

PRIME CUTS: THE BEST WAY TO PROCESS HINDQUARTERS **P.22**

GAME & FISH

EAST

The Regional Outdoor Guide

GAFMAG.COM
NOVEMBER 2021

TM

**HERE
COMES
THE RUT!**

**THE RIGHT STAND
TO HUNT RIGHT NOW**

PLUS:
CALLING **DO'S** AND **DON'TS**
FOR EVERY PHASE

**SEA DUCK,
SHOOT DUCK.**
DROP SURF SCOTERS
ON CHESAPEAKE BAY

PHEASANTS:
WHERE TO FIND
EASTERN ROOSTERS

GEESE:
PRO TIPS
TO DUPE
LATE-SEASON
HONKERS

BASS:
TOP LURES
FOR FALL
LUNKERS

REGION ROUNDUP

- MAINE'S BURLY BUCKS
- CHAMPLAIN LAKE TROUT
- BIG-WATER BLACK DUCKS
- PENNSYLVANIA TURKEYS
- MID-ATLANTIC STRIPERS

LIVE THE SEA-DOO® LIFE



Plenty of new fish in the sea

Get hooked on the new FishPro™ Scout and FishPro Trophy, or opt for the FishPro Sport, the original fishing model with a sporty new name. Whether it's a passion or a pastime, snappy features like the pedestal seat and Garmin† fishfinder will take your fishing game to the next level.

Go fish at Sea-Doo.com

© 2021 Bombardier Recreational Products Inc. (BRP). All rights reserved. ®, TM and the BRP logo are trademarks of BRP or its affiliates. In the U.S.A., products are distributed by BRP US Inc. †All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners. Carefully read the operator's guide and safety instructions. Observe applicable laws and regulations. Always wear appropriate protective clothing, including a personal flotation device and wetsuit bottoms. Riding, alcohol and drugs don't mix. See your authorized BRP dealer for details.



GAME & FISH EAST

The Regional Outdoor Guide



REGIONAL EDITOR: John Taranto, John.Taranto@OutdoorSG.com | COVER IMAGE: Ryan Yoder | @GAMEANDFISHMAG | FACEBOOK.COM/GAMEANDFISH

CONTENTS
NOVEMBER 2021

56

HOW-TO

44 FALL FAVORITES

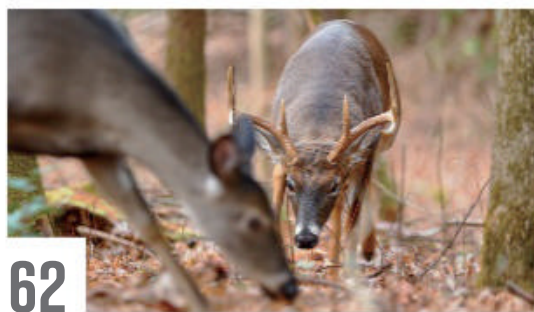
Lake and river bass alike are loading up for winter now. Here are the best baits to throw at each.

By Jeff Knapp

56 ROOSTER ROUNDUP

Where and how to hunt pheasants in the East. (Yes, really!)

By M.D. Johnson



62

50 HAIL MARY HONKERS

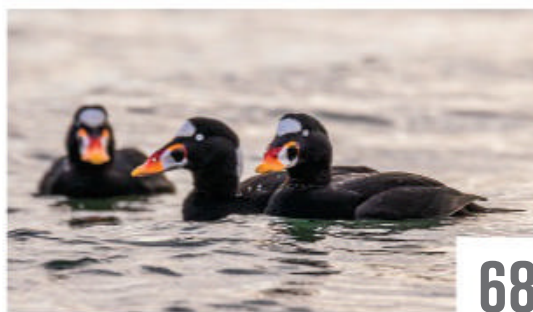
Four experts offer fresh advice for fooling pressured, late-season geese.

By Joseph Albanese

62 TAKE A STAND

For a front-row seat to the rut action, hang a stand in these four key locations this month.

By Doug Howlett



68

40 AROUND THE EAST

Stalk a buck, catch a laker, bag a turkey for the table and more.

By Matt Crawford

FIELD SKILLS

42 GRUNT, RATTLE, BLEAT

A phase-by-phase calling strategy for the whitetail rut.

By Dustin Prievo

DESTINATIONS

68 SCOTER SMACKDOWN

Few waterfowling adventures compare to the thrill of sea duck hunting on Chesapeake Bay.

By John N. Felsner

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP: PAGE 66

GAME & FISH EAST (Volume 41, Issue 9; ISSN-2687-766X) is published monthly with bi-monthly issues in June/July and December/January by Outdoor Sportsman Group®, 1040 6th Ave., 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Canadian Publications Mail Sales Agreement No. 41405030. Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: 500 Rt. 46 East, Clifton, NJ 07011. Yearly subscriptions: \$19.97 for one year (\$32.97 Canadian). POSTMASTER: Send address changes (form 3579) to GAME & FISH EAST, CDS, P.O. Box 37539, Boone, IA 50037-0539. Copyright© 2021 Outdoor Sportsman Group®.

30

FEATURES

30 RED-DIRT REDEMPTION

How many times could things go wrong? One hunter takes failure in stride while looking for a special buck in Oklahoma.

By Dr. Todd A. Kuhn

74 FAR WEST AND BLESSED

The peaks and draws of Far West Texas provide dramatic scenery and lots of places for whitetails to thrive. Finding them, however, isn't easy.

By John Taranto

GEAR

82 RANGE REPORT

Henry Repeating Arms updates the lever-action rifle for today's hunters with the X Model, and a proven platform gains versatility.

By Adam Heggenstaller

86 PRICE POINTS

Big-game packs come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. These four meet hunt-specific needs across a wide range of prices.

By Game & Fish Staff

IN EVERY ISSUE

04 EDITOR'S LETTER

08 MOON TIMES

88 RITES

DEPARTMENTS

12 SHOOTING

The best deer bullets don't have to be fancy. Here are four excellent options that anchor deer quickly.

By Richard Mann

22 DO-IT-YOURSELF

Butchering a deer's hindquarters won't be intimidating when you follow these six steps.

By Drew Warden

18 BOWHUNTING

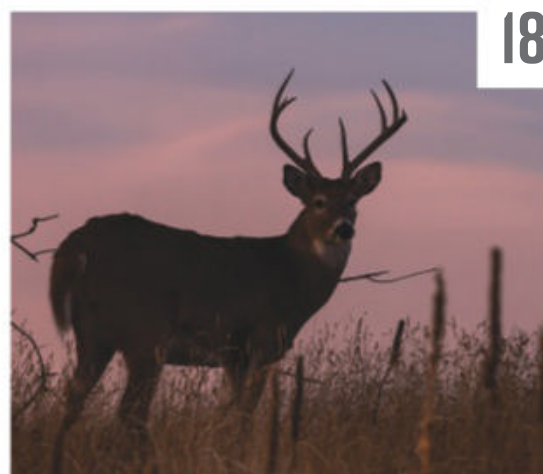
There are only 30 short days in November. Make the most of them by sticking to this plan.

By Tony Hansen

26 CONSERVATION

Our behavior in the field shows how we really feel about wildlife and other resources.

By Andrew McKean



DECADES OF DEPENDABILITY

FOR THE ROAD AHEAD



Vehicles never stop evolving. For the DIYer and the professional, FRAM® delivers the right level of performance for all types of drivers – a legacy built on keeping up with the changing demands of every kind of engine.

Check out the complete line of trusted filters at [FRAM.com](https://www.fram.com)

FRAM

[FRAM.COM](https://www.fram.com)

Trusted since 1934



STRETCHING NOVEMBER

I was about halfway up the tree in my climber when I heard sticks breaking in the cedar thicket to my left. Light was a good 45 minutes away, so all I could do was pause my ascent and listen. A few more sharp cracks were followed by a series of hollow thumps. It was the first week of November, and it sure sounded like a buck was chasing a doe over there in those cedars.

The noise continued during the next half-hour as I finished the climb, pulled my flintlock into the stand and settled in. Then the woods went quiet, and there was no more cracking or thumping or rustling. As soon as legal shooting time arrived, I checked to be sure I could see the muzzleloader's sights, primed its pan and blew a few short grunts from the tube hanging around my neck.

Almost immediately sticks started breaking in the thicket again. It was obvious something was coming my way, and I had a pretty good idea what it was. Light yellow tines confirmed my prediction when the buck emerged from the cedars 25 yards away. The wide 8-pointer was on a stiff-legged march right to the tree in which I was perched.

I didn't like the straight-on, downward angle from the stand, so I nervously waited for the buck to turn—a movement he didn't make until he was mere steps from my tree. Now walking directly away, the buck still didn't present a shot I was comfortable taking with my flintlock. I watched his sauntering gait over the top of the gun's sights, hoping he would turn and give me a chance.

At about 35 yards he paused and shifted his body, almost like he was looking over his shoulder to make sure he hadn't missed something. It was enough to open up a good path to his vitals. The round ball entered near his last rib, passed through his lungs and continued into his lower neck. When I recovered him at the end of a 70-yard blood trail, I still couldn't believe how quickly the buck had responded to my grunts.

That's the rut—or more precisely, the pre-rut. With bucks cruising and chasing and fighting and grunting, it's hard to imagine a more exciting time to be in the woods.

If you put whitetails above all other game, November is your favorite month of the year. And as is true for most good times, it doesn't last. November is over too soon. Tony Hansen laments this in his "Bowhunting" column on page 18 and offers ways to squeeze every possible minute of hunting time out of this month. November is fun not only because action can come quick, but also because you can make that action happen. Calling and decoying are exciting tactics, and we're featuring a series of "Crash Course" videos from Mark Kayser on our website to give you tips on how to best use these strategies. See page 6 for a QR code that will take you directly to these videos.

Enjoy November while it's here. Find ways to stretch your hunting time, even if it's less than an hour. If you're in the woods, you're in the game.

Adam Heggenstaller
Editorial Director

GAME & FISH

The Regional Outdoor Guide

PUBLISHER

Michael F. X. Cassidy

EDITORIAL

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

Adam Heggenstaller
Adam.Heggenstaller@outdoorsg.com

EDITOR

John Taranto
John.Taranto@outdoorsg.com

REGIONAL EDITORS

Dr. Todd A. Kuhn
Drew Warden

ONLINE CONTENT EDITOR

Scott Bernarde

ART DIRECTOR

Brian Judge

ASSISTANT ART DIRECTOR

Andrew Tuchscherer

PRODUCTION

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Melissa Williams
Melissa.Williams@outdoorsg.com

ADVERTISING

NATIONAL ENDEMIC AD SALES

VP, Endemic Sales

Michael Savino
Mike.Savino@outdoorsg.com

Jim McConville | (440) 791-7017
James.McConville@outdoorsg.com

WESTERN REGION

Hutch Looney
Hutch@HLooney.com

MARINE/FISHING ADVERTISING

Michael Cassidy | (407) 625-0992
Michael.Cassidy@outdoorsg.com

MIDWESTERN REGION

Mark Thiffault | (720) 630-9863
Mark.Thiffault@outdoorsg.com

NATIONAL AD SALES

ACCOUNT DIRECTOR DETROIT OFFICE

Kevin Donley | (248) 798-4458
Kevin.Donley@outdoorsg.com

NATIONAL ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE CHICAGO OFFICE

Carl Benson | (312) 955-0496
Carl.Benson@outdoorsg.com

DIRECT RESPONSE AD/ NON-ENDEMIC

Anthony Smyth | (914) 409-4202
anthony@smythps.com

Weather-Beating Waterfowlers

Tough, Inertia-Driven® Stoeger Shotguns

M3500, 12-GA.,
3.5" MAGNUM

5YEAR
WARRANTY

M3020,
20-GA., 3"

Serious waterfowlers choose Stoeger

When cold wind is pelting your face with sleet and icicles are forming on your blind, you need a rugged shotgun that functions reliably in extreme weather. Stoeger's M3500 and M3020 semiautomatic shotguns feature our legendary Inertia Driven® system and enjoy a solid reputation for affordable dependability in a wide range of hunting conditions. Veteran duck and goose hunters will attest to the way they resist water, dirt and snow to deliver consistent patterns on-target, shot after shot. Because when wings set and the birds are gliding in,

you want a gun that's everything you are – tough, consistent and accurate. Ask your firearm dealer to show you a Stoeger M3500 or M3020 semiautomatic shotgun and experience the fit, balance and sturdy construction that make them the logical choice for waterfowlers. StoegerIndustries.com

 **Stoeger**®
Every Day Tough

Shotguns • Pistols • Airguns

TRENDING NOW AT GAME & FISH ONLINE

GET TIPS, SEE GEAR AND CELEBRATE THE LIFESTYLE AT [GAFMAG.COM](https://gafmag.com)

**OUTDOOR
SPORTSMAN**
GROUP®
PUBLISHING & BRANDED MEDIA

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER,
PUBLISHING & BRANDED MEDIA**
Mike Carney

EVP, GROUP PUBLISHER & OPERATIONS
Derek Sevcik

VP, CONSUMER MARKETING
Peter Watt

VP, MANUFACTURING
Deb Daniels

SENIOR DIRECTOR, PRODUCTION
Connie Mendoza

DIRECTOR, PUBLISHING TECHNOLOGY
Kyle Morgan

SENIOR CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Tim Neher

DIRECTOR, DIGITAL EDITORIAL
Jeff Phillips

For questions regarding digital editions,
please contact digitalsupport@outdoorsg.com.

