick by a little bit quicker.

It's the middle of June, and, yeah, it might sound odd, but I'm sweating it out in this blind in search of one of the wariest bucks in North America. That's right, I'm deer hunting.

You can tell by the photo on this page that it's not the typical white-tailed deer I'm pursuing on this hot Texas morning, not even a cousin. It's the elusive chital buck (most commonly known as "axis") and from past experiences, I mature ones are next to impossible to find when you're actually looking for them. What might also surprise you is this hunt is not in a "high fence" or anything even remotely close. It's free-range habitat, and although the deer are plentiful, they're about as skittish as the whitetails I grew up hunting in the vast public forests of northern Wisconsin.

Daylight filters across the landscape, and several antlerless deer materialize on the horizon. There's a protein feeder about 100 yards away and a water hole.

The does have numerous grown fawns in tow as they head toward both, looking to grab a snack and a drink

The author shot his 2021 buck while hunting with Keith Miller of Texas Trophy Whitetails. For more information, call (717) 512-3582. Email: Info@HuntTexasWhitetails.com, or visit online at www.HuntTexasWhitetails.com.

before seeking shelter in the shade of mesquite and live oak draws to my east. I shoulder my binoculars and watch in amazement as axis, sitka and white-tailed does filter past my blind. Before long, a very odd sound pierces the calm morning air.

"Reeoooarrrrr!"

It's the roar of an axis buck, and he's close. I only know that because I've hunted them before. How far ... I can't tell. It's kind of like trying to gauge the distance of a spring gobbler. All I know is that he's close enough that I need to get my shooting sticks and video camera ready to roll.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF DEER

Venture outside the typical range for white-tailed deer in North America, and you'll discover some things that are as odd as they are fascinating. Wild free-ranging axis deer are on that list, and they can be found in small parts of South Texas and Hawaii.

They were introduced to Molokai, Hawaii in the 1860s, Maui years after that, and Texas in 1932, intended as a game animal, but axis are indigenous to places like India, Sir

Lanka and Nepal. Their presence dates all the way back to the Pleistocene age. The axis deer is its own species of deer.

Axis were introduced to Texas in 1932 as an exotic species for hunting ranches. Although most of those ranches were high-fence operations, most of those were huge landholdings, encompassing tens of thousands of acres of South Texas brush country habitat. Over the years, some of the axis deer escaped the massive enclosures and now range freely across southern parts of the state.

Over the years, I've had the good fortune of hunting wild, free-ranging axis deer on three occasions — twice in Texas and once in Hawaii. Of the things I've learned, these deer — especially bucks — are among the smartest, most wary deer I've ever encountered. Their sense of smell is many times that of a whitetail, and their eyesight is as good if not better.

Their behavior is markedly different than a whitetail in that the bucks roar much like an elk during the rut, and they also tend to harems of does during breeding season. Because they are a hot-weather species, they have no internal breeding clock. Although the classic axis rut occurs in the warm months of May, June and July, these deer will breed throughout the year, and it's not uncommon to see young fawns while hunting. Does can breed up to two times a year (spring and fall), but most adult females will only give birth to one fawn per year.

The same kooky natural clock causes bucks to enter and exit their antler growing process at varying times throughout the year. It's quite common to see both velvet and hard-antlered bucks while hunting during the prime months of May, June and July.

Granted, sitting in an enclosed blind during June in Texas might not seem overly appealing, it is actually a nice reprieve during what we normally view as nonhunting months. Once you get used to the heat — and aptly prepare for it by bringing plenty of cold beverages — you'll discover a brand-new way of hunting that you wished you'd experienced years earlier. Well, that's the way I viewed it!

EXTREMELY WARY

Axis deer are so skittish in nature that seasoned hunters call the mature bucks "spotted ghosts." Some even go as far as saying that a mature axis buck is a "deer of 100 sits." And when they do show up, they invariably know they are being hunted (near feeders, ponds, etc.), so they usually keep their distance by remembering where the most human activity is located. This means the buck typically shows up at the far reaches of shooting range. In the case of bowhunting, it's typical to expect nothing less than a 40-yard shot.

Axis also have their own unique language. It's deer-like, but quite different than whitetails. For example, instead of snorting/blowing like a whitetail, the axis will emit a high-pitched bark. I liken it to the sound of a small lapdog — a sharp, shrill "woof" that, once you hear it, you'll not only know what it is, you'll know that the jig is up and you're chances of seeing a mature buck are slim to none. Axis does are notorious barkers and, unlike old bucks, they don't seem to mind to investigate the perceived danger.

The bark is usually preceded by hoof stamping and lip curling. As stated, the axis deer's sense of smell is incredible. I've had deer wind me and start barking even



The one that got away. It was an easy shot, but I blew it. That's how it goes when you're hunting mature axis bucks: "the deer of a hundred sits."

THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY

I could wax poetic and say all of the deer hunting clichés. Like how it was just good to be out there. Or how it sure beat working in the office on that particular day. Or the one I loathe the most: "That's why they call it hunting."

Let's put all of those on the table right now in a straight flush. It still won't take away the sting of the deer that could've been.

This hunt that now haunts happened a few years ago. I was in camp in my friends Jon Severson and Todd Seyfert of Feradyne Outdoors. They had graciously invited me to hunt some free-range (don't know why I have to preface that, but there you go) axis deer in Texas.

I'm nestled in a homemade ground blind that Severson constructed of mesquite brush and limbs a few days prior. It's mid-June, and, well, it's freaking hot. Daytime temps are in the 90s, but the axis are frequenting the waterholes.

The afternoon sun's beating down on us as videographer Abigail Hehner and I position ourselves in adjacent hideouts. Long story short, the Carbon Express (now known as AXE) crossbow is sighted dead-on at 50 yards. I'm ultra confident in the outcome.

Everyone else in camp has already notched a buck tag. Me? Well, the photo in this sidebar is all I got. If it looks like that behemoth is in my lap, that's because he was. Fourteen steps to be exact. I'm not a mathematician, so I'll let you determine the equation for shooting at a deer that's 14 yards away when your first dot is sighted in for 4X that distance. And, no, the old bowhunting adage "just aim a little low" is not good shooting advice when you have a deer like that standing at 14 steps.

What happened? To take a phrase from baseball announcer Bob Uecker, "Jussstt a bit outside."

Insert crying emoji here.

—DES

though they were sometime two and even three ridges away (several hundred yards).

It's common to locate bucks by their audible roars during the rut. These throaty bellows will put a chill down your spine much in the same way as the sounds from a bugling bull elk or a gobbling tom turkey.

CONCLUSION

The grasshoppers are still parading around my blind as eight axis does finish drinking from the nearby waterhole. The does seem like they want to exit stage right, but they're suddenly put on full alert. To my left, a flicker of movement in the distant trees reveals the telltale spots of another axis deer. This one is much bigger. Binos up ... buck!

"Oh man," I whisper to myself. "Awesome brows. He is nice!"

My heartbeat goes into full throttle. The moments melt by and he steps out of the brush and into my forever memory book.

Another hunt for the ages concluded with a sure shot, awesome antlers and oh-so sweet venison.

— Video of Dan's hunt with Keith Miller will be featured in an episode of D&DH-TV in 2022 on Pursuit Channel.



ALOHA ADVENTURE!

I am a whitetail hunter first and foremost, but I'll readily admit that it was an axis deer hunt that provided the most thrilling adventure I've experienced in my 27+ years here at Deer & Deer Hunting.

That trip occurred in 2014 when my buddy Chad Schearer of CVA/Bergara Firearms invited me to deer hunt with him in Hawaii, of all places. At first blush, you might think of an exotic location like Hawaii as either canned, easy or super expensive. It wasn't any of those. In fact, it was flat-out incredible, featuring unbelievable views, rugged hiking and ocean-side accommodations on the sparsely populated island of Molokai.

Our hunt took place with Hawaii Safaris, a guiding service run by Patrick Fisher since 1992.

Fisher's range includes 84,000 acres of some of the most picturesque hunting land you'll ever see. It's home to thousands of wild axis deer. Most of these animals live to maturity without ever seeing a human.

"Our hunting areas usually feature cooler temps, thanks to the elevation," Fisher said. "The areas where we hunt are prime habitats, which encourage a healthy deer population ... so no matter if you hunt with a bow or rifle, a challenging and rewarding hunt awaits you."

Fisher's clients usually wind up taking a buck with a rack in the 30- to 38-inch range (28 inches is considered a trophy in most places that hold axis deer). Hunts can be conducted on a neighboring island as part of a 2-1/2-day package. Most visitors combine a beach or touring vacation with a hunt, but if hardcore outdoor activity is what you're after, multiple other species can be hunted, and fishing opportunities are also plentiful. No tags are needed for deer on private land (because they're an invasive species to the islands), but a \$105 general hunting license is required.

The prime months for axis deer in Hawaii are from mid-March through October, with the majority of bucks rutting from May through July.

My hunt took place in April, and although it only lasted one day, I saw hundreds of deer and dozens of trophy bucks before pulling the trigger on a 36-inch monster that Walker Schearer filmed for his family's Shoot Straight TV show on Pursuit Channel.

Patrick Fisher is a Hawaii native who guides big-game hunters on a variety of hunts across the islands. For more information, contact Patrick at hawaiisafaris@gmail.com, or visit his website at www.hawaii-safaris.com.

—DES



*Although I pulled the trigger just three hours into our hunt, it took us and additional three hours to pack this gorgeous, 36-inch axis buck out of a deep canyon and back to an access trail on Hawaii's Molokai Island.
(photo by Walker Schearer)*



With the ample deer hunting seasons afforded us throughout North America, there's no shortage of interest in cooking, recipes and creating delicious meals.

Whether you're new to hunting or an old hand, celebrating the success with great dishes, appetizers, snacks or other treats is one of the joys of the experience. From the earliest days when man thrust a stick impaled with a hunk of whitetail venison near a fire to roast it to today's outstanding tools for smoking, making sausages or other prep, the opportunities are almost limitless.

Deer hunters know there's a lot of work involved from well before setting foot in the woods, from scouting and stand placement to studying maps and practicing at the shooting range. But when the hunt is finished and you have venison in hand, it's a great feeling to be able to prepare delicious, nutritious meals for your family and friends.

Our "Butcher's Shop" section in *Deer & Deer Hunting* debuted eight years ago with one thing in mind. Each issue, we will provide you tips, tricks and inside information on how to get the most out of every one of your hard-earned deer.

TEMPERATURE IS IMPORTANT

Because venison and other wild game is so lean, most recommendations are to enjoy it with a medium- to medium-rare finish. Some diners might not like this and will want a more thoroughly cooked portion. So it's important to find out first before serving to someone who might be new to wild game.

Cooking to the right internal temperature is important for safety reasons. Numerous recommendations suggest that for ground meats such as deer, moose, elk, caribou and beef that you should cook to at least 160 degrees. This helps eliminate the chance of harmful bacteria or other potential problems.

For larger cuts from those

MAXIMUM MEAT YIELD

animals, along with steaks, chops and roasts, the recommended minimum temperature is 145 degrees. To attain a medium finish, push that to 160 degrees, and for well done, go up to 170.

Use a thermometer to check temperatures during cooking. Maintain the desired temperature by regulating the heat source. Move meat from direct heat on grills, turn down the gas flow or shift coals in the hot box to one side.

TRUST YOUR SENSES

Humans have five senses: sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing. Two of those are incredibly and immediately beneficial when we're preparing venison for the table.

Your eyes tell you what something looks like. Does the meat have a weird sheen or funky color? Does it look fresh and vibrant, like a good piece of meat? Or does it have an off color or, heaven forbid, look like something out of *The Walking Dead*?

If so, toss it. Yeah, it was bad, or you messed up somewhere along the way.

The other sense to use to your advantage is your sense of smell. Put that schnozzola to use and take a whiff of the venison. Does it smell good? Does it smell like venison; like healthy, red meat? We know the aroma of venison, and when it's not there, we wonder if something's amiss.

It could be. You don't eat stinky fish or even beef that smells bad. So don't force the issue with stinkin' venison, even if it's the only deer you killed this past season or a sealed pack that maybe got nicked. Don't take a chance. Trust your senses.

USE GOOD GEAR

Way back in the old days, like 20 and 30 years ago, hunters would freeze meat and fish by wrapping it in butcher paper and tossing it in the freezer. Or they'd put it in a half-gallon milk container with water and freeze that chunk solid, thawing either when it was time to cook them.

Neither were great, but they did the job. We can do better because of the availability of vacuum sealers. One popular model is the FoodSaver Gamesaver Titanium G800, which

offers dual sealing settings and a 15-inch wide seal strip to handle larger cuts of meat such as a big roast, shoulder or backstraps.