MEDIA
[OUTDOORSG.COM](https://outdoorsg.com)

TELEVISION
[OUTDOORCHANNEL.COM](https://outdoorchannel.com)
[THESPORTSMANCHANNEL.COM](https://thesportsmanchannel.com)
[WORLDFISHINGNETWORK.COM](https://worldfishingnetwork.com)

HUNTING
[BOWHUNTER.COM](https://bowhunter.com)
[BOWHUNTINGMAG.COM](https://bowhuntingmag.com)
[GAMEANDFISHMAG.COM](https://gameandfishmag.com)
[GUNDOGSMAG.COM](https://gundogmag.com)
[NORTHAMERICANWHITETAIL.COM](https://northamericanwhitetail.com)
[PETERSENSHUNTING.COM](https://petersenshunting.com)
[WILDFOWLMAG.COM](https://wildfowlmag.com)

FISHING
[BASSFAN.COM](https://bassfan.com)
[FLORIDASPORTSMAN.COM](https://floridasportsman.com)
[FLYFISHERMAN.COM](https://flyfisherman.com)
[GAMEANDFISHMAG.COM](https://gameandfishmag.com)
[IN-FISHERMAN.COM](https://in-fisherman.com)

SHOOTING
[FIREARMSNEWS.COM](https://firearmsnews.com)
[GUNSANDAMMO.COM](https://gunsandammo.com)
[HANDGUNS.COM](https://handguns.com)
[RIFleshootERMAG.COM](https://rifleshootermag.com)
[SHOOTINGTIMES.COM](https://shootingtimes.com)

SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES: For address changes, subscriptions or questions, e-mail GNFcustserv@cdsfulfillment.com, call (877) 416-2649 or write Game & Fish, P.O. Box 37539, Boone, IA 50037-0539. **BE AWARE THAT GAME & FISH ONLY ACCEPTS SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS FROM AUTHORIZED AGENTS! WE MAY NOT HONOR REQUESTS FROM UNAUTHORIZED AGENTS, AND YOU THEREFORE MAY LOSE YOUR MONEY IF YOU BUY FROM AN UNAUTHORIZED AGENT.** If you are offered a subscription to Game & Fish, please call (877) 416-2649 to determine if the agent is authorized. For more information on subscription scams, please visit www.ftc.gov.

Occasionally, our subscriber list is made available to reputable firms offering goods and services that we believe would be of interest to our readers. **If you prefer to be excluded, please send your current address label and a note requesting to be excluded from these promotions to: Outdoor Sportsman Group®, 1040 6th Ave., 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018, Attn: Privacy Coordinator, or email your label information and note to privacy@outdoorsg.com.**

REPRINTS: Reprints/Eprints or Licensing/Permissions, contact Wright's Media at (877) 652-5295.

CONTRIBUTIONS: Contact Drew Warden at Warden@outdoorsg.com for writer's guidelines. The Publisher assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to unsolicited material.

GAME & FISH MAGAZINE EDITORIAL OFFICE
6385 Flank Drive, Suite 800, Harrisburg, PA 17112
(717) 695-8171 | Fax (717) 545-2527

PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

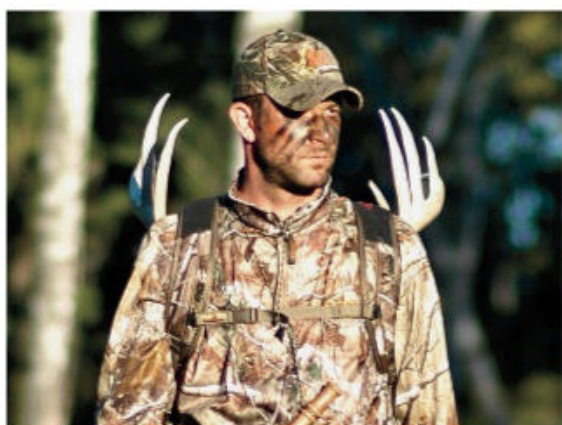
Copyright 2021 by Outdoor Sportsman Group®. All Rights Reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced without written permission from the Publisher.

GAME&FISH® is a registered trademark of Outdoor Sportsman Group® in the United States.

The Publisher and authors make no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of the information contained in this publication. Any reliance or use of the information is solely at your own risk, and the authors and Publisher disclaim any and all liability relating thereto. Any prices given in this issue were suggested prices at the press time and are subject to change. Some advertisements in this magazine may concern products that are not legally for sale to California residents or residents in other jurisdictions.

CRASH THE RUT

November is prime time for deer hunters, and our “Crash Course” videos will help you rule the rut. Get quick lessons on calling, decoys, stand placement and more. Scan the code at the right to start watching.



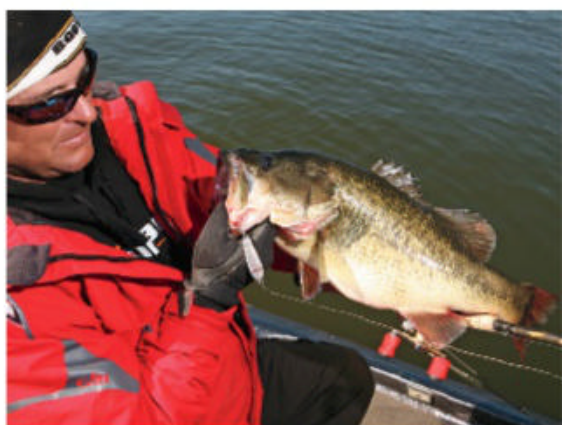
PACK IT RIGHT

There are essential items every hunter needs in the woods. Use this checklist, “10 Things to Keep in Your Deer Pack at All Times,” to make sure you’re set.



HUNTER-FRIENDLY FEATURES

Catch all 12 episodes of our “Beyond the Rifle” series, where Editorial Director Adam Hegginstaller takes an in-depth look at the Benelli Lupo’s innovations.



BRISK BASS

Bass are still biting, and our how-to articles explain ways to catch 'em as temps drop. Pull down to “Bass” under “Fishing” on our homepage for tips.



BEST DEER RIFLES

It’s never too early—or too late—to be thinking about a new gun. See some of the top options for hunters in “Best New Deer Rifles for 2021.”

800-338-3220 | HORNADY.COM



GOES IN SMOOTH. COMES OUT DEADLY.

Fast and easy to load, the Bore Driver™ FTX® delivers the ultimate in muzzleloader performance. At the heart of the system is a polymer base that seals the bore to deliver maximum energy transfer and accuracy.

- **LOADS FAST AND EASY**
- **EXTREME ACCURACY**
- **TOUGH COPPER ALLOY JACKET**
- **PATENTED FLEXTIP® BULLET WITH INTERLOCK® RING**
- **PERFORMANCE-BOOSTING BASE**
- **MAXIMUM LETHALITY**

50 CAL
290 gr. FTX®

Item No. 67713



FOUR 5-COUNT SPEED LOADERS PER PACKAGE.

**BORE
DRIVER™**
FTX®

WHEN YOU HAVE ONE SHOT THIS MUZZLELOADER SEASON, MAKE IT COUNT!

ACCURATE. DEADLY. DEPENDABLE.®

RED DOT ACCURACY



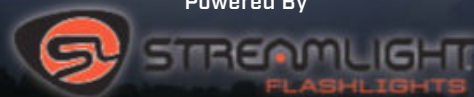
BASECOAT COLOR
TOUCH UP PAINT

If touchup paint had a MOA, this would be it. Our angle cut brush is designed for pinpoint precision when fixing small nicks and chips. Roll it over and it becomes the perfect width for bigger chips and scratches. Need even tighter groups? Try our microdabber for the smallest of chips. With more than 300,000 factory colors, we've got your perfect match the first shot out.

Automotivetouchup.com
888-710-5192

MOON TIMES

Powered By



OCTOBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
24 am 2:54 to 4:54 pm 3:18 to 5:18	25 am 3:42 to 5:42 pm 4:06 to 6:06	26 am 4:30 to 6:30 pm 4:54 to 6:54	27 am 5:18 to 7:18 pm 5:42 to 7:42	28 am 6:06 to 8:06 pm 6:30 to 8:30	29 am 6:54 to 8:54 pm 7:18 to 9:18	30 am 7:42 to 9:42 pm 8:06 to 10:06
31 am 8:30 to 10:30 pm 8:54 to 10:54						

NOVEMBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 am 9:18 to 11:18 pm 9:42 to 11:42	2 am 10:06 to 12:06 pm 10:30 to 12:30	3 am 10:54 to 12:54 pm 11:18 to 1:18	4 am — to — pm 12:06 to 2:06	5 am 12:30 to 2:30 pm 12:54 to 2:54	6 am 1:18 to 3:18 pm 1:42 to 3:42
7 am 1:06 to 3:06 pm 1:30 to 3:30	8 am 1:54 to 3:54 pm 2:18 to 4:18	9 am 2:42 to 4:42 pm 3:06 to 5:06	10 am 3:30 to 5:30 pm 3:54 to 5:54	11 am 4:18 to 6:18 pm 4:42 to 6:42	12 am 5:06 to 7:06 pm 5:30 to 7:30	13 am 5:54 to 7:54 pm 6:18 to 8:18
14 am 6:42 to 8:42 pm 7:06 to 9:06	15 am 7:30 to 9:30 pm 7:54 to 9:54	16 am 8:18 to 10:18 pm 8:42 to 10:42	17 am 9:06 to 11:06 pm 9:30 to 11:30	18 am 9:54 to 11:54 pm 10:18 to 12:18	19 am 10:42 to 12:42 pm 11:06 to 1:06	20 am — to — pm 12:42 to 2:42
21 am 1:06 to 3:06 pm 1:30 to 3:30	22 am 1:54 to 3:54 pm 2:18 to 4:18	23 am 2:42 to 4:42 pm 3:06 to 5:06	24 am 3:30 to 5:30 pm 3:54 to 5:54	25 am 4:18 to 6:18 pm 4:42 to 6:42	26 am 5:06 to 7:06 pm 5:30 to 7:30	27 am 5:54 to 7:54 pm 6:18 to 8:18
28 am 6:42 to 8:42 pm 7:06 to 9:06	29 am 7:30 to 9:30 pm 7:54 to 9:54	30 am 8:18 to 10:18 pm 8:42 to 10:42				

DECEMBER 2021

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 am 9:06 to 11:06 pm 9:30 to 11:30	2 am 9:54 to 11:54 pm 10:18 to 12:18	3 am 10:18 to 12:18 pm 10:42 to 12:42	4 am 10:42 to 12:42 pm 11:06 to 1:06
5 am — to — pm 12:42 to 2:42	6 am 1:06 to 3:06 pm 1:30 to 3:30	7 am 1:54 to 3:54 pm 2:18 to 4:18	8 am 2:42 to 4:42 pm 3:06 to 5:06	9 am 3:30 to 5:30 pm 3:54 to 5:54	10 am 4:18 to 6:18 pm 4:42 to 6:42	11 am 5:06 to 7:06 pm 5:30 to 7:30

The moon's phases are listed as New, First Quarter (First Q), Full, and Last Quarter (Last Q). Times listed represent the peak activity times for game and fish each day.

Best Days

Good Days

Fair Days

For your own 2021 Doug Hannon's Moon Clock go to moontimes.com or send \$9.95 each, plus \$3.75 shipping/handling per order, to: Moon Clock, P.O. Box 28460, Atlanta, GA 30358.

Shhhhh. No wake zone.



Protect your baby (and their toys) with coverage for fishing gear and personal property too.

1-800-PROGRESSIVE / PROGRESSIVE.COM

PROGRESSIVE

**IT STARTS IN THE FIELD.
IT ENDS ON THE FORK.**





It doesn't get any fresher — or any wilder — than this.

Taste of the Wild is two must-see hours of hunting, fishing and foraging with cutting-edge hosts Mike Robinson, Mario Kalpou, Steven Rinella and Nick Hoffman. They'll be serving up plenty of outdoor action as well as teaching you how to prepare a memorable wild food feast.

TASTE
OF THE WILD

BEGINS
MONDAYS 7P


Outdoor

LOADED FOR DEER

**LEAD-CORE BULLETS
REMAIN THE BEST CHOICE
FOR AMERICA'S MOST
POPULAR BIG GAME.**

By Richard Mann

Some years ago I participated in a cull hunt for whitetail deer on a large property in Texas. The other hunters and I were shooting Remington R-25 rifles chambered in .308 Win., and we were provided with 168-grain Barnes VOR-TX ammunition. This was more than enough gun for 70- to 170-pound deer, but the first day of shooting was disastrous. Most of the deer were hit well but ran 100-plus yards into thick brush that was polluted with rattlesnakes.

One hunter suggested the Barnes bullets were not expanding, but I knew that was not the case. Mono-metal bullets like those loaded in the VOR-TX ammo expand after passing through only a couple inches of ballistic gelatin.

We needed to make a change, and fortunately one hunter had a case of 168-grain Hornady Zombie Max ammo.

The Z-Max bullets used in this load were a conventional cup-and-core design with a lead core and polymer tip. I suggested we make the switch, and when we did, we started dropping deer instantly. The ones that ran after the shot made it only 15 to 30 yards. Both bullets killed deer, but the lead-core Z-Max bullets put them down faster.

The following year I was conducting bullet experiments at the Barnes facility and ran a test. Various bullets were fired into an 8-inch block of ballistic gelatin at a range of 100 yards, and the amount of energy deposited inside the block was calculated by measuring the bullet's velocity as it exited the offside of the block. On average, mono-metal bullets like the Barnes TSX dumped about 50 percent of their energy inside the gel block. Cup-and-core bullets dumped 70 percent or more of their energy.

The mono-metal bullets had about the same recovered diameter as the lead-core bullets, but they did not shed any weight. They penetrated about 40 percent deeper than lead-core bullets. In contrast, the lead-core bullets lost about 30 percent to 50 percent of their weight and created more impressive wound cavities due to the material transfer. That's why we were able to put deer down quicker on that cull hunt with the lead-core Zombie Max ammunition.

When you cull more than 100 deer in three days, and then back it up with empirical testing, you learn stuff. You can have either deep penetration or massive tissue damage, but not both. When deer hunters use high-velocity big-game cartridges with muzzle velocities below 3,000 fps—cartridges like the .243 Win. and .308 Win. or the 6.5 Creedmoor and 7mm-08 Rem.—they are

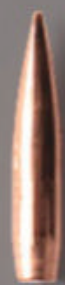


DEDICATED SINCE 1902



Learn More

MADE
FROM
THE
BEST
PARTS



Norma's legendary reputation is the sum of more than 100 years of intentionality. Each cartridge is crafted from the best materials and held to the narrowest tolerances. Only the highest quality powder is used to ensure exact pressures, velocity, and accuracy. Whether hunting, competing, or defending your family, Norma bullets are meticulously designed and manufactured for specific needs and applications.

NormaShooting.com

Now it's up
to you.

DC
Dedicated
Components

better served with lead-core bullets that expand widely, dump lots of energy and create profound wound cavities through material transfer. Ammo manufacturers know this, too, and it's why we now have an assortment of loads that have been ideally adapted for deer hunting.

Mono-metal or bonded bullets make sense for deer hunting if you're using a cartridge that produces an extremely high velocity, like the .300 Win. Mag., or a small-caliber cartridge like the .223 Rem. High impact velocities necessitate bullets that hold together, and small-diameter, lightweight bullets need to retain their weight to facilitate necessary penetration. (Of course, another reason to use mono-metal bullets for deer is if you're hunting in a state or area that mandates non-lead projectiles.) For most of the common deer-hunting cartridges, turn to the deer-specific, cup-and-core loads for the best performance.

Here's a look at four loads that have all been crafted to deliver in the deer woods. One is new, two have been with us for a few years, and another is likely older than you are. Regardless of their age, all these loads have one thing in common. They are designed to drop deer through the application of dynamic lead-core expansion, which results in significant amounts of intensive energy transfer.

NORMA WHITETAIL



Norma has a storied reputation when it comes to manufacturing precision ammunition, and the company's bonded Oryx bullet is a legendary worldwide big-game bullet. Now Norma offers a line of ammunition specifically intended for whitetail deer, and it utilizes a bullet of traditional construction with a lead core encased in a thin jacket. This allows the bullet to deliver maximum energy transfer. Inside 100 yards,

expect about 16 inches of penetration and double-diameter expansion with around 60 percent weight retention. This is ideal terminal performance to put deer down and keep them there.

WINCHESTER DEER SEASON XP



The Deer Season XP line from Winchester delivers terminal performance very similar to that of the Norma Whitetail line. But Winchester gets that performance a bit differently. The Extreme Point bullet has a large polymer tip to help initiate dramatic expansion and improve down-range flight characteristics. Behind that tip is an alloyed lead core surrounded by a tapered jacket. These bullets deliver massive wound cavities, extreme energy dump and moderate penetration, which is just what deer hunters need.

HORNADY AMERICAN WHITETAIL




These deer-specific loads use the InterLock bullet that made Hornady famous. The InterLock has a one-piece lead core that's locked into the tapered jacket via a raised, internal ring. Penetration is on the moderate side and wound cavities are large due to generous expansion. At

woods ranges, InterLock bullets will retain 65 percent to 70 percent of their weight and dump 70 percent to 75 percent of their energy during the first 8 inches of penetration, while pushing to about double that depth.

REMINGTON CORE-LOKT



The Remington Core-Lokt has been a go-to deer bullet for more than 80 years. It's often called "the deadliest mushroom in the woods" for a reason. The bullet's cup-and-core design has a soft lead core that expands wide, sheds material and transfers as much as 75 percent of its energy through only 8 inches of penetration. There's nothing new about the Core-Lokt and there doesn't need to be. While it may not sound as sexy as some of the more modern loads, it's been dropping deer for almost a century. 



Although these four loads are vastly different, the terminal performance their bullets deliver on deer is similar in that it's primarily driven by high energy transfer. Loads that anchor deer quickly include, from top to bottom: Norma Whitetail, Winchester Deer Season XP, Hornady American Whitetail and Remington Core-Lokt.



RUGGED INNOVATION. SINCE 1932.

Since 1932, Rocky has been building the world's best boots and outdoor products for those that live their lives outdoors and need their gear to be as rugged and reliable as they are.

ROCKYBOOTS.COM





STRAIGHT SPEED

As the name suggests, straight-pull bolt-action rifles require only a linear, back-and-forth motion to cycle the bolt. A straight-pull bolt need not be rotated to move lugs in and out of recesses during cycling. Pulling the handle straight backward removes the bolt from battery, and pushing it directly forward achieves lockup.

While straight-pull rifles need just two bolt movements to cycle a round, traditional turn-bolt actions need four. (Lift the bolt handle to rotate the lugs out of lock-up, pull the bolt fully to the rear to eject the spent cartridge, push the bolt forward until it stops to chamber a fresh round, and then lower the bolt handle to engage the lugs and achieve lock-up.) This makes straight-pull rifles, such as the Savage Impulse, faster to cycle. Plus, all the movement stays on one plane parallel to the bore.

Bearing Down

The key to the Impulse's straight-pull action is Savage's Hexlock bolt, which relies on six ball bearings encircling the bolt head, rather than square-shouldered lugs, for

lockup. When the Impulse's bolt handle is pushed fully forward and the bolt is closed, a plunger inside the bolt body forces the ball bearings outward. The bearings lock into a recess machined in the barrel extension.

When a round is fired and pressure against the bolt head increases, the bearings tighten to provide greater lockup strength for safety. Savage tested the Hexlock bolt with magnum and high-pressure cartridges, and it is capable of handling both. After the pressure subsides, pulling back on the bolt handle causes the interior plunger to recede and release the ball bearings from their recess, enabling the bolt to travel to the rear and eject the case.

Handling It

A series of cams inside the bolt body near the root of the bolt handle control the movement of the plunger. These cams are actuated by the back-and-forth movement of the handle, keeping all the motion needed to cycle the bolt in a straight line. The bolt handle does rotate, but its rotation is on a plane parallel to the receiver and the bore instead of roughly perpendicular to it, as with conventional turn-

bolt actions. The Impulse's rotary bolt handle works with the cam system to provide a mechanical advantage during cycling.

Because of this rotation, the bolt handle can be placed in five different positions that change its angle relative to the shooter. The bolt handle can also be moved to the left side of the gun in about a minute with no special tools required. Although Savage currently offers Impulse rifles with the ejection port on the right side only, left-handed shooters nonetheless get a rifle that they can set up to cycle with their dominant hand, without having to reach over the stock.

Fitting Changes

Savage combines the straight-pull action with a composite stock featuring the AccuFit system, which permits shooters to change both length of pull and comb height to fit individual builds. This is important because a gun that fits is easier to cycle efficiently and with less effort, which also contributes to speed. Follow-up shots can save the day, and the Savage Impulse's design makes those shots come quickly when they are needed. ■

||||| WELCOME TO |||||

AMERICAN STRAIGHT PULL

||||| BUILT FOR SPEED. BUILT FOR ACCURACY. |||||



ALL-NEW **IMPULSE**
HOG HUNTER EDITION

Experience the smooth, linear motion, lightning-fast speed and exceptional accuracy of the all-new IMPULSE. Built in America and engineered for world's most demanding shooters - straight pull action combines the confidence and accuracy of a traditional bolt with the speed of a semi-automatic. The pure movement allows for faster follow-up shots with quicker target reacquisition for instinctive, repeatable accuracy.



www.savagearms.com

BETTER COMES STANDARD.



SAVAGE®

IT'S ABOUT TIME



When rut activity repeatedly occurs out of range, don't hesitate to carefully and quietly move a stand closer to the action.

HERE'S A PLAN FOR MAKING THE MOST OF EVERY DAY, HOUR AND MINUTE OF NOVEMBER.

By Tony Hansen

If I believed in genies, I know what one of my three wishes would be. I'd wish that November was the month that lasted the span of six. I wouldn't be too greedy. I'd want to keep April and May for turkeys, June, July and August for smallmouth fishing, and December for holidays. The rest, November.

There is, without exception, no month finer than that one when it comes to hunting whitetails. Sure, the end of the month can get a bit slow and bowhunters have to work their way around some orange from time to time, but those are small concessions to make for such a grand experience.

I love hunting in November, but I hate how fast the month seems to fly by. Take advantage of every single minute. But how? There's work to do, tasks to complete, kids to care for, family to appease. Let's have a conversation about time management and, more specifically, time maximization.

HUNT EVERY MINUTE YOU CAN ...

For much of deer season, your efforts should be focused on those magical hours just after sunrise and just before sunset. During November, however, when the rut hangs thick in the air, midday hunts can be highly effective. I have killed mature bucks during the middle of the day and have had plenty of other encounters that didn't result in a filled tag.

When November finally arrives, I'll be in the woods as many hours of daylight as I can. It's simple math, really. If you typically hunt about three hours in the morning and another three in the evening, you've stacked up six hours of hunting in a day. Now, if you're able to say put and in the woods during the midday, you'll easily add another four hours to the total. Your odds of tagging a good buck are higher when you log more hours in the areas they live. Even if the midday hours are less than ideal for deer activity, there is some during the rut. Those hours count.

This is a tactic that actually seems to be more productive as the month wanes. In my opinion, it's a matter of doe availability. In early November, there are more does ready to breed than later in the month. There are still plenty of bucks willing and able, but fewer does for them to pursue. This creates competition. Competition creates more frantic and frequent movement by bucks, which leads to more midday cruising than at any other time of the year.

... BUT DON'T MAKE IT A CHORE

I've just recommended that you hunt all day in November as often as you can. It's sound advice, but it's also advice I struggle to take.

If I'm not seeing deer on a semi-regular basis, I'm going to get bored and I'm going to struggle to stay in place. Thus I've become a master of the "almost all-day" sit. It looks something like this.

I'll be on stand, ready to go well before daylight. I'm hunting deer that

RYAN YODER



WE LOSE, **YOU LOSE**

Join the Sportsmen's Alliance to protect hunting from animal-rights activists.

With every anti-hunting law passed, wildlife management suffers and
you lose a memory in the field.

JOIN THE SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE

SPORTSMENALLIANCE.ORG/MEMBERSHIP



are pretty wise to the ways of hunters. They tend to head toward bed early, even during the rut, and they'll often wait until very late morning to start sniffing around. They're used to hunters leaving around 10 or 10:30. I think those deer feel more secure as the clock approaches 11:30, and that's when they start cruising doe bedding areas. I want to be in the woods then so I typically stay until 12:30 or 1 o'clock.

Then, if action is slow and I'm starting to get fidgety, I hop out of my stand and head for my truck. I like to eat and so I make my midday meal one I look forward to. It might be a favorite sub from a local shop I've stashed in the cooler, or maybe I'll head to a drive-through if one is nearby.

As I eat, I'll listen to a podcast or, if the cell signal is strong enough, stream a favorite hunting video from YouTube. The point is to take a short break, try to fully relax and enjoy the experience.

I'll use the dashboard vent to dry gloves and socks, or throw on dry pairs. I'll often swap out my sweatshirt for a new one, maybe even change jackets. The goal is to do what it takes to feel renewed, because fresh energy and a shot of anticipation of what the coming hours might bring is all I need to power through the rest of the day.

Typically, I'll be back in the woods in 60 to 90 minutes. I'm still hunting longer than in September or October, but I'm doing so in a manner that I enjoy. If you can pull off a true all-dayer, do it. If you can't, do what it takes in order to spend as much time in the woods as possible.

PLAY THE SHORT GAME

If you live in an area that has adopted the annoyance of Daylight Savings Time you understand fully just how tough it can be to hunt after work once the clocks are rolled forward. Where it once was getting dark at 7:40, it's now lights out at 6:30.

For me, that used to mean an end to after-work outings. Not so much anymore. Now, if I can make it into a stand with more than, say, 30 minutes of legal shooting time left, I'm going. This is particularly true in November.