Vacuum sealers remove the air inside the durable freezer bags, ensuring quality meat without risk of freezer burn or spoilage. When thawed, your wild game is ready to be prepared (or cooked, if you prepped it first) for your meal.

If you have plenty of ground venison frozen and ready to prepare, consider an 11-pound capacity vertical sausage stuffer. Most units come with four stainless steel funnels so you can make anything from snack sticks to summer sausage. With your favorite recipe and accessories, you can create a variety of sausages for grilling, smoking or traditional methods. It's easy to use and can provide great meals.

GET RID OF SILVER SKIN

It only takes a little time and effort to do the necessary trimming and cleaning with your venison the best it can be.

Muscles are attached to bones and held together by connective tissue, which most hunters see as a white sinewy coating on one side of backstraps or throughout shoulders and hindquarters. This sinew is often called "silver skin" because of its sheen, and it's doggone tough because it's the tendon and ligament fibers that help keep the muscles together.

Ever had a piece of venison so tough that you couldn't chew through it or cut it with a knife? It likely was because the silver skin wasn't removed. If it isn't and is cooked, it shrinks. It's just a bad thing that should be removed when you're doing trim and prep work before cooking, grinding or freezing.

You'll need a good knife to remove this silver skin, such as a fillet knife or chef's knife. A longer, thinner blade helps make the task easier. With the big hindquarters you'll be separating the muscles into roasts, but don't worry about losing some of the meat. You'd rather have the meat with no silver skin than something tough and virtually inedible.

For shoulders, necks and shanks,

there's so much connective tissue that it's almost more trouble than it's worth to try to remove the silver skin. That's when you can slow-cook these cuts by braising them on low heat for several hours with a marinade to create tender goodness for tacos or shredded sandwiches, just like with a pork shoulder.

For backstraps, there are two good options. One is to fillet the silver skin from the meat by carefully slicing it away in one strip. Or you can lay the backstrap on the cutting board with the silver skin on the board, slice steaks (to your desired thickness) and slide the knife under it to leave the skin. Either way works, but the bottom line is to get rid of the silver skin.

GREAT BURGERS

Few things are more aggravating than to have a beautiful array of burgers on the grill and then see one (or more) fall apart when you're trying to flip them.

Disintegrating burgers are a mess, not to mention the lost time and meat, along with hungry folks wondering why they let you be in charge of the cooking duties.

Here's how to solve the problem: Use a binder to keep the ground meat together. Two of the best are an egg and bread crumbs. Just one egg and maybe $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of bread crumbs with 2 pounds of ground meat can help keep them together when you form the patties. If you have more ground venison (or less), adjust accordingly with the bread crumbs. Combine these and the meat in a bowl, add whatever herbs or other additions (bacon, shredded cheese) and then form into patties.

If you process your own venison, consider investing in a No. 8 heavy-duty meat grinder and sausage stuffer. Some units have a powerful 575-watt electric motor, a large grinding tray and stainless steel construction for easy use and cleanup. You can adjust the grind with three plates for fine, medium and coarse grinds. The best thing is you can control your own processing from the hunt to the dinner table.

Don't worry about sullyng the taste of your delicious venison with the egg or bread crumbs. They're not going to be detected when you


**OUTDOOR
EDGE**[®]
KNIVES/TOOLS

RAZORBONE[™] KNIFE TO DO IT ALL

NEW

5.0 Inch ▶
Boning Blade
▼

◀ RazorSafe[™]
Replaceable
Blade System

3.5 Inch
Drop-Point
Blade ▶

**BIG BLADE
PERFORMANCE.
FOLDING KNIFE
CONVENIENCE.**

Switch between three styles of interchangeable razor blades to break down the biggest game—all with one tool that never needs sharpening. Includes three 3.5" drop-point blades, two 5.0" boning blades, gutting blade to open game like a zipper, plus sheath to pack out this indispensable set once the job is complete. *Make the Cut[®]* and go from field to table fast and easy with the new **RazorBone[™]**.

▲ Gutting
Blade

MAKE THE CUT[®]

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Venison Stir Fry

INGREDIENTS:

+ 1 pound venison, sliced

MARINADE:

+ 2 tablespoons honey

+ 1 tablespoon red wine

+ 1 tablespoon soy sauce

+ 1 teaspoon peanut oil

+ 2 teaspoons red pepper flakes

+ 1 clove fresh garlic, minced

+ ¼ teaspoon ginger

STIR FRY:

+ 1/8 cup sesame oil

+ 1/8 cup peanut oil

+ 2 teaspoons garlic powder

+ 2 teaspoons onion powder

+ 1½ teaspoon ginger

+ 1 yellow pepper

+ 1 red pepper

+ 1 small white onion

+ 1 carrot

+ Handful of green beans, cleaned

+ 1 cup cilantro, chopped

+ 12 oz. baby corn

+ 8 oz. water chestnuts

+ Sriracha noodles



DIRECTIONS:

Trim your venison of excess fat and silver skin. Slice in thin pieces, or feed the venison through your jerky slicer to make perfect strips for your stir fry.

Place the strips into a vacuum sealer bag with the marinade and seal. Refrigerate at least eight hours and up to 48 hours before cooking.

Slice your peppers, onions and carrot.

Heat your large skillet or wok over high heat. When it's hot, pour in the oils, garlic, ginger and onion powder. After you begin to smell the garlic and ginger strongly, drop in the marinated venison strips.

Flip often, and as soon as the venison is no longer pink on the outside, drop in all of the veggies. Continue to cook for a couple of minutes or until your veggies are lightly sautéed. Be sure to flip very often to cook everything evenly – your stir fry will cook very quickly.

Heat your large skillet or wok over high heat. When it's hot, pour in the oils, garlic, ginger and onion powder. After you begin to smell the garlic and ginger strongly, drop in the marinated venison strips.

Flip often, and as soon as the venison is no longer pink on the outside, drop in all of the veggies. Continue to cook for a couple of minutes or until your veggies are lightly sautéed. Be sure to flip very often to cook everything evenly – your stir fry will cook very quickly.

For more recipes and to view a complete selection of meat processing tools, visit www.deeranddeerhunting.com.

bite into the burger. Both will help the lean venison hold the patty shape when you get it on the grill. Be sure to wipe the grill grate with a light coating of vegetable oil, too, before putting on the patties to help prevent sticking.

Make the burger patties a uniform size so they will cook evenly and at the same time. Heat from the grill should be even, too, so one end of the grill doesn't get hotter than the other. Another thing with burgers, or other cuts of meat, is to not continually flip them during cooking. Put them on, leave them and then when they release from the grill grate with minimal effort from a spatula, flip them. Do the same with other meats, too.

SKINNING: PROS AND CONS

In cool climates, wait to skin your deer if possible. Skinning a deer accelerates cooling of the meat, and skinning a deer is easiest when the carcass is still warm. However, the skin helps protect the meat from the elements and rodents while it is hanging. It also prevents the meat from drying out.

In extremely cold weather, leaving the hide on the carcass can help prevent the meat from freezing unevenly. Meat quality depends upon rapid but uniform cooling. Quick freezing, or repeated freezing and thawing, can cause meat to be tough. In warm regions, skin the deer as soon as possible. This will help the meat cool faster. If the deer is to be hung in a cooler, the hide will not be needed for protection.

HANG IT RIGHT

Whether you immediately transport your deer home or leave it in camp, the deer should be hung as soon as possible. Hanging a deer accomplishes two things: It facilitates cooling and puts the deer in a good position for skinning. Propping the body cavity open with a stick promotes even

faster cooling. Many people hang a deer head-up, but a head-down position remains better for several reasons.

First, hanging a deer head down lets heat rise freely from the chest cavity. Second, it makes it easier to skin the animal. Third, it reduces the amount of hair you get on the meat. To hang the deer head-down, simply insert a stout stick or meat-hanging gambrel above the hock, between the large tendon and the bone in the hind leg. Be careful not to cut the tendon. The

opening between the hock and the tendon is the only place to hook the gambrel stick. If you insert the gambrel hook and hang the deer before you skin the hock, it is very easy to accidentally cut the tendon when making the first cuts around the hock, causing the deer to come crashing down.



PRACTICE LIKE YOU MEAN IT

I never gave archery targets much thought until I began shooting broadheads almost exclusively. When you shoot as much as I do, you quickly realize that you need a top-notch target that can take a lot of hits with a replaceable-blade broadhead. Yet, you would prefer to not require the strength of Hercules to remove your arrows.

Like most archers, I do my initial paper tuning with field points. And if it is months before hunting season, I will practice with the field tips using a standard bag-type target. However, when hunting seasons are a couple months away, I tune the bow again using the same broadheads I will be hunting with. After I get it perfect, I reset the sight pins and start shooting broadheads exclusively.

Thirty years ago, I hunted mostly with heavy fixed-blade broadheads made from steel. I shot them into a big sand bank for practice. Then, I simply re-sharpened the blades and went hunting. Today's aluminum ferrule broadheads are not really meant for sand bank shooting, thus the need for a broadhead target.

The first targets designed for modern broadheads were a royal pain. Most were made from a heavy plastic material that could take a lot of hits, but removing arrows was akin to trying to remove the mythical Sword in the Stone without royal blood. I can remember having to lay some targets on their side and stand on them to be able to get my arrows out. And after I started shooting fast carbon shafts, forget it. Sometimes so much heat was generated from the friction of the arrow entering the target it would melt and stick to the shaft!

Of course, the industry responded. New designs and materials created targets with longer life and easier arrow removal. However, some are more durable than others, especially when the

archer is shooting broadheads.

"For an ethical bow-hunter, target practice is of paramount importance," said Mike Weinkauff of Field Logic, makers of The Block and PolyFusion targets. "Trying to shoot out a broadhead target every year is an excellent goal. What archers need to realize is that not all targets are created equal.

"Our testing shows that some of today's most popular targets will have a pass-through failure with field points in less than 1,000 shots. If you're practicing with broadheads, your target may not last half that long before you experience a pass-through."

Early broadhead targets that permitted any semblance of easy arrow extraction frustrated all of us with their lack of durability. However, archers must also realize that when shooting a fast arrow tipped with a razor blade into any target, that target will get shredded over time. It is completely unrealistic to think a broadhead target will last as long as a bag-type target shot with nothing but field points. Still, the best self-healing broadhead targets out there will withstand a lot of hits as well as bad weather should they be left outdoors for a prolonged period.

To help increase the durability of your broadhead targets regardless of make or model, here are a couple of tips. First, buy the biggest target you can both afford and transport. The larger the target, the larger the surface area to shoot, which will translate into longer life.

Second, targets that permit shooting on four sides will last longer than those that can be shot on only one or two sides.

Third, and perhaps most important, do not shoot only at the center of the target. To achieve maximum target life, you have to spread the hits around. To help me do this without the risk of missing the target entirely, I shoot the

BOW SHOP

BOBB ROBB

DITCH THOSE FIELD POINTS FOR BROADHEADS



Made in the USA with 31 pounds of the highest quality high-density self-healing foam, the SEVR 21-inch HD target can withstand thousands of shots from broadhead-tipped arrows at high speeds from both bows and crossbows.

center of my targets when getting my sight pins set. Then I shoot at spots scattered around the edges of the target at reasonable distances (for me that is to about 50 yards), saving the center for long-range shooting where a greater margin of error is needed.

What about 3D targets?

I love shooting life-like targets, especially when replicating actual hunting conditions, such as when practicing shooting from either a tree stand or ground blind. For maximum life, there are targets with a replaceable vital area core.

Good broadhead targets can cost as little as \$50 to as much as \$200. However, they are worth the investment.

I personally like to have two: one larger premium model I keep at home, and a smaller, less expensive model that's easily-transportable in my truck that goes with me to hunting camp.

— Bob Robb is a professional outdoor writer and accomplished whitetail bow-hunter from Washington State.



GUN SHOP

MIKE HANBACK

THE ONGOING AMMUNITION SHORTAGE IS CAUSING MANY OF US TO DIG AROUND IN THE BASEMENT IN SEARCH OF SOME OLD .270 OR .30-06 CARTRIDGES TO HUNT WITH THESE DAYS. IF YOU FIND SOME, ARE THEY SAFE TO SHOOT? WILL THEY KILL A BUCK?

ARE OLD CARTRIDGES SAFE?

Generally, yes. If factory centerfire cartridges are stored in a dry, cool place with low humidity, preferably in an airtight container, they can have an amazingly long shelf life. Many ballistics experts report shooting 20- to 50-year-old ammo with no problems.

Notice I said factory ammunition, which is manufactured using premium components and exacting specifications that extend the shelf life of cartridges. I do not advise shooting old reloads.

If you can't find new ammo and need to hunt with random rounds you have accumulated over time, chances are those cartridges are a few years to maybe 5 or 10 years old. If they have been properly stored, you should have no issues.