When the rut is on and bucks are moving, you can fill a tag in the blink of an eye. Take advantage of that. I have a couple of stands set for these super-short outings. My goal is to get from my place



Cruising bucks appear suddenly when the rut is on, and even a short hunt during the last 30 minutes of light can produce.

of work and into a treestand as quickly as I can. These stands are located where an easy entry is possible. They may not be the best locations on the property, but they're in areas that allow me to get set up quickly and have a reasonable chance of scoring. For these setups, I like to have good to excellent visibility in at least three directions. This allows me to call to bucks that might be out of range. With so little time to hunt, I'm aggressive. I'll call to bucks I see and often throw in blind calling as well.

It's true you run the risk of bumping deer when you have to arrive late. However, the odds of killing a buck are infinitely higher when you actually hunt than when you forfeit those last few minutes of daylight.

DON'T BE AFRAID TO MOVE


When you have limited time to spend on stand during the best month of the year, you can't afford to waste a single minute in a setup that has minimal odds of producing a shot. I'm not in the woods to watch deer. I'm there to hunt them. When I see deer, particularly bucks that are clearly cruising for hot does, pass by out of range, I do not hesitate to climb down and move my stand location.

I've hung hundreds, maybe thousands, of stands over the years. I can do it quickly and quietly, partly because I'm fussy about the stands and climbing sticks I use. I want quality pieces that hang easily, and I want them to be comfortable.

I've owned untold numbers of cheap stands over the years. They were a pain to set up, a pain to haul around and not worth the savings. Today, I use only cast-aluminum stands (think Novix, Lone Wolf, etc.) and sections of climbing sticks. With that combination, I can get up just about any tree in a hurry.

STAY READY

I used to have a ton of gear, and it was typically scattered around my house, office and barn. Then I decided to rebel against the notion of excess and severely purged my bowhunting gear down to just what fits in a single plastic tote. That tote is in my truck throughout the month of November along with my bow. No more searching around willy-nilly for a needed item. No more wasting time by driving home after work to grab gear.

I know exactly where everything is at all times. It takes me almost no time at all to grab the tote, throw on hunting clothes, pick up my bow and hit the woods. If I happen to get out of work a bit early, I'm ready to go because I have everything I need with me. The last thing I want to do is waste time. Planning ahead is nice, but when I get an unexpected opportunity to hunt in November, I want to take full advantage of it. By keeping everything I need to hunt in my truck, I'm able to minimize my time getting ready and maximize my time in the woods. 

GEICO®



SAVINGS SO REAL YOU CAN ALMOST TOUCH THEM.

Switch to GEICO and see how easy it could be to save money on insurance.
Simply visit [geico.com](https://www.geico.com) to get started.

[geico.com](https://www.geico.com) | 1-800-947-2886 | Local Office

Some discounts, coverages, payment plans, and features are not available in all states, in all GEICO companies, or in all situations. Boat and PWC coverages are underwritten by GEICO Marine Insurance Company. Motorcycle and ATV coverages are underwritten by GEICO Indemnity Company. GEICO is a registered service mark of Government Employees Insurance Company, Washington, DC 20076; a Berkshire Hathaway Inc. subsidiary. © 2021 GEICO 21_21_651779149

HINDQUARTER HANDIWORK

PROCESSING **THE REAR LEGS OF A DEER** MAY SEEM DAUNTING, BUT THESE TIPS **MAKE PRIME CUTS COME EASY.**

By Drew Warden

Most hunters know how to remove choice cuts like the backstraps and tenderloins from deer. Fewer are as familiar with the legs, particularly the hindquarters. This is a shame, as the rear legs offer fantastic cuts fit for various cooking styles. They're also not as difficult to break down as many perceive.

First, if possible, hang the deer at least a day or two in cool temperatures to allow rigor mortis to subside. Also consider dry-aging before butchering. Done correctly in safe temperatures (33 to 40 degrees), it yields more tender and flavorful meat.

When it's time to start cutting, use an area that provides ample space for the

hindquarter and your tools. Consider a curved, semi-stiff boning knife and a straight, more flexible fillet knife for separating connective tissue and trimming. You also want a large cutting board, gloves, paper towels, a meat-storage container and plastic sheeting to cover the work surface and make cleanup easier.

There are two main ways to butcher a hindquarter: by removing the leg bone before separating the cuts or by taking individual cuts directly off the bone. Both are correct and often involve simply separating muscles along natural seams of connective tissue. I do better when removing the bone first, so I'll focus on that method.



SEAL THE DEAL

Should you use an external or a chamber vacuum sealer for meat storage?

The most common vacuum-sealing device is the external vacuum sealer. Place the open end of a sealer bag into a tray, clamp the lid down and suck air out of the bag. The other option is a chamber vacuum sealer. The entire bag goes inside the machine, and the sealer removes all air within the chamber—inside and outside the bag.

External vacuum sealers are inexpensive, and their design permits sealing larger cuts of meats. Chamber vacs excel at sealing liquids and other moist items. They're great for marinating meats or for sous vide applications. They require more money upfront and are less portable.



With adjustable seal time and vacuum settings, and an integrated bag roll holder and cutter, the **MEAT! Pro External Vacuum Sealer**, left, (\$179.99; meatyourmaker.com) ups any hunter's meat-preservation game. It's also equipped with a removable drip tray for easy cleanup. For the hunter who freezes lots of meat or seals liquids often, there's the **MEAT! Chamber Vacuum Sealer**, right (\$799.99). This one also has adjustable seal time and vacuum settings, as well as a manual seal time mode. If you want professional-quality sealing, this is the ticket.



ON  HUNT

TRUSTED BY MILLIONS OF HUNTERS

See why at onxhunt.com





X WAYPOINT

MODEL 2020

SEE THE WAY.

Springfield Armory® is proud to introduce the Model 2020 family of bolt action hunting rifles. Precision manufactured in the USA, each Model 2020 is built to deliver the accuracy and performance expected from a custom grade rifle. The Model 2020 Waypoint™ features a premium carbon fiber stock and the option of a steel or carbon fiber barrel with an impressive .75 MOA accuracy guarantee. Learn more at springfield-armory.com



.75 MOA
GUARANTEE

SPRINGFIELD ARMORY.

THE PROCESS

Step 1

Remove any hair, dirt, blood-shot and excess fat on the skinned hindquarter. All can contaminate meat and negatively affect flavor. Removing fat also helps reveal lines of connective tissue you'll use to separate muscle groups.

Step 2

Remove the shank by slicing along the sinew lines between it and the round. Do this on both sides of the hindquarter with the tip of a boning knife. Cut the ligament opposite the shank. Then work the knife tip gently around the joint at the knee (not sawing at the bone) while using your offhand to move and apply pressure to the joint. Slowly, you'll separate the shank from the round without needing a saw. If intended for grinding or stews, remove the shank meat from the bone.

Step 3

Set the round down with the inside facing up. The femur's ball should be visible. Starting here, make a straight, shallow cut along the nearby seam down to the

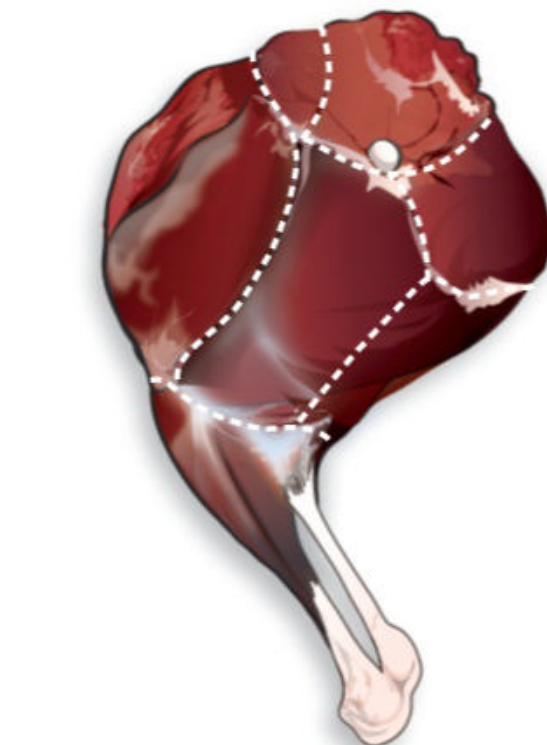
kneecap. You should feel the femur running beneath the tip of your knife.

Step 4

Cut on both sides of the kneecap and pull the meat back with your free hand. Continue cutting to expose the length of the femur. Work the blade tight around the bone's contours, alternating cuts along both sides. Keep the blade flat against the curve of the bone, and don't cut into the meat below. While holding the kneecap up with your offhand, cut below it and along the femur toward the ball until the entire bone is clear and comes free.

Step 5

Pull the round apart with your hands. The still-connected individual cuts should lay flat on the cutting board in front of you. You'll see a mass of connective tissue with a particularly thick concentration near the center of the round. Inside is a gland, which you should carefully remove by trimming the surrounding connective tissue. Left in place, it can taint the meat.



Step 6

Separate the cuts along connective tissue lines with your hands and knife tip. Seams are evident, so let nature be your guide. You should never have to cut into muscle. Trim excess fat and sinew, but leave the silverskin that surrounds muscles to protect meat during freezing. Leave cuts large to avoid exposing more meat to air.

THE CUTS

Larger cuts include the top and bottom rounds, eye of round and sirloin tip. You also have the sirloin butt (rump), tri-tip and shank. All are great in their own ways.

Top and Bottom Rounds

Pulled from the deer's hamstring area, these cuts are quite versatile. They're tender enough for cutting into steaks and hardy enough for making roasts or enduring low-and-slow cooking methods, like smoking or braising. Cube them into kabobs or slice thin for jerky or stir-fry. Or butterfly and pound them out for chicken-fried steak or jagerschnitzel.

Eye of Round

Called the hidden tenderloin because of its appearance, many cook them similarly. Pan-sear or grill whole, or as medallions. It's also good as jerky or fajita meat, or it can be cured.

Sirloin Tip

Also called the sirloin, football or knuckle, the sirloin tip is tougher than

the rounds but still makes great steaks, especially on young or aged deer. It's perfect for a roast. Or it can be smoked, braised, ground up or turned into jerky.

Tri-Tip

A well-known beef cut, the tri-tip is mostly overlooked on venison hindquarters because of its small size and how it blends in with the sirloin tip. It's great for flash-searing. Like tenderloins, lean toward rare and medium rare.

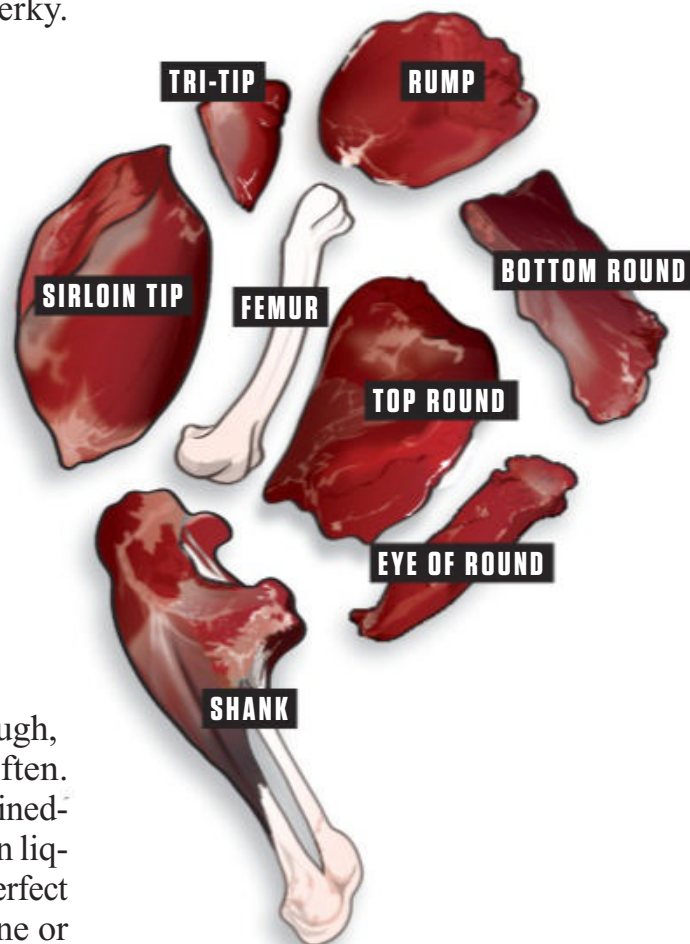
Sirloin Butt (Rump)

This cut's size depends on how well you removed the hindquarter. It's often small and used for pot roast, stew or grinding meat.

Shanks

Shanks get a bad rap. They're tough, sinewy muscles that deer use often. Cooked improperly, they're almost inedible. Cooked right—low and slow in liquid—they're delicious. Shanks are perfect for osso bucco, braising on the bone or

simmering in a broth to produce succulent stew meat. 



SITUATIONAL ETHICS



WE MUST APPLY STANDARDS OF CONDUCT WHEN NOBODY IS LOOKING.

By Andrew McKean

Let's call him Clay. He was a senior colleague and one of my mentors in thinking about hunters' obligations to wildlife. He could hold a room in rapt attention as he discussed the finer points of our North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. He could wax eloquent over a campfire about the spiritual connection between humans and wild animals.