AMMO CHECK

Before shooting any old ammunition, take each cartridge out of the box and check it carefully. If the brass and bullet are clean, smooth and not corroded, the round should shoot fine. Keep in mind the warning signs of unusable and potentially unsafe cartridges: split case necks, rusty bullets and/or corroded brass or primers. If a cartridge shows any of these signs, discard it properly and don't shoot it. Also, if a round looks OK but does not load and chamber easily and smoothly in your bolt-action or lever rifle, do not use it.

IS IT OK TO HUNT WITH OLD AMMO?



Old ammo works just fine for whitetail hunting. However, be sure to inspect each round before going afield with it.



The mushroom performance of this old round did the trick for the author when he shot a chunky Texas buck.

WILL OLD ROUNDS KILL A DEER?

Last season I planned to hunt with a new CZ 557 rifle chambered for .30-06. The '06 has long been one of my favorite cartridges, and I've killed dozens of bucks and some larger animals with it, including elk and bears. But for some reason I hadn't used the iconic round for years.

One day last September I went to my gun shop and asked the guy behind the counter for a couple boxes of 150-grain '06 loads.

"Ha, haven't had those in stock for months!" he barked.

I went home, dug into my ammo cache in my basement and pulled out a partial box of factory .30-06 with 165-grain bullets. I got to wondering, "How old is this stuff? Ten, 15, 20 years? Maybe older?"

I didn't know for sure, but I pulled each cartridge out of the box

and checked it. They looked shiny and fine. I went to the range, and after a little fine-tuning had the loads grouping one inch at 100 yards. I went out and shot three bucks with those loads.

Right now, ammunition companies are working diligently and round the clock, but with ongoing incredible demand and supply-chain issues, it will take months and likely a year or more to get the shelves restocked. Good to know those old cartridges you've squirreled away in the basement will do the job this season.

— Mike Hanback is the host of Big Deer TV. Visit his site at www.bigdeerblog.com



JOSH HONEYCUTT

THE WHITETAIL TRIFFECTA

IN 2020, BRIAN SALMONS TOOK SEVERAL ROAD TRIPS, AND TAGGED THREE BUCKS IN THREE STATES.



Buck Score:
153 5/8 inches
Date Harvested:
October 3, 2020
Location:
Scioto County, Ohio
Compound bow

Brian Salmons' Ohio whitetail is as nice as they come. BRIAN SALMONS PHOTO

The average American deer hunter spends most if not all of their lifetime hunting only one state. Few venture out of town to lands unknown. But last season, Brian Salmons did just that, and tagged three nice bucks as a result of his efforts.

"I have been deer hunting since I was 9 years old when I killed my first buck," Salmons said. "I started bowhunting when I was 19, and fell in love with it and have been doing it 15 years now. Deer hunting to me is some of the best memories of my life. From being a kid and hunting with my father, to maturing into the hunter I am today, it's a peaceful getaway from work and to be out in God's creation. Nothing beats those mornings waking up and getting things ready to get in the woods and watching everything come to life. Getting a deer is just icing on the cake."

AN OHIO HAMMER

He started the three-legged journey in Ohio, shortly after the late-September opener. On the afternoon of October 3, he went afield on a farm he'd hunted for two years. While he was familiar with the area, he wasn't really targeting a specific buck. Any mature deer would do.

The weather was pretty nice and sunny with minimal wind. The 12-degree temperature drop was just what he needed to see increased deer movement, too. At least, that's what he hoped.

Sitting on stand, he was surrounded by rolling fields and oak hardwoods. In front of him, an open field retained much of his focus. Thick hardwoods were to the left, right and rear. The smell of freshly-cut hay wafted across the landscape, reminding him of fall's arrival. Manure from a nearby cattle barn also filled the air with fragrance. *Good cover scent*, he thought.

As he patiently waited, he hoped his first sit of the year would prove fruitful, and he didn't have to wait long to see a return on his time. Around sunset, a big deer he didn't recognize entered the open.

"He came across the fence and started walking down the side of the field edge, going slowly and feeding," Salmons said.

Knowing the deer was about to wind him, he carefully drew his bow. Just as the buck stopped to scent check the area, he settled the pin, and released the arrow. The buck sprinted 80 yards downhill, did an incredible front flip, and expired in the timber.

Salmons could not have been happier with the outcome. "It was my 1st sit there that year, and I'd slipped in and hung a stand right before the hunt," Salmons said. "I believe that helped a lot, as I hadn't been in the area except to check the camera. The hunt was awesome."

His hunting buddy, Drew Hunt, was also on the property that day. They recovered the whitetail together. As expected, they were both stoked over the stud, 4 1/2-year-old buck. Jokingly, his friends asked what he'd do the rest of the season. His response? Keep hunting, of course.

A KANSAS DREAM

About five weeks later, Salmons and Hunt found themselves in Kansas. Salmon had never been there before, and it was the furthest from home he'd ever been. He wasn't entirely sure of what to expect. But it turned out to be pretty slow. For five days, he barely saw any deer.

Then, on the 6th day, things improved. It was very cold and windy. Sitting in a Redneck box blind, he was surrounded by soybean fields, hedge apple trees and pines. There was plenty of thick bedding cover and food.

That afternoon, two does and a small 4-pointer fed out into the beans. That was his only entertainment. Then, a nice buck entered the open. Following a doe, it quickly turned into a chase.

Fortunately, the series of runs brought the deer within bow range. The buck stopped and turned broadside. Seeing his opportunity, Salmons drew his bow and took the 63-yard shot. The arrow soared through the air, arched upward, and dropped right into the vitals. The buck bolted



Buck Score:
120 1/8 inches
Date Harvested:
November 13, 2020
Location:
Marshall County, Kansas
Compound bow

Brian Salmons' Kansas hunt was one to remember.
BRIAN SALMONS PHOTO

about 100 yards and tipped over in the edge of a pine thicket.

While walking to the buck, he and his friend, Hunt, came face to face with the biggest skunk they'd ever seen. Promising to part ways peacefully, the skunk didn't spray, and the hunters didn't shoot. Shortly thereafter, they recovered the buck, and both hunters were happy.

"It was all new terrain to me and an all-new experience," Salmons said. "The buck was super cool, as he has 8- and 9-inch brow tines. It was just an overall neat experience to see a new area of the country with a lot of open land, windmills and agriculture. It was neat to travel 12 hours away and be lucky enough to hunt and take a deer."

A KENTUCKY TANK

Refusing to be finished with deer season, Salmons road tripped back eastward, and stopped for a hunt in Kentucky, too. He had two years of history with a big buck, and even missed it during the previous rifle season. That encounter, plus tons of trail camera photos and a pair of sheds from the previous year, there was no question the deer captivated his attention.

He's hunted the farm this buck calls home for about nine years, and he's taken a couple of nice bucks there. Knowing the farm well, it was a matter of time before he crossed paths with the big whitetail.

On his way back from Kansas, his brother-in-law, Jeff Porter, sent trail camera photos of the giant. It'd returned. He recognized the deer from the previous year as the one he'd missed. As a result, he hunted daylight to dark for five straight days.

On November 20, after several days of hard hunting, the weather brought low temperatures and variable northerly winds. His stand location consisted of mostly hardwoods, overgrown fields, and a green food plot filled with turnips. Directly in front of the stand, a drainage fed down into the main hollow filled with oaks. To the left and right were flats that created a bowl. And to the rear was a steep bank that was impassable, which prevented deer from getting downwind of him.

Early in the afternoon, he spotted several turkeys, and six of them were big longbeards. The group of birds yelped, clucked and created a whole symphony of turkey sounds. It was a great sight and way to pass the time.

Shortly after their departure, a young buck pushed through, hot on the heels of a doe. Grunting the entire way, it never took its eyes off of it. He hoped the bigger buck wasn't far behind.

Minutes later, he caught movement to the right, and the giant appeared. Walking down off of a point, it stopped and stood only 90 yards away. Broadside and facing downhill, it hadn't a clue of Salmons' presence.

So, he slowly raised his rifle, settled the crosshairs, and took the shot. The buck dropped in its tracks, and didn't move a muscle.

"I was on cloud nine, as he was my biggest buck to date," Salmons said. "After having found both of his

sheds the previous year with my girlfriend, Ashley, it was very special, to say the least. The hunt couldn't have gone any better."

After climbing down, his brother-in-law, Porter, and another friend, Dustin Williams, helped him retrieve the buck and drag it out. Both were just as happy as Salmons to see the 4 1/2-year-old buck on the ground. As expected, there were plenty of high fives going around. After all, he'd just completed his whitetail trifecta — tagging out in all three states he'd purchased tags for.

"My Ohio, Kansas and Kentucky deer all represent something that I deeply care for, love to do, and am very passionate about," Salmons said. "Doing food plots in the spring. Running cameras and hunting in the fall and winter. All that's in between. I'm thankful to live in a free country to be able to pursue dreams."



Buck Score:
163 1/8 inches
Date Harvested:
November 20, 2020
Location:
Lawrence County, Kentucky
Ruger .350 Legend

Brian Salmons' Kentucky buck scored 163 1/8 inches. BRIAN SALMONS PHOTO



SANCTUARIES: SORTING THROUGH THE MYSTERIES

GROW'EM BIG

STEVE BARTYLLA

By giving deer areas they can claim as their own, they get drawn to those areas as the pressure rises and tend to move much more freely inside.

WHEN LISTENING TO OTHERS TALK OF SANCTUARIES, I TEND TO CRINGE. NOPE, NOT BECAUSE I DON'T SEE THE VALUE IN THEM. HECK, FOR AN AWFUL LOT OF HUNTERS OUT THERE, **CREATING AND RESPECTING SANCTUARIES IS EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL TO INCREASING THE QUALITY OF HUNTING ON THEIR HUNTING GROUNDS.**

Not everyone controls their own hunting grounds, but even many in that group can effectively create and realize the benefits of sanctuaries. I do it on public grounds most every year.

Hopefully, what follows will take any mystery out of sanctuaries and reveal how they can be used to our advantage.

SANCTUARY DEFINITIONS

To me, sanctuaries are NOT places I never enter. I merely time the trips and limit them to what's needed to accomplish my goals. Sanctuaries are mostly made up of deer cover, though they certainly can contain farm fields, food plots and, hopefully, a bunch of natural browse and mast.

As one told me years ago, you can divide your hunting property into two types: areas you hunt and areas deer live. The more land one hunts the less deer they'll have to chase.

Though that's not a perfect analogy, I've found it to be a great guide and reminder that hunting more is very often worse.

So, I use an easy formula for

defining sanctuaries. If I can't consistently get to, hunt and leave an area, without spooking deer, I'm including that area as sanctuary.

As alluded to, each off season, I do shed hunt, scout and inspect the sanctuary. If I decide that a spot inside is just too good to not hang a stand or maintenance work should be done to the habitat, I have it done in as few trips as required and months before season starts. A couple months before season starts, I'll prep any stands and place cell cams inside, assuming coverage is acceptable.

From about 2 months before season on until its close, I'm pretty much only entering the sanctuary to track a deer or an extremely rare hunt of one of the stands, and I use them for when desperately needed, hunting stands inside sanctuaries once or twice every two or three years.

Add it all up and I'm inside a sanctuary one to four times a year, with the deer owning it the rest of the year.

WHY IT WORKS

Public land hunting has taught me that deer move more freely

within the pockets they feel safe than outside of them. On public, I strive to find areas no one else goes and hunt the edges, just like sanctuaries on private grounds. That's my greatest trick for tagging public land bucks.

The same applies to sanctuaries. As the neighboring hunters are trashing their woods, your sanctuary serves as a magnet. The more their ground is trashed, the more the deer pile into our sanctuary. At the same time, though they tend to greatly reduce daylight movements much outside them, they know they're safe there and move much freer within and on the edges.

CONCLUSION

Sanctuaries are very powerful hunt quality aides. Frankly, they often have the power to transform those sloppy hunting neighbors from working against you to actually helping drive deer to your grounds and make the season get better, not worse, with each passing day. That's a huge win!



AMERICA'S #1 TURKEY HUNTING SOURCE!

TURKEY & TURKEY HUNTING

PRACTICAL AND COMPREHENSIVE
INFORMATION FOR WILD TURKEY HUNTERS

**SPRING
TURKEY**

SPECIAL

VALUED READERS,

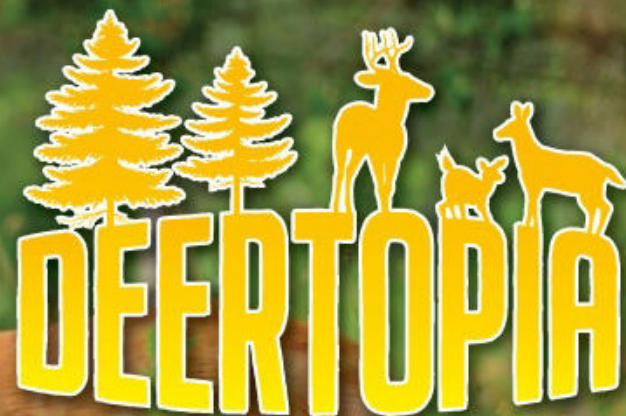
For years, we have been limited in the number of pages we could produce in our spring issues. Now that D&DH is once again independently owned, we changed those rules. One of the most notable changes is actually the bonus section you are about to read. Considering the fact that 64% of D&DH readers also hunt wild turkeys, we thought it was only fitting to tack some extra pages onto this April issue and include this special bonus section. This hand-picked content comes from our sister publication, Turkey & Turkey Hunting. And if you really like chasing gobblers, we have a full 68-page version of Turkey & Turkey Hunting for 2022. It is only available on newsstands, so be sure to swing by your favorite D&DH newsstand and pick up a copy before they're all gone! From the entire team here at Media 360, have a great spring season.

PHOTO BY TES RANDLE JOLLY

— Dan, Brad and Steve

MEDIA360

NEW TV SHOW FROM DEER & DEER HUNTING!



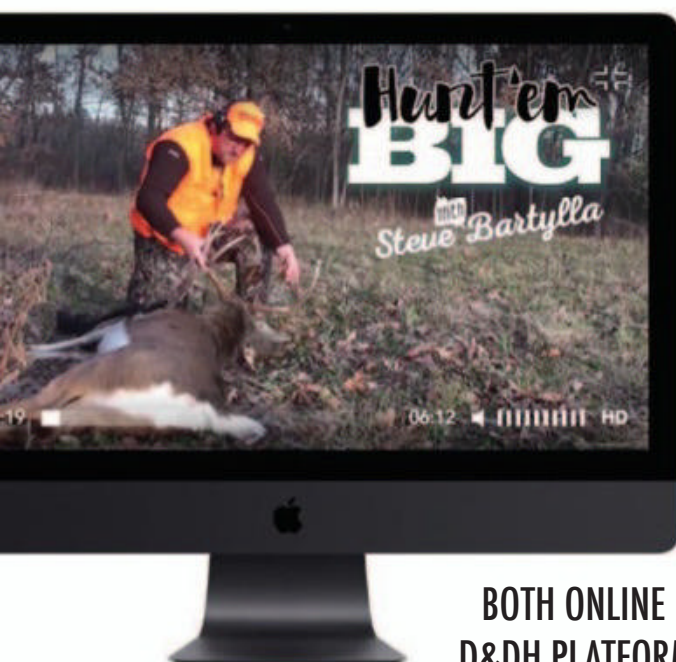
FROM THE CREATORS OF THE TWO HIT ONLINE SERIES, **GROW 'EM BIG** AND **HUNT 'EM BIG** COMES A NEW TELEVISION SERIES. STAY TUNED FOR 13 EPISODES AIRING ON PURSUIT.

Expand your whitetail knowledge with Deer & Deer Hunting's exclusive content hosted by management expert Steve Bartylla.

PHOTO BY CHARLES ALSHEIMER



WANT MORE ONLINE CONTENT?



GROW 'EM BIG • 22 EPISODES

This airs during the weeks and months leading up to hunting seasons. In this online show, Steve provides in-depth, proven methods for managing deer and local habitat.



HUNT 'EM BIG • 13 EPISODES

This airs during the hunting season. In this online show, learn how to hunt mature whitetails by using low-impact, high-odds tactics.

BOTH ONLINE SHOWS ARE CURRENTLY IN THEIR 7TH SEASON, AND 200+ EPISODES ARE HOUSED ON OUR D&DH PLATFORMS FOR FREE VIEWABLE 24/7, 365 DAYS A YEAR. NEW EPISODES AIR EVERY WEDNESDAY ON:



www.deeranddeerhunting.com



www.youtube.com/DDHONLINE



www.facebook.com/deerhuntingmag



BOB ROBB

TOP SCOUTING TIPS

SCOUT FROM HOME

IT HAS NEVER BEEN easier or more productive to accomplish a good portion of your scouting from the comfort of the living room. Using smartphone apps like HuntStand and HuntStand Pro, OnX Hunt, BaseMap, Google Earth and others, as well as topographic maps, you can learn a lot about a property before ever setting foot there.

With HuntStand Pro, you can access satellite images that have been updated monthly, giving you a real-time vision of the area, as well as the ability to go back in time, month by month, for several years, so that changes and trends can be seen. It's the only app in the world currently offering this feature.

You can also use many state game departments' websites to learn all you can about turkey hunting in each state, harvest statistics, population dynamics, etc. Many states also offer walk-in hunt programs that allow the unattached hunter to access private lands. They are definitely worth investigating.

GROUND CHECK

If turkeys aren't gobbling or visible, don't despair — simply search for other clues. Tracks, scratching, droppings and strut marks can reveal travel, loafing or feeding areas. Droppings and feathers — especially primary wing feathers — near suitable trees might reveal roosts. Dusting areas can be golden, as turkeys visit these frequently during the day. As you find sign, look around for potential set-up spots or ambush sites. One caveat: do your walking during midday hours so you won't inadvertently spook birds as they move about close to their roosting areas.

Don't forget about glassing. In areas where you can

access high points and glass lots of country, do so. I can't tell you how many birds I've glassed up in open country at long distances, then planned a way to sneak into position later on.

MAP CHECK

Simply finding tracks, feathers and droppings is just the beginning. Unless they're in a primary roosting area you shouldn't get overly excited just yet. Now grab your topo map and see if you can figure out where the birds might be heading and the likely route they'll be taking. Finding travel routes between bedding areas (roost trees) and food sources can be dynamite. Sounds familiar, doesn't it, deer hunters?

SHUT THE HECK UP!

I know, I know. You've worn those new diaphragms out practicing, and you need to see how that Old Faithful box call sounds. Show some restraint when scouting and limit the use of your turkey calls, instead just focusing on a locator-type call (crow, coyote, etc.) If you can elicit a shock gobble, cool beans. While you shouldn't be afraid to use your turkey calls, don't educate birds now by scaring them with too much yelping. It's best to be a stealth bomber and disturb your hunting area as little as possible while you scout.

SNEAK ATTACK

As an unattached public-land hunter from way back, one thing that I learned very early on was that other hunters will piggyback on your knowledge if you carelessly allow them to. For that reason, I am very, very careful to not let anyone know where I am scouting and hunting. How do you do that? Well, you ...

Park your vehicle away from where you're actually scouting. I might park a quarter- to half-mile from the place I really want to check out, then stay off the road as I hike over to it, just to keep others from knowing exactly where I'm looking.

Remove obvious turkey sign. Out West, I've often driven dirt backroads calling and looking for turkey sign on the road itself. If I find sign — tracks, feathers, droppings — I note the location on my map, then remove the sign so others won't see it. A whisk broom is a great tool for sweeping away tracks — both a turkey's, and yours.

Scout during the middle of the week whenever possible to avoid the weekend rush.



CHALLENGE THE PECKING ORDER

THE THUNDER SERIES DECOYS
OFFER LIFE-LIKE POSTURES, RUGGED
DURABILITY & DETAIL SO REAL
IT'LL FOOL THAT GOBBLER EVERY TIME!

THUNDER CREEPER, JAKE, CHICK FEEDER, CHICK BREEDER & CHICK UPRIGHT



flextonegamecalls.com

flextone

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal,
providing you various content:
brand new books, trending movies,
fresh magazines, hot games,
recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price

Cheap constant access to piping hot media

Protect your downloadings from Big brother

Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages

Brand new content

One site



AVXLIVE • ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open <https://avxlive.icu>

OUTSIDE-THE-BOX TIPS FOR PUBLIC LAND

CHURCH MOUSE CALLING

IF YOU THINK ABOUT most hunters who might set foot on the same public land as you, they probably aren't great callers. They have also, probably, bought into the less-is-more calling style. We've had this engrained in us since the only good(ish) turkey hunting advice was coming out of the Southern swamps, way back when the Northern states didn't even have viable bird populations.

Obviously a lot has changed since then, but it's still common to hear turkey experts (and nonexperts) preach the benefits of conservative calling. When it comes to most of my public-land hunts, you could call me a contrarian on this front.

When I was in high school some Missouri longbeards on public land taught me that they'd fire right up at 11 in the morning, but only if my hunting buddy and I gave them something to get fired up about. We did, mostly because

we were bored and didn't know any better. Since then, I've developed an aggressive style of calling on public land, because it often feels like birds want to be convinced. A few hesitant yelps every half hour doesn't cut it. Instead, using a mouth call and a slate or box at the same time to ratchet up the sequence from competitive yelping to all-out cutting and purring, can do wonders on public-land gobblers.

I have to believe that is partially due to the fact that they are exposed to a lot of cautious calling. Of course, this rule is best followed if you're not confident in turkey-speak and feel like you could do more damage with poor calling. If you know what you're doing, let the gobblers know there is a party. If you don't, learn to call, and then give them an earful.

RUN AND RUN AND RUN AND MAYBE GUN

I spend more time bowhunting turkeys than shotgun hunting them these days, because I love the challenge of calling them into 7 yards and then thumping them with an arrow. The dark-to-dark blind sits with a bow in hand are pure torture in some ways,

but they've also taught me the value of putting in the requisite hours in a good spot.

Instead of trying to run across a workable gobbler every half hour throughout the day, devoting more time to a well-scouted spot has put a lot of toms in front of my 12 gauge. This strategy involves patience, but it also involves the reality that there might not be a single bird on the property you're hunting at any given moment, that will easily fire up and work in. Sometimes it's not about sole proximity to the right bird, but instead is a long-game method that takes into account being someplace turkeys generally like to go.

On public land, where the run-and-gun crowd is thick and likely to bump birds every day of the season, devoting far more time to a few really good spots can yield birds. This is hard to do with a shotgun in hand and a lull in the action. But if you bowhunt birds enough like

LOW PROFILE UNIVERSAL RIB MOUNT

NO DRILLING AND TAPPING REQUIRED

MULTIPLE FOOTPRINTS TO FIT VARIOUS REFLEX RED-DOT BRANDS

IMPROVED SIGHT PICTURE & MOUNTING LOCATION

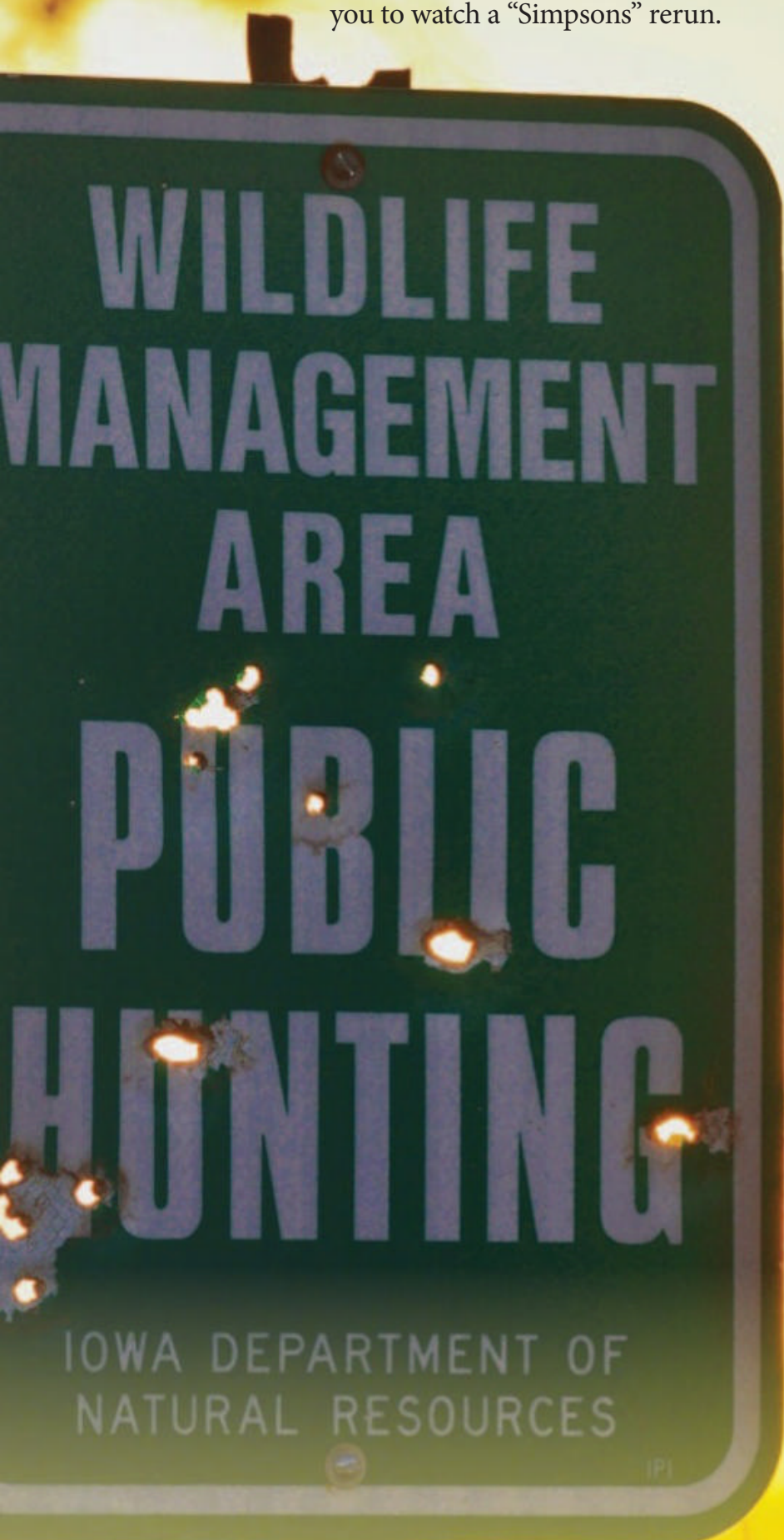
EASY ACCESS TO RED-DOT CONTROLS

EASIER TARGET ACQUISITION



WWW.MEADOWCREEKMOUNTS.COM

I have, you realize there is a solid play to be had when you believe in a spot and are willing to give it three or four hours, versus the amount of time it would take you to watch a “Simpsons” rerun.