He was also an occasional hunting partner. So, when he took a snap-shot at a running mule deer buck, I was surprised. But then when Clay refused to follow up on his "miss" to confirm there was no evidence of a hit, I was irked.

"Probably just a flesh wound, if anything," he rationalized.

I had been taught to confirm every shot at an animal, even when it appeared to

be a clean miss. To Clay's consternation, I hiked the couple hundred yards to the spot and found shards of bone, a swatch of hair, and enough blood and meat to confirm what I had seen in my binocular. Clay had hit the buck, probably low in the front shoulder. I walked back with the news.

"Let's keep moving. There's more where that one came from," Clay said. "That's the reward of good management."

That incident remains so clear because it's one of the starkest examples of the disconnect between the abstractions of conservation and the real-world application of it. We talk a lot about "fair chase" and "ethical harvest," but those are just squishy ideas unless they're implemented in the field.

Your state's hunting regulations will let you know in exhaustive detail what is illegal. The unwritten rules that guide interactions between us sportsmen and -women are even more extensive. But we also must follow the silent commandments of conservation, one of which is to keep the welfare of animals we hunt as a top priority. Another equally powerful commandment: exercise restraint.

ETHICS IN PRACTICE

I'll give you a few examples of how this plays out in the field. Obviously, Clay's unconcern for injuring that deer is a stark reminder that we should do everything in our ability not to inflict needless pain and suffering on wildlife, but sometimes the lines governing our behavior get fuzzy.

Take party hunting. In my home state of Montana, it's expressly forbidden for one hunter to fill the bag limit for another. I cannot, for instance, shoot a doe whitetail for my daughter. If she holds the tag, she must be the one to fill it. That rule is also in effect for waterfowl, but the total number of birds allowed by a group's size sometimes wrongly governs shooting instead of individual limits.

Consider our response to the sense of competition we feel when we hunt or fish on public ground and water. This is one of the timeless tensions in our sporting traditions. We love the idea of more hunters and anglers joining our community of sportsmen and -women, but we hate to see them in our places.

I'm as guilty of this as the next guy, racing a stranger's pickup to the sign-in

box so I can have first pick of spots, or setting up too closely to another hunter's blind at a public waterfowl refuge. Those are either subtle or stark violations of our unwritten rules of conduct in the field, but they can also lead to safety or resource implications. How does such behavior square with our public pronouncements that we are game-sharing conservationists?

Other examples of this include erection of treestands or blinds on either public or private properties. I've hunted the fencelines of places where I had permission and found stands placed just on the other side of the fence. Legal? Yes. Ethical? Maybe not.


Some of these violations of codes of conduct are intentional. Others probably aren't, though they can seem like it at the time. I've gotten up unnaturally early on a cold, windy morning, slogged through icy water in the dark to set up decoys in a public marsh, and waited in eager anticipation for legal light only to have the first flights of birds working my spread scattered by "slob" hunters pass-shooting from the peripheral dikes.

Are they really "slobs"? Or are they hard-working hunters taking advantage of an opportunity, same as me? As with the rest of these ethical lapses, it's situational.

LISTEN TO YOUR INNER VOICE

If you hunt or fish long enough, you get a sense for limiting your impact on a given resource. You exercise restraint. You don't keep all the big bluegills, or you let that buck walk if you are concerned that you won't be able to get all of his meat out of the backcountry without spoilage.

And you call out your buddy's excessive or unseemly behavior. This can be among the hardest things to do, as I was reminded in a hunter education class I taught in my hometown. I had mentioned to the students that one of the bravest things a beginning hunter can do is to point out a mentor's bad behavior, whether it's driving off established roads, trespassing or over-shooting a limit. After the class, as parents were arriving to pick up their kids, one father asked his son what he had learned that day.

"I learned that you do a lot of illegal stuff, Dad," the kid blurted out. The father flashed me a dark look and hurried his kid into the pickup, but I hope that moment made a difference. 

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!**

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.

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 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.

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: WHK315-01

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

Stauer® 14101 Southcross Drive W., Ste 155, Dept. WHK315-01
Burnsville, Minnesota 55337 www.stauer.com

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

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



Not shown actual size.

What customers are saying about Stauer knives...

★★★★★

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

— B. of Maryland

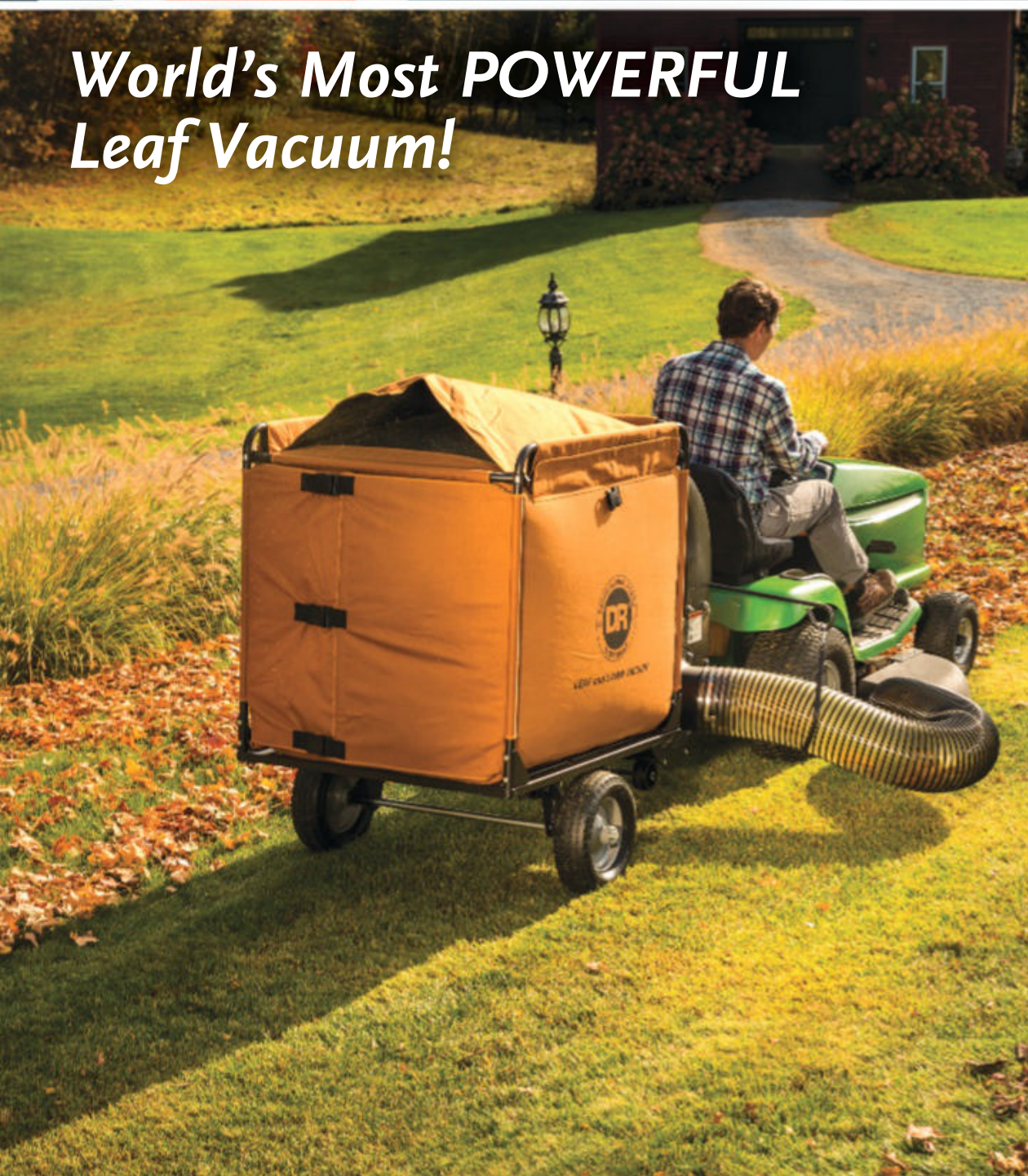


Rating of A+



Do it Right with DR®

World's Most **POWERFUL** Leaf Vacuum!



*EASY
1-hand
dumping!*

Tow-Behind

- Rated #1 in vacuum power
- Huge capacity up to 321 gallons
- Folds flat for storage

Walk-Behind

- For landscaped or smaller properties
- Easy on/off 8-bushel collector bag
- Self-propelled models available

★ **USA**

ENGINEERED AND BUILT

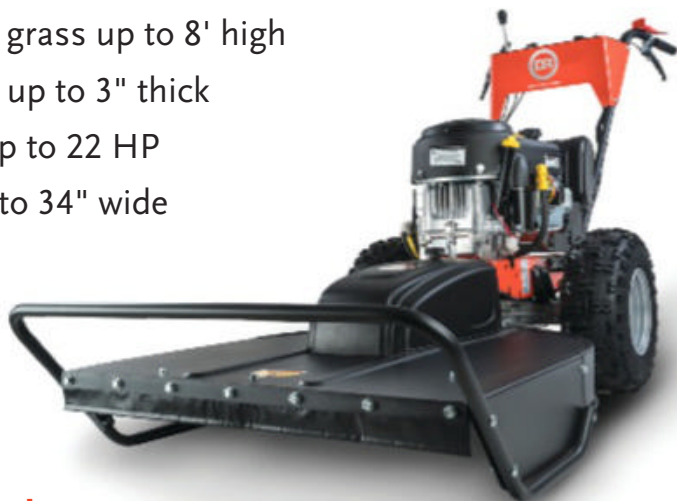
Assembled in the USA
using domestic and
foreign parts.



DRleafvac.com

America's Original Field & Brush Mower

- Mow field grass up to 8' high
- Cut brush up to 3" thick
- Engines up to 22 HP
- Decks up to 34" wide
- Power steering available



DRfieldbrush.com



SALE!

Including

**FREE
SHIPPING**

**EASY
FINANCING**

Some limitations apply. Go online or call for details.

DR Power Equipment

A GENERAC POWER SYSTEMS COMPANY

Make Yard Cleanup *EASY* with a Chipper Shredder!



★ **USA**
ENGINEERED AND BUILT

Assembled in the USA
using domestic and
foreign parts.

- CHIP big branches up to 5" thick
- SHRED lighter yard and garden waste
- REDUCE it all to a fraction of its original volume



DRchipper.com

Faster, Easier, Food Plots with the *DR®* Tow-Behind Tiller!

- Tills twice as wide as most walk-behind tillers
- Puts no strain on you because your towing vehicle does all the work
- Tine depth adjusts easily and precisely from your driver's seat



DRrototiller.com

World's *FASTEST* Splitters!



- Cycle times of just 3 seconds
- Proven rack & pinion technology
- 22 to 34-ton splitting force
- Electric models available for splitting wood indoors or out

DRlogsplitter.com

Trim and Mow the *EASY* Way!

- TRIM fencelines & perimeters
- MOW waist-high grass & weeds
- 5X the power of hand-held trimmers
- Self-propelled models
- Gas- or battery-powered

★ **USA**
ENGINEERED AND BUILT

Assembled in the USA
using domestic and
foreign parts.



DRtrimmer.com

GoDRpower.com

Request your *FREE* PRODUCT CATALOG
Online or Toll-Free at 888-213-1812



CHASING A GHOST

**A WHITETAIL HUNTER GETS A RARE CHANCE AT REDEMPTION
WHEN AN ELUSIVE TROPHY CROSSES HIS PATH IN OKLAHOMA.**

By Dr. Todd A. Kuhn



The prairie grass bristled as an angry wind whistled through it. In the darkness I could barely make out the hill I was climbing. It wasn't particularly steep, but the icy incline offered no firm footing. At its peak, a ground blind was perched overlooking the ravine below, ratcheted with cables to ensure it remained anchored in the gale-force winds.

It was my first morning hunt in Oklahoma, and it was inhospitably cold and dreadfully nasty. A 100-year storm had transformed the landscape into a fragile crystal, enshrining it in ice. With a flashlight clenched in my teeth and thickly gloved hands, I chipped away at the accumulation on the blind's door with my pocketknife. Once it was freed, I shuffled inside, leaning my muzzleloader against the far wall.

Settling into my chair—with the wind howling through the blind's seams—I fired up the tiny space heater. It burped to life with a hiss, casting a muted crimson

glow. These were some of the most miserable conditions I had ever hunted in, yet sitting there I couldn't help but feel a sense of excitement. I'd finally made it to Oklahoma, a deer mecca overshadowed by more publicized whitetail venues.

After a lifetime spent bowhunting whitetails, I had yet to punch a tag with a rifle or muzzleloader. I hoped to change that during this trip. Little did I know this would be the beginning of a protracted Okie adventure I won't soon forget.

CAMP PROPER

My hunt took place at Rut-N-Strut Guide Service near Elk City in the far western portion of Beckham County. With a population of around 11,500, Elk City is a quiet, quaint kind of place, located on Interstate 40 just off historic U.S. Route 66, about 110 miles west of Oklahoma City and 150 miles east of Amarillo.

I was there to muzzleloader hunt at the end October. It just so happened to

be when Oklahoma was pummeled by its worst ice storm in a century. The entire landscape was ensconced in ice, the ground a frozen, slick mess.