TONY J. PETERSON

The key to this is comfort and concealment, which is most easily accomplished with a hub-style blind. But they are totally unnecessary if you plan out your spots. A comfortable seat, backrest, and the use of natural foliage or a deadfall to really dig into the terrain can accomplish the same thing. Having a decent view helps here, too. If you can't see anything, or your lower back is barking after a little while, you'll talk yourself into moving. If you're comfortable and have decent sight lines to watch for approaching birds, you'll sit longer and work one spot more efficiently.

LESS-THAN-DREAMY HABITAT

A couple years ago a buddy and I drove down to Nebraska to hunt birds for a few days on public dirt. We planned to bowhunt the first two days, and then gun hunt the last two. I got lucky and arrowed a bird right away on a property we hunted on a whim, so the trip was off to a good start.

But it didn't take long to start believing we had peaked early.

After hunting in some of the better wooded draws we could find, and focusing on the only agricultural field in the vast tract of public land, we ran out of birds. Or more likely, the birds ran out on us.

With nothing to lose, we loaded our packs and headed out to explore. It felt like a bad idea to leave the best-looking turkey habitat for rolling Sandhills and scrub cedars, but we also bumped into a group of jakes. With low standards and nothing else to work with, we laid down and glassed those birds as they regrouped half of a mile from us. When they settled down and started feeding, I started calling. Ten minutes later we were celebrating a public-land double.

The next morning, I went back and found two separate lone toms that got the best of me. While they were roosting in the obvious spots, they weren't spending their days there. They were flying down and booking it out into the areas that didn't look like they'd hold much more than jackrabbits.

There have been quite a few other birds in a bunch of different states that ended up wearing my tag, or teaching me a turkey lesson, that weren't holding in the dreamy cover. They were, I can guess, responding to pressure and spending the daylight hours in places that hunters don't frequent. This is a lesson elk learn quickly, as do whitetails, and yes, even turkeys. Hunt the likely stuff first, if you must, but then get on your maps or scouting apps and try to find areas that just don't look like they'd draw the crowds. In those spots, especially during the back half of the season, you'll find birds that have had enough of being harassed in the obvious spots.

SO YOU'RE SAYING THERE'S A CHANCE

A lot of hunters are beaten before they ever leave their truck in the morning. Now, I don't want to go full moti-

vational speaker on you, but the reality is your mindset matters. There's danger in what we believe that is not true, and this is obvious when it comes to public land. It's so easy to decide that it's nearly impossible to kill a bird on ground that has been hunted every day of the season.

The key here is that there is a hell of a lot of daylight between impossible and just difficult. I don't know how often I've seen this in the whitetail world, but it has happened hundreds of times where folks have told me there is no way anyone could kill a big buck on the public they hunt, or the public land in their state. Yet it happens, every year. It happens every season. It just happens.

Turkeys are no different, and to make the impossible possible, simply scouting, hunting harder than the competition, and staying out there longer can up the odds in your favor. Time in the woods is your friend, and the more you put in the more likely it is that you'll run across a bird that just plays the game for you.

This happened to me a few years ago when I bought a last-season tag to hunt in Iowa. I wanted to scout some public land for deer, but I also wanted to run-and-gun turkeys for a few days. My pre-hunt research wasn't encouraging, and the first spot I hunted looked like it had been absolutely pounded by other hunters. The parking areas were full of

trucks, and it felt pretty hopeless.

But I knew the birds were around somewhere, and so I set out the second morning to get as far away from the easy stuff as I could. I never heard a gobble at sunrise, and finally set up mostly so I'd stop walking around like an idiot. After 10 minutes I got a response, and 45 minutes into it I was admiring a beast of an old bird, with a rope beard and serious spurs. He didn't make much noise coming in, but he came in, which is the important part.

Figure out what you need to do to stay confident on your chosen ground, and you'll kill birds.

CONCLUSION

Public land is all the rage these days, but the success you see on social media and on other platforms is a highlight reel. It's not easy, and not likely to get easier as more of us choose to, or are forced to, hunt land open to anyone. The good news here is if that's you, you have options, and a real chance to tag out on a pressured bird. Just remember that your success might hinge on a style of hunting that doesn't match the typical private-land scenario.



HERE COMES THE THUNDER



**GOBLIN' THUNDER™
TURKEYSHOT CHOKE**

BY KICK'S INDUSTRIES, INC.



KICK'S INDUSTRIES, INC.

925 Waynesboro Highway | Sylvania, GA | 800.587.2779
www.kicks-ind.com

MOSSBERG® | 940® PRO TURKEY

**OPTIC-
READY.
HUNT-
READY.**



940® Pro Turkey
12GA, 5-Shot
18.5" or 24" Barrel
(Optic not included)

SAFETY TIP 
Store firearms securely, inaccessible
to children and unauthorized users.

OPTIC-READY KEEPS YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE.

An innovative, cut receiver allows direct mounting of Shield RMSc-pattern micro dot sights for improved eye alignment and target acquisition. Inside, the corrosion-resistant internal parts with premium finishes, plus a gas system that can go up to 1500 rounds between cleanings help ensure a smooth, reliable performance. Outside, a self-draining stock with adjustable length-of-pull, a front fiber-optic sight, and a ported extended turkey choke combine to help you bring home a prized longbeard, season-after-season.

Mossberg – Makers of dependable, hardworking firearms for more than a century.

**LEARN MORE AT
MOSSBERG.COM**

MOSSBERG®
SINCE 1919



RALPH HENSLEY/WINDBO IMAGES

GO THE DISTANCE

MAXIMIZING LONG-RANGE EFFICIENCY WITH your shotgun and ammunition requires trial and error at the range. Ammunition and choke tubes are expensive, so combining efforts with fellow hunters is a good way to spend time learning about which setup works best for you. Three or four hunters chipping in, bringing chokes and ammo and spending a few hours patterning loads is paramount to discovering what works best so you'll be comfortable in the woods.

"At 40 or 50 steps, or any range for that matter, I want to get 10 hits in the kill zone of a life-size turkey head target with an even pattern that surrounds it," said Brandon Wallace, a 33-year-old Alabama hunter and founder of Wallace Custom Calls. He's chased turkeys for two decades.

"It only takes one hit in the bone of a turkey head to put it down for the count. Lots of guns and loads do this at 30 yards, and many will also do it farther. If no turkey head target is available, then I will use a 10-inch circle. Everyone likes the holy grail of 300 pellets in a 10-inch circle, which is awesome, but it takes a special load, choke and lots of range time to do it."

Wallace hunts with a Benelli Super Black Eagle with a 26-inch barrel, TruGlo fiber-optic sights, a 2-inch extended and ported Rhino .660-constriction choke, and Nitro Ammunition's load of No. 4, 5 and 7 Hevi-Shot. He developed that setup after hours at the range and still goes each spring to make certain things are dialed in. Wallace starts at 20 yards with light dove loads to check his dead-center zero. Then he backs up to 40 yards and then 50 before signing off for the season.

"My gun, choke and load combo is a 50-yard gun every time I pull the trigger if I do my part and put it on the bird

with a clear shot," Wallace said. "I like to keep shots on birds at or near 40 yards because that is where my pattern is the fullest and still has a lot of density. Sometimes, I misjudge distance, and if I am thinking he is 40 yards and he turns out to be 50, then I am still good. I hunt a lot of field birds, and distances can be deceiving at times in a field."

KNOW YOUR LIMITATIONS

Wallace noted that, "Some guns might be 30-yard guns, and some might be 50 and beyond," which is why range time is so critical. Clark Bush, founder of AllAboutShooting.com, has spent hundreds of hours at the range testing chokes, shotguns

and ammunition through the years, and he agreed that knowing your setup's efficiency — and limitations — makes all the difference.

"I buy butcher paper by the rolls and spend a lot of time at the range," Bush said. "I shoot everyone's chokes, guns and ammo. There's no way to know how a gun patterns until you're at the range."

"I'm not into numbers (of pellets) as much as I want to see a good, even core density within a 10-inch circle at 40 yards, or a 14-inch halo around it and good density. It's not subjective. If it has a gap in it of more than 2 inches, I don't find that acceptable. The problem I see with that is (hunters) pattern these in the middle of summer, and we hunt mostly in spring and autumn. Those patterns are affected greatly by ambient temperature and density."

Time or financial constraints might keep hunters from getting to the range several times a year in various seasons. But Bush believes it's necessary to shoot in different seasons and weather conditions to truly discover what your gun and ammunition can do.

Turkey hunters dream of gorgeous spring days, warm temperatures and sunny skies. But the reality is we might have a late winter, hotter-than-normal temperatures or a late cold front that blows in. If you have only patterned your gun in summer, those cold temperatures could alter the dynamic of the shot pattern. That's why Bush urges hunters to spend time throughout the year with their chokes and pet loads, or others they want to try, to see what works best.



ALPS OUTDOORZ

EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS.

NEW FOR 2022



AMBUSH SLING PACK



Realtree TIMBER®
Mossy Oak® Obsession™

SUPER ELITE 4.0 VEST



Realtree TIMBER®
Mossy Oak® Obsession™
Mossy Oak® Bottomland™

GRAND SLAM VEST



Realtree TIMBER®
Mossy Oak® Obsession™
Mossy Oak® Bottomland™

DASH PANEL BLIND



Realtree TIMBER®
Mossy Oak® Obsession

HIGH RIDGE CHAIR



Realtree TIMBER®
Mossy Oak® Obsession™

Discover more at ALPSOUTDOORZ.com

ALPS OutdoorZ is dedicated to conservation and spreading the passion and appreciation for the outdoors to a new group of hunters.

Learn more at ALPSOUTDOORZ.COM/STL   #SAVETHELIFESTYLE



BEN BRETTINGEN

GETTIN' AGGRESSIVE

THE WALK-OFF

HUNT ENOUGH, AND YOU start to see some patterns develop, especially in the case of anxious gobblers.

Chances are that you've had a tom that wouldn't commit to your location, but gobbled immensely, eventually settled in a spot, gobbled his brains out, then walked off while gobbling over his shoulder. I'm guessing you know the type. He goes to where he thinks you two should meet up, announces his undying love, and hits the road barking the whole way. I've killed dozens of these birds in the past decade by employing a pretty specific trick when they first start to "walk-off."

If you know the area you hunt well, you're at a distinct

advantage, as the exact area these birds gobble-out becomes a kill zone of epic proportions. Your move is to let him move away, no more than 100 to 200 yards as you get to that location, plop down quickly, and hit him with aggressive calling right away. You're simulating a hen that's done her part. One that's heard the gobbler, gone to where he drew a line in the sand, and is impatiently chewing him out for leaving without her. For whatever reason, I've had numerous gobblers from across the country, in a variety of terrain, with and without hens, march directly back to that location, head bobbing and neck outstretched the whole way.

There's something to be said for the fact that he just traversed those steps, and likely considers the path somewhat safe given he was there mere seconds ago. Or maybe it has to do with the fact that toms gather their hens in spots like these all over, and you're simply at the right meeting location at the right time. Like so many aggressive tactics, it requires directly noticing the type of bird you're dealing with, and immediate action to get where you need to be before the bird moves too far away. Yet, when it continues to work again and again, it smacks of that poker-like odds-maker discussed earlier. Given that bird and the hand I'm dealt with in the woods, I know if I execute the "walk-off" well, I'm bringing aces to the table.



- New for 2022 -
**The King of Spring's
Reign is over.**

Tag soup? Never heard of it.

Oh, there's some weather in the forecast?

The high pitched tone will cut through the wind and the waterproofing will keep you in the game no matter what mother nature throws at you.

Crawling, running or doing the boot scootin' boogie to get to the perfect spot?

The silencer keeps those pocket squeaks quiet.



quakerboy.com
1-800-544-1600

QUAKER BOY
Hunters' First Choice™

Originally family owned and operated.
Proudly made in the USA.



IT'S ABOUT TO HIT THE FAN

Get ready. One look at the intricate detail and realism of the new Avian-X HDR Strutter decoy, and things start to get interesting. With translucent tail feathers that can be adjusted to mimic a mature Tom or youthful Jake and two interchangeable head postures, the challenge has been made.

NEW HDR™ Strutter



AVIAN X

avian-x.com    

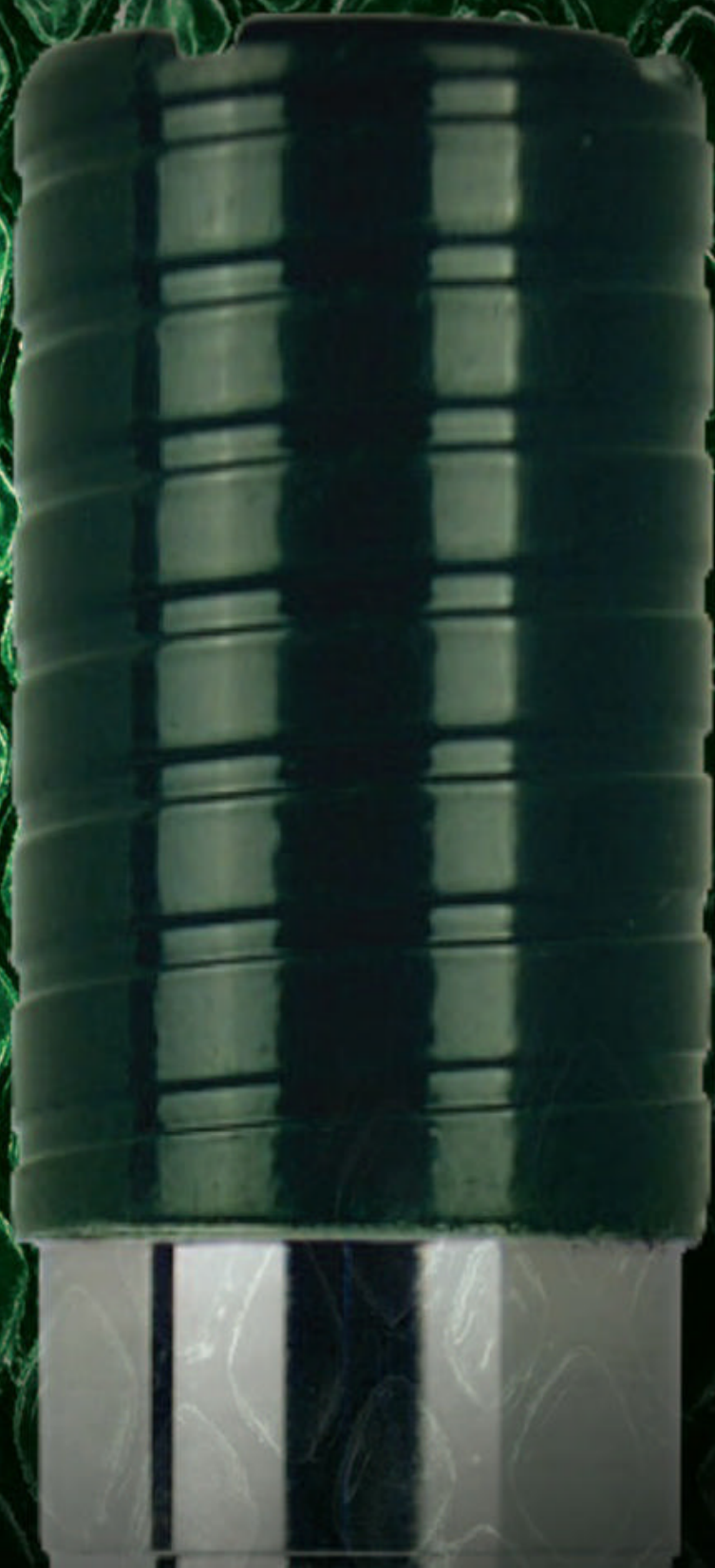
A TURKEY HUNTER'S BEST FRIEND



ORDER YOURS TODAY
PATTERNMASTER.COM



The Anaconda Striker™ Turkey Tube is our first Gas Over Constriction™ tube intended strictly for turkey hunters. Featuring the Anaconda's Patented Coil Zone™ technology, this tube is capable of knocking-down turkeys at extreme distances. The Anaconda Striker™ has changed the game for Turkey hunters spring after spring.



Made In
USA



THE DECOY DILEMMA

TURKEY DECOY 101 GOES something like this:

Early in spring, hunters typically use larger decoy spreads, which often mimics the social dynamic of birds at this time. Hens and jennies are still flocked up, gangs of jakes roam the woods and gobbler groups are common. During this time, decoys can spark social curiosity or interaction that might lure a gobbler within range. Birds are still sorting out their pecking orders and battling for dominance (actually, this never ends). A turkey that sees a decoy might charge in to kick a potential rival's butt. However, if the bird has had its tail whipped, it might avoid the setup because it doesn't want another fight. Standard early-season setups usually include two or more hens and a strutter or jake decoy.

As spring progresses, breeding commences, and gobblers tend to get henned up. Decoys can still be effective, but longbeards with hens typically won't leave their harem and rush into decoy setups. Hens in peak breeding mode often avoid interaction with other hens, and they might walk away from decoys and even calling. Gobbler decoys can still

spark strong confrontational reactions from toms — solo or henned up — but they might also send birds running.

As hens build egg clutches and eventually nest, decoys can still net results. Many hunters pare down their sets late in spring, preferring to use just one or two hens. Gobbler and jake decoys can still work, but again, much of that depends on the mood and social status of the bird you're hunting.

No turkey hunting tool or trick works all the time, including decoys. Often, they provide the visual evidence necessary to attract birds or seal the deal. Sometimes, they might prompt an adverse reaction.

My bottom line? I always bring a decoy or two to the woods. If I think the situation calls for it, I'll use them. If not, I won't. If I make the wrong call, I note it for future reference. And if my hits outnumber my misses, I'm a happy turkey hunter.





THE 4-PLAY TURKEY CALL

THE FIRST FOUR SIDED BOX CALL OF ITS KIND



**Try It, Love It or
Send it back !!!**
SOME RESTRICTIONS APPLY

The 4-Play Turkey call is the first call to employ a forward mounted wheel allowing use of 4 striking rails! This results in an almost unlimited range of tones!



4PlayTurkeyCall.com
610-984-4099






No Frills. No Gimmicks. No Hype.
**Just solid guaranteed performance
or your money back.**



TrulockChokes.com
DISTRIBUTOR INQUIRY'S INVITED

THE HANDS OFF SCOOT-N-SHOOT

SCOOT-N-SHOOT GUNNER

THE NEW SCOOT-N-SHOOT GUNNER

Portable and user-friendly, it aids your fast paced Scoot-N-Shoot hunt by freeing your hands to maneuver the terrain and shoot with ease. The Gunner mounting system is modified to attach to your gun barrel, holding the barrel upright. It includes two receptacles; one for the fan, one for the gobbler head. The oversized fan and wings provide extensive cover, while still allowing you to see between the decoy and the gun. No need to worry about the decoy, focus on the charging gobbler. **MOJO® - Forever changing the way you hunt.**



GOBBLER GEAR



GAMEHIDE ELIMITICK LADIES WICKING TEE

These new garments are designed and cut for women. Whether you're turkey hunting, hiking, camping, gardening or just walking the dog, Gamehide's ElimiTick garments protect you from harmful ticks that can cause Lyme and other diseases. The new Wicking Long Sleeve tee offers a loose, comfortable and cool fit. They are available in either Mossy Oak Obsession or Realtree Edge camo patterns, or a solid charcoal color. In addition, the technology protects from chiggers, mosquitos and other biting insects. It's odorless and lasts the life of the garment. Lightweight Birdseye mesh fabric is extremely breathable and super soft.

MSRP: \$59.99

Info: gamehide.com

KICK'S INDUSTRIES GOBLIN' THUNDER .410 CHOKES

KICK'S Gobblin' Thunder .410 chokes easily convert the most mild-mannered bird gun into a turkey hunting specialist. With the right combination of shell, pellet and choke constriction, Gobblin' Thunder dependably delivers a 14- to 16-inch pattern at 40 yards. Gobblin' Thunder chokes are precision machined to high tolerance standards on computer-controlled equipment. They are made from 17-4 ph-grade stainless steel and feature a unique conical/parallel internal design and Kick's exclusive outward angled diagonal ports. These features improve pattern density by up to 20%. The extended ported section also makes follow-up shots faster and more accurate by reducing recoil and muzzle jump. KICK'S makes the .410 choke for numerous makes and models of shotguns.

MSRP: \$70

Info: www.kicks-ind.com or call (800) 587-2779

PATTERNMASTER ANACONDA STRIKER TURKEY TUBE

The Anaconda Striker provides affordable, edge-of-envelope versatility with patented "Coil Zone" technology to wind gasses around the wad to assist in constricting and pattern uniformity. The Anaconda Striker was designed to give tight, consistent, full to extra full patterns with an effective range of up to 60 yards without compromise. All Patternmaster Anaconda tubes are made from aircraft quality 17-4ph stainless steel with a military-grade Chemical Agent Resistant Coating (CARC) powder coat for a lifetime of durability. This tube is safe and effective with lead and other nontoxic shot, but is not to be used with steel shot.

MSRP: \$59.99

Info: www.patternmaster.com



ALPS OUTDOORZ AMBUSH SLING PACK

The Ambush Sling Pack is a lightweight, run-and-gun pack that features an ambidextrous shoulder strap. It has the MOLLE system on both sides, which allows the ThermoCELL® pocket to attach to either side of the sling. Additional features include interior mesh pockets, a slate call pocket for two slate calls and three strikers, a removable, protective diaphragm call pocket, a silent box call pocket, shoulder strap shell loops and an exterior zippered mesh pocket. Available in Mossy Oak Obsession or Realtree Timber camo patterns.

MSRP: \$59.99

Info: alpsoutdoorz.com

ALPS OUTDOORZ GRAND SLAM TURKEY VEST

This vest features state-of-the-art design with the "sit anywhere" kickstand frame, thick padded fold-away seat, a smartphone sleeve and a removable diaphragm call pocket, among many others. Other features include multiple call pockets, a large breathable game bag, shell loops, H2O compatibility, side compression straps, two water bottle pockets, detachable shoulder straps, and a protective and silent box call pocket. Available in standard and extra-large sizes in Realtree Timber, Mossy Oak Obsession and Mossy Oak Bottomland camo patterns.

MSRP: \$239.99

Info: alpsoutdoorz.com



MOULTRIE MICRO-42i CAMERA KIT

The Micro-42i camera acts as your eyes in the field, and thanks to its invisible flash technology, you can capture bright and clear images without spooking the target. Enjoy ultra-high-resolution 42MP images and HD video (1280x720) with a blazing trigger speed and multiple capture modes. Each kit includes the Micro-42i game camera clad in Mossy Oak® Bottomland®, four AA batteries and a heavy-duty strap for installation. SD card sold separately. Check out the accompanying 6V Feeder/Micro Camera Power Panel® (available in May 2022) to extend the camera's battery life. Dimensions: 3.25" W x 3.5" L x 3" D. Trigger speed: 0.4 sec. Detection range: 70 ft. Flash range: 80 ft.

MSRP: \$89.99

Info: www.moultriefeeders.com





MOJO® OUTDOORS SCOOT-N-SHOOT GUNNER

This portable decoy aids in a hunter's fast-paced hunt by freeing both hands to maneuver and shoot. Its gun mounting system is modified to attach to a shotgun barrel and includes two receptacles; one for the fan and one for the gobbler head. The built-in bipod keeps the gun and decoy from rolling over when the hunter is seated or on the move. The oversize fan and wings provide extensive cover, while still allowing the hunter to see between the decoy and the gun. It also includes two interchangeable gobbler heads; one contented white, one aggressive red.