After a dicey drive from the airport to camp, I sat down to a steaming bowl of homemade vegetable soup and a generous slice of buttery cornbread. Todd Rogers runs the outfit, a man of reserved demeanor with little to say, unless of course it needs saying. His two boys, Caden and Cole, help out with the guiding chores. Both are well-worn-cowboy-boot kinds of kids, with a polite "yes, ma'am" and "no, sir" genuineness about them.

As I finished a second bowl of soup, Todd sat with me and scrolled through trail-cam pictures like a kid leafing through his baseball card collection. On occasion he would stop to share his favorite animals with me, as well as a stat or two: "He's a four-and-a-half, runs over on our 403 parcel. He'll go 143 or 4, maybe a couple better depending on that left G3."



Rutting behavior was at peak levels during the author's November Oklahoma hunt, providing an endless stream of activity during his sits.

During our impromptu deer review, one buck caught my eye, a gnarly brute with 10 or so points, lengthy tines and thick, two-fisted mass. I half-jokingly asked Rogers if he could put me on something like that. He chuckled, saying that buck was “The Ghost,” a deer they’d only captured on trail cameras at night. Rogers added that no one had ever seen the buck during daylight hours in the six-plus years he’d been on camera. With that, I glibly announced I’d officially scratched him off my big-buck wish list.

FOILED AT FIRST

My first morning I sat overlooking a deep ravine with a feeding station in its bottom. During that initial sit I saw 10 rack bucks pass through, pausing to feed then moving along their way. All were quality deer, mostly 8-points, one a young 10 with tremendous potential, as well as a few scrubby 6s I didn’t count in my rack-buck tally. Four of the 8s were shooters by almost anyone’s measure, but I was willing to wait out a special deer. After a couple morning and evening hunts, I’d seen more shooter bucks with antlers that would measure from 130 to 140 inches than I’d ever encountered in one place.

Rogers’ real estate is littered with fantastic deer. This can be credited to the trophy management program he employs. He encourages hunters to shoot only mature deer, those 4 1/2 years or older, and it has obviously paid off in spades.

After I had passed up several very nice bucks on the previous days, Rogers put me in the “Ghillie Blind” the last morning. The Ghillie was his “go-to spot,” a 10-foot-high tower aptly named for its tattered-cloth concealment treatment, which melted into the tangled backdrop. And, lucky for me, it hadn’t been hunted all season.

The big blind overlooked a “green” field, which hadn’t received a smidgeon of rain since its sowing in August. As the sun rose on the barren, brilliant red-dirt parcel, which was now devoid of ice, I thought there was absolutely no way I was going to see a deer there. But, as is the case with all great guides, they always know better.

In about an hour’s time, deer seemed to begin oozing out from under every rock and materializing from every shadow. It was as if someone had kicked an anthill. I saw several great bucks, but opted to once again hold out.



With about an hour left in the hunt, I saw what appeared to be a really great buck walking on a faint two-track trail cutting through the field. As luck would have it, he was walking directly toward me. I got him in my binocular, sizing him up. The closer he got, the better he looked. At around 100 yards I decided he would be my Oklahoma deer.

With the buck now at 75 yards, I slipped the gun barrel through the blind’s ragged cloth and tried cocking the hammer, but it wouldn’t budge. It was binding on something. Apparently, when I moutned the scope, I’d positioned it too far back. When sighting in the gun, I had turned the scope all the way up to

The author's first trip to Oklahoma coincided with a hellacious ice storm that created inhospitable conditions in which to pursue The Ghost (above).





"The Crew"

10/22® Team, Newport, New Hampshire

BE ORIGINAL

Built in our American factories by American workers, every 10/22® rifle that comes off the line is a quality firearm. With millions sold over a span of more than half a century, the Ruger® 10/22® has long been America's favorite rimfire rifle. When it comes to choosing your next .22 rifle, don't settle for an imitation, make it an original.



T H E R E I S O N L Y O N E 1 0 / 2 2 ®

RUGER.COM/1022



RUGER®
ONLY 10/22®

its highest power. Now, with the scope set on the lowest power, the magnification indicator was blocking the hammer.

As I fumbled with the gun, frantically trying to figure out what had gone so terribly wrong, the big buck closed the gap to just 30 yards. Once I'd solved the binding issue, I dialed the scope to its highest power and cocked the gun. The deer now stood just 20 steps away.

I tried to get him in the scope but couldn't because the magnification was too high. I knew if I dialed the scope back down, the hammer would not clear. I was left to watch the big deer walk into the woods at arm's length.

I'd muffed the golden opportunity I'd patiently held out for, and it was no one's fault but my own. Back at camp, I hesitantly told my story to a group of bewildered hunters who simply couldn't believe my misfortune and, of course, stupidity. One last evening hunt came and went without fanfare, and I was done. No Oklahoma monster buck, just one more silly deer-hunting story about the big one that got away.



Todd Rogers (right), owner of Rut-N-Strut Guide Service, worked tirelessly to put the author on a mature Oklahoma buck.

READY FOR ACTION



B-100 MOSSY
OAK® BOTTOMLAND®



B-100 MOSSY OAK®
SHADOW GRASS®
HABITAT™

B100 CAMO BOAT SEATS

Waterfowl hunters looking for maximum comfort, durability, and concealment in their boat seats need look no further than the Millennium Marine B-100 Camo Boat Seats available in Mossy Oak® Bottomland® and Mossy Oak® Shadow Grass® Habitat™ camouflage.

MILLENNIUMMARINE.COM



MILLENNIUM
MARINE



Once the ice had melted, the resulting moisture turned the Sooner State's fabled red dirt into a sticky, slick morass.

DIFFICULT DECISION

Rarely are hunters offered a second chance. It's one swing-and-a-miss and you're out. The hunting gods hardly ever offer mulligans. In my decades of bowhunting, I can't remember ever being granted a do-over.

Nevertheless, I booked a second hunt with Rogers, returning several weeks later during the rifle season for another

at-bat. This time the rut was roaring and the ice had retreated, turning the ground to a gelatinous, goopy mud—the kind that tugs at your boots and slathers your pant legs. No matter, I was back.

The third morning found me tucked into a box blind overlooking a great ravine that stretched a considerable distance to my left and right. Directly across the ravine was a gently sloping

bench running its length and devoid of any appreciable vegetation or brush.

Soon, the rising sun silhouetted two exceptional 8-points looking into the brushy ravine below. The bucks were at my 12 o'clock, a short chip-shot out. After giving them a good once-over, I decided to pass, again, holding out for something a bit better. As I watched the wide, particularly tall-racked buck to the right waddle away, I couldn't help but second-guess myself. Had I just made another big mistake?

Several hours had passed when a glint of movement across the ravine caught my eye. On the distant hillside some 300-plus yards away, I spotted a doe with purpose to her trot. She disappeared over the sharp ridge as quickly as she had appeared.

I propped up a bit taller in my chair, craning to see what was sure to be following her. Seconds later, two bucks popped out from the brush below and moved up the hillside, track-for-track with the doe that had been there moments before.

DR. TODD A. KUHN (2)

LEADING THE CHARGE

Elite XT™ Trigger System

TRADITIONS® NITROFIRE® — the world's first and best muzzleloader that uses the **FEDERAL PREMIUM® FIRESTICK™ SYSTEM**. Revolutionary begins with Traditions®.

Traditions
PERFORMANCE FIREARMS

Learn more about Traditions® NitroFire® at:
WWW.TRADITIONSFIREARMS.COM/NITROFIRE

FEDERAL
PREMIUM

The lead buck was nice, but the one in tow was incredible. He was a thickly muscled specimen, with antlers strewn in all directions. I quickly placed the rifle on the window ledge and settled the reticle on him. I flipped the safety off and readied for the shot ... and then a harsh dose of reality washed over me.

The wind was blowing a steady 25 mph, with frequent gusts into the high 30s. It was blowing directly from my left to right, whipping down the ravine then swirling up the hillside. My mind raced trying to calculate a windage hold in this insufferable situation. This was by far the biggest deer I'd ever seen on the hoof, and I was staring at a shot I definitely had no business taking.

As the buck came to a stop and stood broadside, now at 250 yards, I begrudgingly put the safety back on and pulled the rifle into the blind. It was the hardest thing I've ever had to do while hunting. Seconds later, I watched the buck's rump follow that amazing rack over the ridge.

Once I'd quit shaking uncontrollably, I texted my buddy and told him what had just happened. I'd just seen my biggest deer ever and was forced into passing. I was confident I'd never get another chance like the one I just had, but I wasn't comfortable winging a shot in such conditions.

USER ERROR ... AGAIN?

For the next two hours I sat in the blind replaying the situation, second-guessing my decision not to shoot. Doubt had now crept into my mind, and I had devolved into an emotional basket case. After the earlier muzzleloader mishap, I couldn't stomach this level of failure again.

Then I caught something moving in my periphery to my left, a long poke down the ravine. It was two bucks at what I guesstimated to be at least 400 yards away. I put my bino on them but couldn't tell what was on their heads for certain.

Luckily, they were making their way toward me, this time along the ridge on my side of the ravine. Both bucks were slipping in and out of the ravine, each time just a bit closer. At about 200 yards, I recognized one of the racks. It was him, the same buck I had to pass up earlier. I opened the front blind window and readied my rifle.

Several minutes later he had walked to 80 yards and was now at my 12 o'clock. Just as I went to slide the rifle through the window, a wind gust blew it shut, the noise echoing throughout the ravine like a car door slamming. The buck's head snapped, and he looked right at me. I froze, but he trotted quickly into a ravine finger to my immediate right, disappearing into the thicket.

I felt sick to my stomach, and I knew I had just blown yet another chance at

what would have been my biggest deer ever. I fixed my stare on where he had dropped into the ravine, hoping if I stared hard and long enough, he would magically reappear.

Lo and behold, he did just that.

A minute later I saw the tips of his antlers coming up the side of the ravine, three paces to the east of where he'd vanished. I opened the right-side blind window and got my gun ready. As he topped the ravine's crest, I put the



FIOCCHI FORCE

A new high-performance rifle load saves the day.

Fiocchi may be best known for its shotshells and rimfire ammunition, but the company recently spent considerable time reengineering and reimagining every aspect of its centerfire rifle cartridge lineup. The Fiocchi team devoted millions of developmental dollars, as well as countless research hours, in labs and on the range, to perfecting its centerfire offerings. This effort has led to the new Hyperformance Hunting centerfire line.

Fiocchi's R&D team forged advances in propellant formulations to offer increased performance across all centerfire cartridges in the line. Manufacturing processes were also perfected, specifically for Fiocchi's new Polymer-Tipped Copper Solid bullets. These are CNC-machined with longitudinal skives, or cuts, to produce dramatic petaling upon impact. The skives offer repeatable expansion to predictably increase both the bullet's frontal diameter and the diameter of the wound channels produced during penetration.

In Oklahoma I used the 130-grain 6.5 Creedmoor Hyperformance Hunting Polymer-Tipped Copper Solid load, which has an advertised muzzle velocity of 2,815 fps. My first shot was poor at best, hitting the buck well off my intended point of impact. However, the bullet's petaling action and subsequent controlled expansion produced a wound cavity that incapacitated the large-bodied deer, allowing me to place a follow-up shot.

I credit the design features of the Polymer-Tipped Copper Solid with grounding the buck. I am not sure this would have been the case with ammunition of lesser quality or performance.

Bushnell



HUNT FOR YOUR TROPHY NOT YOUR CROSSHAIRS.

BUSHNELL.COM

ELITE 4500 4X

EXTRA-LARGE EYEBOW

Puts you on-target with zero effort, and zero time wasted when your eyes are tired and the adrenalin's pumping.

4X MAGNIFICATION

Gives you four more options than you'll find in any of its 3X competitors.

EVERY HUNTING ADVANTAGE

Superior optical quality and advanced lens coatings deliver true-to-life images so you can get it done no matter the conditions.



crosshair on him and pulled the trigger. Nothing. Instinctively, I squeezed with all my might. Still nothing but horrid silence.

I cycled another 6.5 Creedmoor cartridge into the chamber, its predecessor flying out and ricocheting off the fiberglass blind wall. The commotion again drew the buck's stare and concern. As he turned to leave, I settled the scope on him and nervously yanked the trigger with reckless abandon. This time there was plenty of boom, but it resulted in a clean whiff.

Unscathed and confused, the buck trotted several yards and stopped, still looking at the blind. I settled on him again and triggered another shot. This time I hit him, though evidently not where I was aiming. The impact crumpled him; he was definitely down but not done. I knew I had better give it another go.

I frantically worked the bolt, but the gun was now empty. I'd brought only three cartridges with me (I surely wouldn't need more than one), so I had to find the first round I'd ejected. I slid my chair back and started digging around for it. Somehow I found it quickly, shoved it into the gun and chambered it. My only shot was at the buck's neck. The crosshair was bouncing around like I was trying to aim while on a dead sprint. I gulped for a breath then tried to exhale, but it didn't help. My mind said to pull the trigger smoothly, but I was a mess. Miraculously, my last bullet hit its mark, and the ordeal was over.