MSRP: \$69.99

Info: www.mojooutdoors.com

ALPS OUTDOORZ DASH PANEL BLIND

This blind combines the benefits of traditional pop-up blinds with the mobility and light weight of traditional panel blinds. Three-panel construction offers three directions of ground-level concealment for one or two hunters. It utilizes a single-hub design for compact storage, quick deployment and stability. To accommodate the needs of rifle, shotgun or compound/crossbow shooters, the blind features a SILENT-TRAC window system across the front panel. Mesh windows on each side skirt can also be raised or lowered as needed. It comes with attached ground stakes, an interior mesh pocket and is offered in Mossy Oak Obsession and Realtree Timber camo. Weight: 5 pounds, 8 ounces. Height: 54 inches. Width: 40 to 80 inches.

MSRP: \$119.99

Info: www.alpsoutdoorz.com



MOSSBERG® 940® PRO TURKEY AUTOLOADING SHOTGUNS

The 940 Pro has a durable gas system that can run up to 1,500 rounds before cleaning and is compatible with 2¾-inch or 3-inch shells. Features include an oversize, beveled loading port with redesigned elevator and shell catch; adjustable stock; and oversize charging handle and bolt release button. The internal components are nickel boron-coated, and the return spring plunger is hard-anodized aluminum. The vent rib AccuChoke™-compatible barrel is equipped with a HIVIZ CompSight front fiber-optic sight and X-Factor™ XX-Full ported choke tube. The receiver features cuts that accept low-profile, direct mounting of micro-dot sights (Shield RMSc pattern). Includes Mossy Oak Greenleaf camo, sling swivel studs, five-round capacity and ambidextrous safety. 18.5-inch or 24-inch barrel.

MSRP: \$1,120

Info: www.mossberg.com

TRULOCK SMALL-BORE TSS TURKEY CHOKES

Trulock Choke Tubes is proud to offer a new line of small-bore TSS turkey chokes for 2022, specifically in .410 bore and 28 gauge. These new small-bore TSS turkey chokes have been designed and manufactured to give optimum pattern density with Tungsten Super Shot. The new designs in 28 gauge include Beretta Optima HP, Franchi Instinct and Mossberg SA/08. Tri-Star and Yildz are coming soon. The new designs in .410 bore include Browning Invector Plus, Mossberg 500 and Remington. TriStar and Yildz are coming soon. All Trulock® Choke Tubes come with an unconditional 60-day satisfaction guarantee and a lifetime warranty against failure.

MSRP: Starting at \$55.99

Info: trulockchokes.com



GAMEHIDE ELIMITICK SERIES BIB

This new bib will give you great coverage against ticks, chiggers, mosquitos and flies. Built using lightweight SuppleTuff fabric, the bib is tough, lightweight, repels burrs and dries fast. They feature cargo pockets, front slash-style pockets, zippered cargo pocket on the chest, zippered fly, and adjustable and detachable suspenders. Insect Shield technology is built right in and lasts the expected life of the garment with no special care needed. Available in Mossy Oak Obsession, Realtree Edge or solid tan.

MSRP: \$119.99

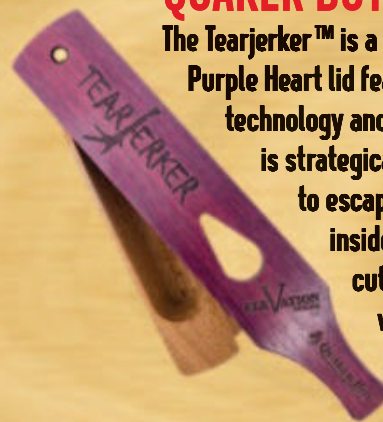
Info: gamehide.com

QUAKER BOY TEARJERKER™

The Tearjerker™ is a two-sided box call made with a Purple Heart lid featuring the patent-pending ToneBlast technology and a mahogany bottom. The ToneBlast port is strategically placed in the lid to allow the sound to escape through the lid instead of being trapped inside the box call. This will make all yelps, cuts, cackles, whines and purrs leave the box with volume, clarity and definition.

MSRP: \$44.99

Info: www.quakerboy.com





JEBS CHOKE TUBES HEADHUNTER TURKEY CHOKE

Delivering extreme patterns downrange at longer distances, the Headhunter Turkey Choke is the perfect choke for increased success in the turkey woods. Developed with Jebs' patented "multi-staged" interior bore designs, this choke tube allows for better shot and wad cup separation, thus making patterns more precise and dense on the intended target. Available in original matte grey or black nitride.

MSRP: \$100.00

Info: www.jebshotchoke.com



CUTTING EDGE GAME CALLS 4-PLAY TURKEY CALL

The 4-Play has a forward-mounted wheel that allows it to play on both sides of the call, employing four rails instead of the typical two. The wheel allows the lid to move forward and backward along each rail to provide the hunter the ability to create an unlimited amount of tones. Each call uses a white oak lid coupled with four different "sound rails" made of walnut, sassafras, red cedar and poplar. The bodies are customizable with three different species: cherry, mahogany or walnut.

MSRP: \$125.00

Info: 4playturkeycall.com



FLEXTONE THUNDER CHICK™ BREEDER

This durable, blow-molded turkey decoy perfectly mimics the body size and posture of a breeding hen. Specially designed to pair with the Thunder Jake or Thunder Creeper decoy, it's a sight that no passing gobbler will leave unnoticed. Includes integrated stake for easy setup.

MSRP: \$49.99

Info: www.flextonegamecalls.com

AVIAN-X HDR STRUTTER

The HDR Strutter allows for intricate customization with interchangeable heads for two distinct aggression levels, and an adjustable tail fan, so you can make the HDR Strutter multiple birds in one to mimic a mature

tom or a youthful jake for an arsenal of setups. Flocked feathers, realistic legs and an iridescent paint scheme further authenticate reality down to every last feather. The strutting wing pieces and fan also remove easily for real, feathered substitutions, plus the decoy is 15% smaller than a real, mature bird for easier transport.

MSRP: \$269.99

Info: www.avian-x.com



QUAKER BOY REIGN™

The Reign™ is a two-sided box call made with a maple lid and cherry bottom, that is compact and waterproof. Although it is a very small box call, it puts out a high-pitched, big sound. This high-pitched box makes it hard for that old gobbler to resist and is very user friendly. The Reign™ comes with a rubber O-ring silencer.

MSRP: \$24.99

Info: www.quakerboy.com



MEADOW CREEK MOUNTS

These low-profile red-dot sight mounts are designed for Burris Fastfire, Vortex Venom and others that use the same footprint, as well as Trijicon RMR and Swampfox optics. The mounts require no drilling or tapping, they simply clamp to the rib on the barrel and stay tight all season. All mounts are universal and will fit almost any shotgun barrel rib between 6mm and 3/8". The mounts are slotted to aid with alignment on the rib and use a plate that clamps on the bottom side of the rib. The mounts come with Rib Adapters, which ensure centering on the rib and make installation a breeze. The Standard rib mount fits ribs between 6mm (.236") and 3/8" (.375") wide. This includes, but is not limited to, pump and semi-auto shotguns by Benelli, Beretta, Browning (except Maxus), Franchi, Mossberg, Remington, Retay, Savage/Stevens, Stoeger, TriStar, Weatherby, Winchester and more, as well as Browning Cynergy, Stevens 555 and Tristar Upland Hunter over/under shotguns. Also available is an over/under mount that will fit any over/under shotgun with a rib.

MSRP: \$54.99

Info: meadowcreekmounts.com



MOULTRIE MOBILE

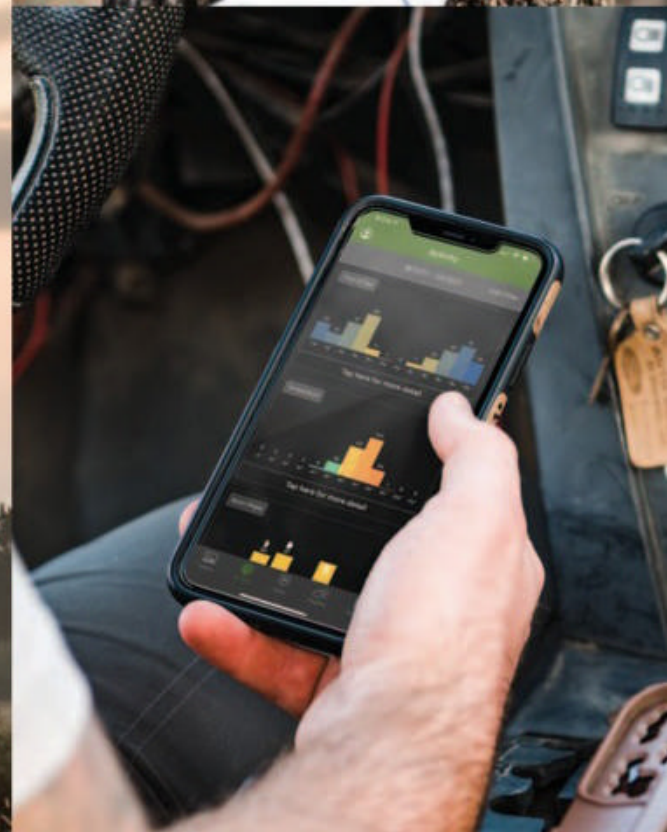
**DON'T JUST CHANGE THE
GAME. TRANSFORM IT.**

**WE KNOW ABOUT THE EARLY MORNINGS, THE RELENTLESS
REPETITION, AND THE WORK YOU PUT IN TO GET YOUR SHOT.**

That's why Moultrie Mobile gives you more than a promise to transform your hunt. We do it. Our system gives you more connection, more convenience and more control — from anywhere. Because better technology in your hands equals better results in your hunt.

DELTA
BASE
CELLULAR TRAIL CAMERA

Introducing the **all new BASE** – engineered to be a reliable scouting tool all season long.
To learn more visit: **MOULTRIE MOBILE.COM**



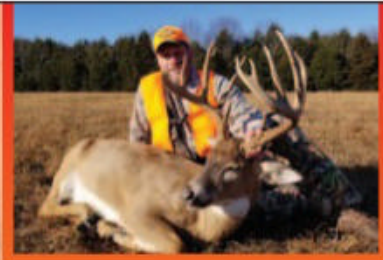
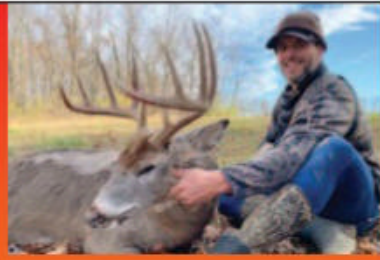
WHERE TO GO

KENTUCKASEE FARMS

*Strickly Managed for
Big Bucks & Wildlife!*

RENT A FARM for 3 DAYS
as low as **\$1000 PER HUNTER!**

TEXT OR CALL FOR BROCHURE
270.707.6511



XTREME HUNTS

- Hunt Pike County, IL or Southeast Kansas on over 20,000 acres
- We manage IL and KS property with a 140" min.
- Archery, Shotgun or Muzzleloader
- Property is managed with low hunting pressure

CONTACT TONY AT
217.440.5732

TONY@XTREMEHUNTS.COM
EDWIN AT 217.430.2695
XTREMEHUNTS@GMAIL.COM
WWW.XTREMEHUNTS.COM

Blackhills Merriam Turkey Hunts

Custer, South Dakota



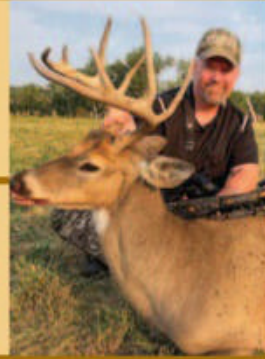
605-673-2403 rockyridgesd@gmail.com



Trophy Ridge Outfitters

NE Wyoming • 300,000 acres
Private • Managed for Trophies

Whitetail • Mule Deer • Elk
Antelope • Buffalo • Merriam Turkeys
Archery hunts = 95% Success Rate
Gun hunts = 100% Success Rate



Ralph and Lenora Dampman - 17985 US HWY 14, Carlile, WY 82721
Phone (307) 756-9776 or Cell (307) 756-2194
www.trophyridgeoutfitters.com

License #BG-353

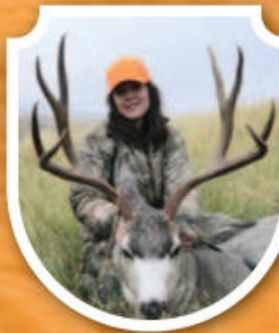


OUTFITTER #: BG 208



We are a family-run outfit offering wilderness and lodge hunts in the most scenic, wild country in the lower 48. With mule deer, antelope and cow elk hunts, we have something for everyone! Hunt out of a fully set wilderness camp on horseback, or enjoy the comforts of our lodge hunts. We are handicap accessible and very encouraging of youth hunters! Give us a call and we'll set up your western adventure! NOW BOOKING FOR THE 2022/2023 SEASONS.

RACHEAL: **307.899.7040**
RON: **307.899.3877**
BOX 2166 | CODY, WYOMING 82414



STATE RECORD DEER

HUNT LARGE WYOMING CATTLE RANCH

- RANCH HAS LIMITED COMMERCIAL HUNTING THE LAST TWO YEARS
- GUIDED OR SEMI-GUIDED HUNTS

- WE HAVE WHITETAIL, MULE DEER, ANTELOPE AND SEASONAL ELK
- LODGING AND MEALS AVAILABLE

- FREE DOE TAG WITH PURCHASED HUNT

RAFTERSTAR RANCH

CALL FOR
OUR ARCHERY
SPECIAL

CALL FOR DETAILS | **307-737-2680** | CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE 

EPSTEIN DID NOT KILL HIMSELF

MEDIA360

TO ADVERTISE WITH US, PLEASE CONTACT:

CASEY LENZ (ASK ABOUT
WHERE TO GO/HUNTER'S CLOSET ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES)
CASEY.LENZ@MEDIA360LLC.COM



WHERE TO GO

HUNT MONTANA



- 10,000 ACRES
- OFFERING MULE DEER, AND ANTELOPE HUNTS
- VERY LIMMITED HUNTING PRESSURE



RAFTERSTAR RANCH

CALL PEPPER FOR DETAILS | 307-737-2680 | CHECK OUT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

HUNTER'S CLOSET



LENON ANIMAL LURES
Serving Trappers
Continuously
Since 1924
LENONLURES.COM

MEDIA360

ADVERTISE WITH US,
PLEASE CONTACT:

**CASEY LENZ (ASK ABOUT
WHERE TO GO/HUNTER'S CLOSET
ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES)
CASEY.LENZ@MEDIA360LLC.COM**

Learn Taxidermy!

Online Videos!



FREE
Catalog!

www.mckenzie-taxidermy.com
1-800-279-7985

BUILT TO LAST AND BUILT TO PERFORM

ROUGH CUT MOWERS

- Mow Food Plots & Brush
- 44" & 57" Heavy Duty Deck
- 2"-8" Height Adjustment
- 19HP-27HP Engines

43" CHISEL PLOW

48" & 72" CULTPACKERS

For a free catalog and product DVD please call 815-539-6954 or visit www.kunzeng.com

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 96)

to raise my flag and let these men know what was happening. When I did, these friends came through for me. One stopped by the office regularly to ask me how I was doing. One hunted and fished with me, knowing that was a low-threat way to interact. And another one left prayers on my answering machine. He'd call while I was at work and say, "Hey, I knew you couldn't pick up, but I wanted to pray for you." And then he'd pray and let the machine record his conversation with God on my behalf. Those messages made me feel like Ware felt when Hancock patted him on the chest and said, "It's going to be all right."

These friends helped me weather the storm. They didn't try to solve my problems. They didn't tell me to "man up" and get over it. They didn't tell me to forget about the storm and picture a blue sky instead. They simply entered into the elements and waited by my side for the bad weather to pass. And it did, about seven months later. And it was my wife, family and those few close friends who helped me keep my nose and mouth slightly above the water.

NOT ALONE

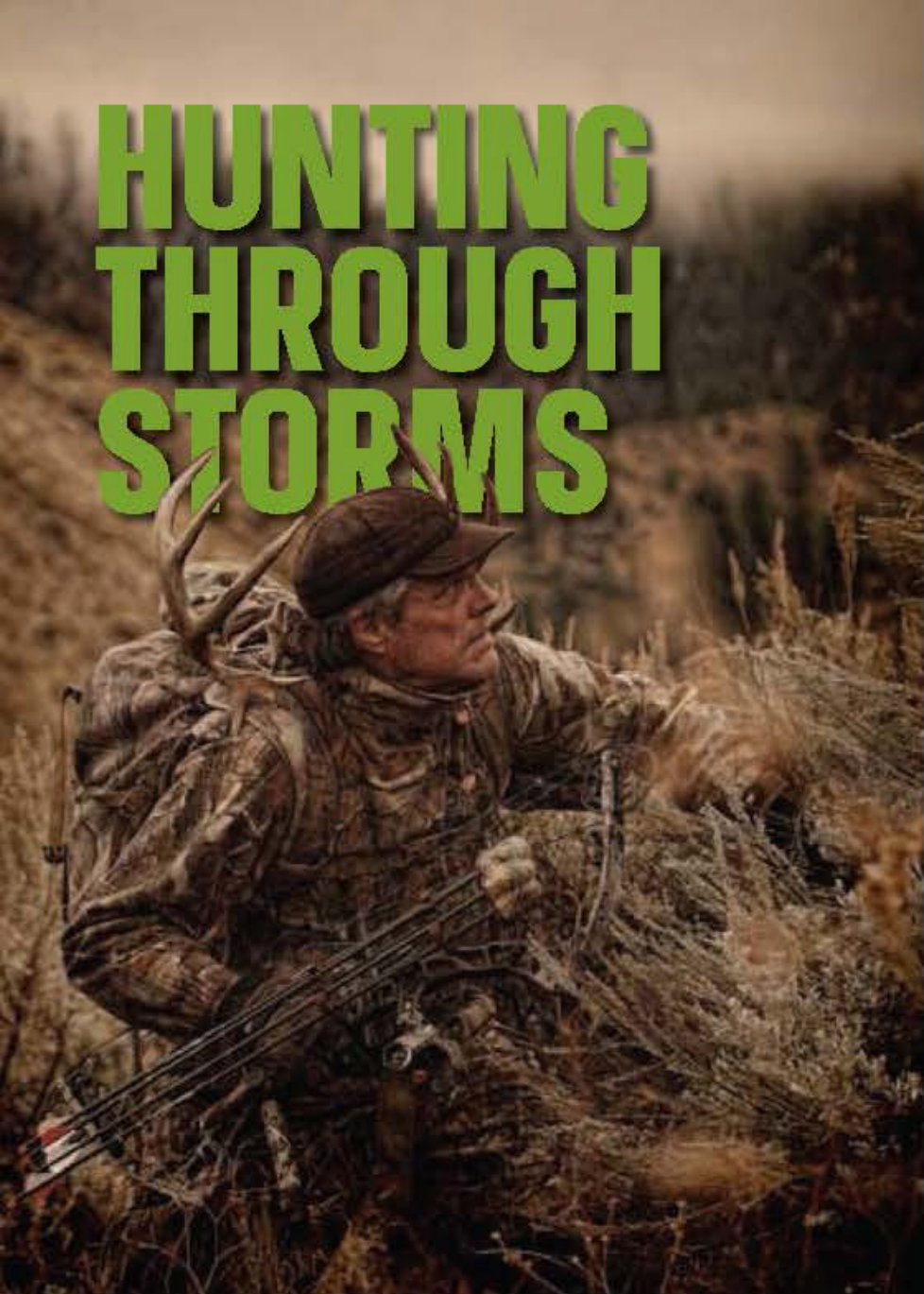
As a deer hunter, I don't fear bad weather. Some of my best moments outdoors have been in the rain, sleet, hail and snow. In fact, it's often on these wet or snowy days that I'm most aware of my surroundings, and most able to play the weather and get close to the game I'm chasing. What's more, nothing makes a warm, bright day feel more cheerful than when it immediately follows a stretch of cold, blustery grayness. And nothing tests our ability to adapt and succeed more than a nasty day. For those reasons, I don't fear bad weather.

And for the same reasons, I don't fear the difficulties ahead in life. They'll test my wits. They'll test my ability to adapt and survive. And they'll do their best to send me home early. But I have a friend or two on the hunt with me, and we'll figure it out.

We will hunt through the storms together.



HUNTING THROUGH STORMS



**TRUE FRIENDS ARE ALWAYS THERE FOR YOU,
EVEN WHEN LIFE DEALS OUT BAD WEATHER.**

BY ZEKE PIPHER

The clouds were rolling in. I could feel it in my bones that something dramatic was about to happen. And then the storm hit: Three of my friends and hunting buddies went through painful, challenging life experiences. One separated from his wife. One went through depression. And another brought a long-standing addiction into the light. In one moment, the skies seemed blue, and the future looked bright. And then, with the passing of time and innocence, an eerie sense of danger moved in. Soon after, these situations struck, causing severe damage and pain to our entire community.

To call this life hard would be like calling a the Milo Hanson buck a “fairly average shooter.” Nobody makes it from start to finish without experiencing loss, pain and grief. Sometimes, these storms give us advance notice. Other times, they surprise us like a tornado from a cloudless sky. Always, they chill our bones and leave us scrambling to figure out a way to survive and press on.

Deer hunters are nothing if not adaptable, especially when we’re with our closest friends. Two men sitting in the cab of a pickup, with a map and a weather report, can navigate the worst that the skies can unleash at them. Together, they can figure out how to stay warm in a negative wind chill, stay dry during a torrential downpour, or play the wind and fool a whitetail on a blustery fall afternoon. Two hunting buddies can hunt together through any type of weather.

PERSONAL STORMS

The same is true when it comes to the storms of life. Proverbs 17:17 says, “A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.” We saw that this past spring during the NCAA basketball tournament. When Louisville’s Kevin Ware broke his leg, everyone in the stands and on the court went numb. All America gasped in shock. With six inches of bone protruding from Ware’s leg, it was likely the worst sports injury ever captured on television. And it was one of the worst storms Ware had ever experienced. In the middle of the pain, his teammate and friend Luke Hancock ran to his side, took him by the hand and patted him on the chest. Hancock prayed for Ware, “Lord, watch over us, and let Kevin be OK during this tough time.” Ware later stated in an interview that during those first moments on his back, he was afraid. And then Hancock showed up, and Ware calmed down. Ware said, “Seeing Luke there really just touched my heart.”

That’s the power of a good friend. And we all need one or two people like Hancock in our lives. Men tend to be friends in motion, forming our deepest bonds on battlefields, job sites or basketball courts. For me, chasing whitetails in the fields and forests of the Midwest has helped me develop a couple of strong friendships. It’s one of the reasons I speak and write about hunting and fishing. I want to use my pen and paper like a bullhorn to scream my appreciation for these great sports. Time in ground blinds, tree stands and pickups has forged and formed relationships that I’ve held onto for life at times.

For example, about four years ago, I went through depression for the first time. Talk about a tornado dropping unexpectedly from a blue sky. I had no advance warning and was utterly unprepared to deal with it. I can remember the week it hit. I normally wake up and jump out of bed without an alarm. I usually drink my first cup of coffee in the truck so I can get to work as soon as possible. But not that week. The first drops of rain I felt, telling me the storm had arrived, came those mornings I lay in bed and couldn’t find sufficient motivation to go from horizontal to vertical. My alarm would go off, and then I would stay in bed trying to think of some idea, some image or picture, that was energizing enough to get me to sit up, put my feet on the floor and make the trek to the shower. It felt like a different person had taken over my mind. I didn’t recognize him, and I didn’t know how to make him go away.

I told a few close friends when this storm hit. Unlike a broken leg in the center of a basketball court, psychological depression is not easy to spot. I needed

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 95)



GEAR THAT HUNTS™

We believe everyone should have the opportunity to pursue their outdoor adventures. That's why we build purposeful gear that is engineered and priced to suit every hunter.



NOMAD

nomadoutdoor.com



CuddeLink. CELL

FUTUREPROOF

CuddeLink® is the cellular trail camera that won't go obsolete.

**\$10 per month,
up to 24 cameras**

Cuddeback's patented CuddeLink technology makes cellular trail cameras truly affordable.

Unlike other brands, with CuddeLink your cell fee doesn't increase every time you add a camera. In fact, you can have up to 24 cameras on the same low cost cell plan. And cell plans start as low as \$10 per month.

Here is how it works:

- 1** Start with a CuddeLink Cell. This is the only camera that requires a cell plan.
- 2** Then add CuddeLink Remote cameras. You can add 1 or more and your cell fee does not increase.
- 3** When you decide you need more cameras you can add them without increasing your cell fees. In fact, you can have up to 24 cameras on the one original cell plan.



CuddeLink® Solo Mode

You don't have to use CuddeLink Remotes to enjoy Cuddeback performance. By selecting CuddeLink Cell you get all the advantages of a conventional cellular trail camera, along with these benefits:

- 1/4 second trigger speed, so you get more deer and fewer blanks
- Power House® IR Illumination which is 3X the power for longer range and better images.
- Plus, when you decide you need more cameras you simply add them without having to add another cell plan.

You know you will eventually want more than one cell camera, so don't lock yourself into paying additional fees every time you add a camera.

cuddeback.com

**Don't get stuck with
a dead-end system,
get a Cuddeback**