I flopped back into my chair and couldn't help but wonder why the first round didn't fire. After some thought, the best I could come up with was I had failed to fully close the bolt when I chambered that first round. With the

deer down, I texted Rogers and told him I'd finally gotten my buck. Per the camp rule, I remained in the blind until he and his sons arrived.

When we walked up to the deer, Rogers and his boys each kind of half-shook their heads. Kneeling over the buck, Rogers looked up at me and asked if I knew which deer it was, referring to the trail-cam photos he had shown me. Well of course I did.

"Yes, the biggest one I've ever seen," I quipped.

"Nope," said Rogers, glancing back at the buck. "It's him. It's The Ghost."

Standing on a windblown, muddy hillside in Oklahoma, with three fellow hunters emotionally invested in this deer, I couldn't help but feel lucky, or blessed, or maybe a little of both. A second chance at any buck is rare enough, let alone a buck like The Ghost. 

The author cashed in a lifetime's worth of goodwill from the hunting gods in his pursuit of the buck known as The Ghost.





Turn Your **Passion** into **Action**

A minute of your time can ensure clean water,
abundant fisheries and the conservation of both.

Join us. Be heard.



The Voice of the American Angler

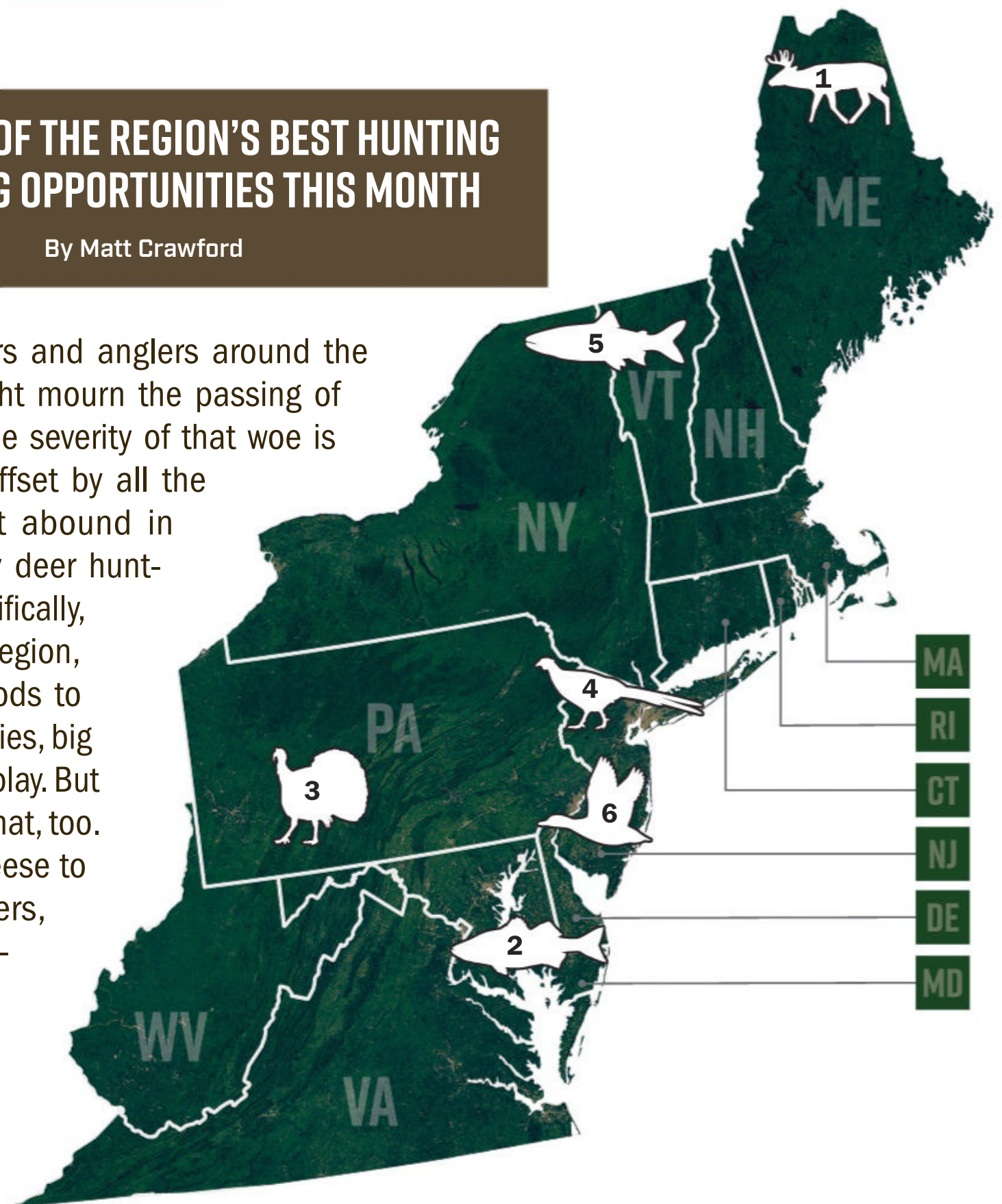
Preserve what you love at [KeepAmericaFishing.org](https://www.KeepAmericaFishing.org)

AROUND THE EAST

A SAMPLING OF THE REGION'S BEST HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES THIS MONTH

By Matt Crawford

While hunters and anglers around the region might mourn the passing of October, the severity of that woe is certainly offset by all the opportunities that abound in November—namely deer hunting, and, more specifically, the rut. Across the region, from the deep woods to the suburban crannies, big bucks come out to play. But there's more than that, too. From ducks and geese to salmon and stripers, November functions just fine as a follow-up act to October. Here's a look at some of the highlights.





MAINE MONARCHS

In the big north woods of Maine, deer hunting is far from easy, but the rewards can be monstrous during the rut. Every November, massive bucks are shot in the remote woods of Aroostook County, usually by hunters who track the big bucks in the snow that begins to fall there in late autumn. How big? Well, Maine likes to measure its bucks by the pound, and in Aroostook County, anything under 200 pounds is considered a little fella. Bucks as big as 300 pounds are shot here during the rut—huge, thick-bodied studs that are wary and cagey. While trackers have the best success, still-hunting can also pay off. Look for the monarchs of Maine to come anywhere along the St. John and Allagash Rivers.



FISH FOR THE TABLE

While most folks are out chasing deer or waterfowl this month, those who know about the bountiful striped bass in Maryland are taking full advantage of the last full month of striper fishing in Chesapeake Bay and the surrounding waters and tributaries. If you're going to put fish in a chowder for a special Thanksgiving Day dish, consider fishing the lower Potomac River channel edges. More specifically, any water from Piney Point to St. George Island all the way to Point Lookout is where keeper fish (longer than 19 inches) often show up this month.



KEYSTONE TURKEYS

Pennsylvania is a deer hunter's paradise, but if you're done chasing whitetails there, consider hunting fall turkeys. While the birds' numbers are declining, Pennsylvania is still one of the best states to hunt wild turkeys this month. It should be an interesting fall season in the Keystone State. Earlier this year, the Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners voted to eliminate the use of rifles for turkeys during the fall season in an effort to increase hen survival. According to the Pennsylvania Game Commission, survey data indicate only 14 percent of the state's fall turkey hunters primarily use rifles, but they are responsible for a third of the fall turkey harvest. Fall turkey seasons vary by wildlife management unit, so pay close attention to where you're hunting.



JERSEY RINGNECKS

Long ago, the gamebirds of New Jersey included grouse, pheasants, quail and woodcock. Today, save for woodcock on Cape May, much of the Garden State's gamebirds are stocked. Pheasant stocking begins in November on wildlife management areas throughout the state. Best bets include Flatbrook WMA in the northern region, Colliers Mills in the central region and Dix WMA in the southern region. Make sure to wear high-vis colors: It can be crowded on the days the birds are put out.



LAKERS BY LAND

When the skies turn gloomy, the gray light shines bright on a small part of Lake Champlain that gives anglers a unique opportunity to catch lake trout from shore. Known locally as "the causeway," there's an old 4-mile-long railroad bed running from Colchester to South Hero, Vt., that forms the outer ring of Malletts Bay. Each year, starting around Halloween and continuing into December, Lake Champlain's lake trout come in close to the causeway, giving shore-bound anglers ample opportunity to catch them, some of which get as big as 14 pounds. Fly anglers use streamers, while conventional anglers do well with stickbaits and plastics that resemble smelt or alewives.



BIG-WATER BLACK DUCKS

As Canada begins to freeze up, the last pushes of migratory birds wing their way over the region. Among those latecomers are black ducks. Notoriously wary of decoys, blacks are found in marshes on big freshwater lakes (Ontario, the Finger Lakes, Lake Champlain), coastal areas (Maine has good numbers) and the tidal areas of Chesapeake Bay, though about 30 percent of the Atlantic Flyway's black ducks winter in New Jersey's marshlands. You might have to open up a landing zone in water that has frozen the night before, but when the big black ducks with bright red legs are around, all the cold and suffering is worth it.



Trailing grunts, which combine a dozen or so short grunts followed by one long grunt, are effective during the peak of the rut.

RUT CALLING TACTICS

THE WHITETAIL RUT CAN OFTEN BE A FRANTIC FREE-FOR-ALL. HOWEVER, WITH THE RIGHT CALLING STRATEGY, YOU CAN INFLUENCE THE PROCEEDINGS AND CONTROL YOUR DESTINY ... TO A DEGREE.

By Dustin Prievo

If you're reading this, you are witnessing the power of attraction, and the next few moments will determine whether you read this article in its entirety or move on to something else. The same concept applies to

calling deer during the various phases of the rut. Even if you get a buck's attention with a call, a number of variables ultimately affect whether it brings him in for a closer look. While November can be an incredibly unpredictable month

in the whitetail woods, the use of calls can be effective during the pre-, peak- and post-rut stages. But you need to understand what the deer are doing during each of these phases and offer up the right auditory lure.

PRE-RUT (Oct. 26 to Nov. 7)

Most deer have transitioned from their summer food source to their fall and winter food sources by now. Wooded areas that have good, healthy oak stands will become highly sought out by does and bucks alike. Knowing the locations of these areas can really help you home in on where to call, especially since does will often be on their feet in these areas.

Get your rattling antlers out because we are about to stir some things up. The bucks are now at an all-time high in testosterone levels and looking for that first doe in heat. Tensions are on the rise, and as daylight movement increases, bucks often move into territories where they really don't belong. Get the biggest set of rattling antlers you have, smash them together every 30 minutes and be ready.

In areas with low deer densities or where there may not be many mature bucks, however, this may not be the best tactic. If this is the case where you hunt, keep things social through contact grunts and doe bleats. Continue to be mindful of wind direction and watch carefully—these bucks will work their way to your call from the downwind side.

Adding a buck decoy and facing the head in the direction from which you expect a buck to approach can really help close the distance. Try to be as scent-free as possible, and if you plan to use a deer scent, I suggest using buck urine rather than estrous. The key to this phase is imitating a buck on the move, working to be the first to breed.

PEAK RUT (Nov. 8 to Nov. 20)

It's time to put the grunt tube to work. The does are in estrus and the bucks are begging them to stop and let them breed. My go-to sequence for the peak rut is a trailing grunt. I do 8 to 15 short grunts followed by a long grunt every 15 to 20 minutes and remain vigilant. A buck passing by will often hear this and come in to try to get in on the action. Unlike in the other phases, I have found during the peak of the rut that bucks will come from all different directions regardless of the wind direction. They will often come into this grunting sequence almost immediately, rather than take a prolonged, cautious approach.

Very seldom do I use a bleat call, but have found during this phase that a bleat is sometimes the tool that brings a buck in close. Occasionally I will use a bleat call in a soft manner, but mostly only if I see a buck that is hung up and won't commit. The best luck I've had is with grunting. When that doesn't work, wait 20 minutes and grunt again.

Snort wheezes can be highly effective in this phase. Seldom have I called in a buck with a blind snort wheeze, but several times I've stopped bucks in their tracks. If you have a decoy, pairing it with the snort wheeze can be a deadly combo. A buck that hears the call will want to know what he's getting himself into, so having something visual highly increases your odds of drawing him in, especially if he's cruising or hung up outside of shooting range.



Rattling isn't just a pre-rut tactic. It can be effective during the post-rut, too, especially in areas with a well-balanced herd.

POST-RUT (Nov. 21 to Dec. 12)

In areas where the deer herd is balanced, I'll treat the post-rut like the pre-rut. The use of rattling antlers and soft grunts can really get a buck moving during this time. A few of my biggest and most mature bucks have been killed in late November and early December with calling. In 2017 I was able to lightly rattle in three separate bucks, which enticed two of them to fight under my stand. I eventually took the more mature of the two.

Although this isn't common and was a unique experience, it led me to believe that just because the peak of the rut is over, breeding is not. Some does have gone unbred, bucks still have high levels of testosterone and deer are still communicating often.

In areas with lower deer densities or where the balance is heavily in favor of the does, I don't do as much aggressive calling during this phase. Instead, I'll opt for lighter contact grunts and bleats. Deer are still very vocal regardless of densities or sex ratios, but in areas where there are fewer bucks, fighting for does often isn't necessary, so I tend to withhold the aggressive tactics.

The key to successful calling is to understand how and why deer communicate, create curiosity during certain times, and stay vigilant. Keep your focus, spot them before they see you and be ready, because calling deer during the rut can be both exciting and rewarding for those who are patient and persistent. **G-F**



Be mindful of wind direction when calling during the pre-rut, as bucks tend to circle downwind before approaching a call.

ON THE

FEED

AS BASS PREPARE FOR WINTER, THEIR FOCUS IS ON FOOD. HOWEVER, THE PREFERRED FORAGE—AND THE BEST LURES TO IMITATE IT—DIFFERS BETWEEN LAKES AND RIVERS.

By Jeff Knapp

Though I hate to be one who wishes his life away, I must admit to a strong annual anticipation of late fall, which is prime time to catch the biggest bass of the year. Be it lake, river or reservoir, bass are now likely to be where they are going to be for some time. Long gone is the spring transition from spawning areas and summer patterns that find fish

in a wide variety of niches based on available cover and food. The fall transition, which sees bass on the move from summer areas to zones that offer the food and stability to survive another winter, has also passed. Stratified lakes and reservoirs have turned over; river water temperatures have dropped into the sub-50-degree range that forces fish into deeper, mild current pools.

With bass easier to locate, the question now becomes “what is the best way to catch them?” Based on over three decades of plying such waters until ice cover forces me to stop, I suggest a strategy that employs both metal reaction baits, including vibrating blade baits and flutter spoons, as well as finesse plastics, many of which are now categorized as Ned rig offerings.

TOM MARTINEAU, THE RAW SPIRIT

Wading anglers will find hungry bass near banks, especially in rivers with high flows that push the fish toward the edges.



While each style of bait can excel in both scenarios, I lean more toward metal baits in lakes and finesse plastics in rivers, keeping the other on deck as a backup. Here's how.

LAKE BASS

Flutter spoons such as **Strike King's Sexy Spoon** and blade baits like the classic **Silver Buddy** both factor heavily in the late-fall bite on bass lakes. While both are made of metal, that's where much of the similarity ends regarding how they are fished and why they inspire strikes.



STRIKE KING
SEXY SPOON

Flutter Spoons: These lures are great for covering water since they can be fished fast. In clear-water environments, bass can see them from a great distance, which expands the strike zone. Their tantalizing, fluttering look invokes a feeding response. By contrast, blades furnish a more precise in-their-face presentation that can trigger a reaction bite from

lethargic, cold-water bass. I've taken both largemouths and smallmouths on blades on days when I've had to motor through acres of crinkle ice to get to my spot.

When fishing post-turnover lakes, I often find bass holding in the 20- to 25-foot range, typically with access to deeper main-lake basins. If there is shallow-water cover toward shore—green weeds or laydowns—it ups the odds that bass will be using the area. But perhaps the biggest factor is baitfish. Baitfish such as shad, shiners and smelt often migrate toward the deeper, warmer areas of a lake come fall; seeing their presence on the sonar screen greatly ups the odds bass will be nearby.

For working flutter spoons, I prefer a casting rod such as St. Croix's Avid X in the 7-foot range, a medium-power model with either a fast or extra-fast action. This is coupled with a quality baitcasting reel with a fast retrieve ratio. I highly recommend fluorocarbon line such as Gamma Edge when fishing flutter spoons. Fluorocarbon line transmits slackline strikes better than braid or nylon monofilament—a quality that shines considering how this lure is fished.

Using my trolling motor to creep along 20- to 25-foot-deep contours, I make a long cast with the flutter spoon, either out in front of the boat or quartering toward shore. The spoon is allowed to free-fall to the bottom on a slack line, which is when many of the strikes occur. Absent a strike on the initial fall, the lure is then worked back to the boat with a series of aggressive sweeps that lift the lure off the bottom and then allow it to free fall before momentarily kissing the bottom once more. Some fish will just "be there" and pin the spoon to the bottom.



SILVER BUDDY BLADE BAIT

Blade Baits: When late-fall bass show no interest in flutter spoons, blades are my next choice. I prefer a shorter spinning rod like St. Croix's 6-foot 3-inch,



The best way to work a blade bait now is with a painfully slow trolling speed. As little as .2 mph will keep a 1/2-ounce bait in the strike zone.

medium-power, extra-fast-action Eyecon coupled with a 1000-size reel. This lightweight outfit reduces fatigue (it can be tiring pumping blade baits all day). The reel is spooled with 15-pound Sufix 832, a braided line that repels water—a decided plus on days that can dip below freezing. A foot-long, 10-pound-test fluorocarbon leader joined with a swivel and finished with a snap terminates things. Always use a snap, as blade baits will quickly wear through the leader material.

On bass lakes in the fall, I've found the

most efficient way of presenting a blade bait is to use the boat. Trolling along at .2 mph may seem slow, but the bait is in the strike zone the entire time. With a half-ounce blade, the line will trail out behind the boat at around a 25-degree angle. Sharp, upward snaps of approximately 6 inches cause the bait to jump up and forward while vibrating. It's then allowed to fall back on a semi-slack line. Pause for a few seconds and repeat. Many strikes will happen on the pause, some on the fall. Other times, you'll hook the fish

on your next upward snap. Occasionally drop the rod tip back to ensure the lure is just off the bottom.

Back-Up Plan: Finesse plastics like Z-Man's TRD Tubez and Ticklerz can be fished along the bottom using the same boat-control tactics used with blades. And if there's any remaining submergent weed cover, plastics can be worked along inside and outside edges in a manner we'll look at closely in the next section.



A DIFFERENT LOOK

In praise of the versatile bucktail jig

It's interesting that the bucktail jig is enjoying newfound popularity in bass fishing circles. For many of us, it never went out of style.

Hair jigs—typically made of deer hair, but also rabbit and bear hair and synthetics—can be substituted for many of the presentations detailed above. Like finesse plastics, lightweight hair jigs of 3/16 or 1/8 ounce can be offered to river bass holding in mild current areas. Cast them to weed

edges for lake-dwelling largemouth and smallmouth bass.

When fishing deeper in a lake, move up to 3/8- or 1/2-ounce bucktail jigs in place of blade baits to show fish an alternate profile. Like plastics, they can be dragged or shaken along the bottom, or they can be snap-jigged more aggressively like a blade bait.

Whether fishing a lake or river in fall, I never go on the water without a hair jig rod on the deck of the boat.

BILL LINDNER PHOTOGRAPHY (LEFT); JEFF KNAPP (TOP)

DOMINATE THE SKIES

SUPER BLACK EAGLE 3

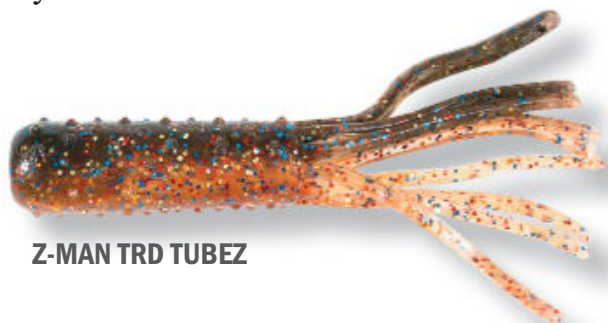


Benelli.

Now Available in 20-gauge. Legendary in quality and performance, three generations of the Benelli Super Black Eagle have carved their name in history. This historic line expands in 2021 with the addition of 16 new models of the SBE 3 in 20-gauge and 3" 12-gauge. See one today at a dealer near you or visit BenelliUSA.com.

RIVER BASS

Rivers, which by their flowing nature favor smallmouth bass, are prime waters during late fall. One can reasonably expect to catch river bass until water temperatures dip below 40 degrees, and chances are they will be big bass. Larger, deeper holes with light current can gather fish in huge numbers. These are spots where the fish will spend the winter and where they'll be to greet you in March.



Z-MAN TRD TUBEZ

Finesse Plastics: Whereas metal baits figure prominently on lakes, I reach for finesse plastics first on rivers, especially tubes, worms and grub tails. These are coupled with light lead-head jigs from 1/8 to 1/4 ounce in weight. I'm particularly partial to 3/16-ounce jigs with a mushroom or worm-nose design fashioned on a light-wire hook.

On rivers, my basic strategy is to first target shallow areas, which generally are closer to the bank. Shallow bass tend to be biting bass. Higher flows also push bass closer to the bank, which favors the angler by narrowing down the search.

Rivers are snaggy places, heavily seasoned with rock and imbedded wood. As such, presenting finesse plastics is more of a short game—not one for firing lengthy casts. Casts of 20 to 35 feet where you can maintain control of the jig, slowly working it along the bottom, are in order.

A medium-power, fast- or extra-fast-action spinning rod in the 6 1/2- to 7-foot length, like St. Croix's 6-foot 8-inch Mojo Bass, coupled with a 2000-size reel, is ideal for working finesse plastics like the **Z-Man TRD Tubez** and original TRD and the Galidas Grubz (a 4-inch twister-tail grub). The reel is spooled with 15-pound braid and finished with a 3-foot leader of 10-pound-test fluorocarbon joined with an Albright Knot.

The basic presentation—and this goes for working along weed edges on lakes, too—is to make a moderate-length cast to the targeted area, maintaining a tight line as the jig falls. If a strike doesn't occur during the initial fall, begin drag-

ging/hopping it along with short 1- to 2-foot pulls followed by pauses. Some days bass respond well to shaking the jig during the pause, as you'd do with a shaky-head presentation. Experiment. The same goes with bait profile and color. While I'm partial to the TRD Tubez, I've seen days when the bass respond better to the half-a-Senko look of the TRD or a grub. Color-wise, green pumpkin or watermelon seed are seldom poor choices.

Back-Up Plan: Blade baits are an important backup on rivers when bass are inactive and holding in deeper water, such as 10 to 20 feet deep. In this case I'll fish blades vertically, under the boat, as it drifts slowly in the mild current. Due to its snaggy nature it's important to maintain good contact with the blade, giving it short, 6-inch to 1-foot upward strokes to activate the lure, but keeping it off the bottom a few inches during the pause. Keep a close eye on the sonar unit to adjust line let-out for fluctuations in depth.

The one-two punch combining heavy metal and finesse plastic options is a great way of targeting fall bass when they are on the feed—as well as not.

Later in fall, river bass congregate in large, deep holes with light current where they will remain until spring.



JEFF KNAPP

ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

DIGITAL ACCESS NOW INCLUDED WITH YOUR PAID SUBSCRIPTION!

ENJOY DIGITAL ACCESS ON YOUR PHONE, TABLET & MORE*



SUBSCRIBE TODAY AT

WWW.GAMEANDFISHMAG.COM

CURRENT SUBSCRIBERS GO TO MYMAGNOW.COM
AND SELECT "CREATE DIGITAL ACCOUNT"

*Digital Edition is available on updated iPad/iPhone, most Android devices, and the Microsoft Store for Windows

WINNING LATE

**SOME OF THE BEST
GOOSE HUNTS OF
THE YEAR TAKE PLACE
AS THE SEASON NEARS
THE FINAL INNINGS.
BUT SCORING WITH
BIRDS THAT HAVE
BEEN HUNTED HARD
SINCE SEPTEMBER
MEANS BRINGING
YOUR “A” GAME.**

By Joseph Albanese

The late season is a magical time, in which cold weather and northern winds send waves of Canada geese winging down toward us. If you're out there on the right day, it can seem like there's an endless stream of birds working their way south.

But just because you can see them doesn't mean you can get them to work. These geese have had several months of education by now, and they have become quite adept at identifying calls, circumventing decoy spreads and generally steering clear of loads of non-toxic shot. To get wary, late-season Canadas within shotgun range, you'll need to change up your decoy strategy, adjust your calling and maybe even head to a new location. Use the following tips from seasoned pros to score now with tough, smart geese.

CALLING TIPS

The Expert: Clay Hudnall, co-owner of Field Proven Calls

The Game Plan: Clay Hudnall lives in Louisville, Ky., but he's hunted geese all over the U.S. No matter where you're targeting honkers, he says, the key to success in the late season is determining if the geese you're encountering are residents or migrators. Once you figure that out, you can adjust your calling accordingly.

"Migrators are easy to pick out because we typically hear them before we see them," says Hudnall. "They are known for making a lot of noise, so we give them a lot of noise."

It's much harder to get migrators interested than residents, according to Hudnall, and you must work them all the way down to the water. If he encounters big, loud flocks, he turns up the volume to get their attention.

He and the others he's hunting with will call hard as a group until they can break down the geese and get them interested in their set up.

Hudnall takes a different approach with resident geese, which can be pretty stale by this point in the season. Instead of a group chorus, just two hunters in his group will do any calling, and only when needed. Once the geese are headed their way, they stop calling. If the birds continue past them, they work as a team to get them turned back. To finish these wary birds, one caller moans and the other answers with a cluck. If the geese start to slide, they pick up the tempo and cadence to line them back up.

The Final Word: Turn up the volume to attract migrators, but call sparingly when dealing with stale, late-season resident geese.

DECOY STRATEGIES

The Expert: Mario Friendly, vice president of Final Approach

The Game Plan: Mario Friendly moved to the Pacific Coast when he hopped on board with Final Approach, but he cut his teeth chasing cornfield honkers in his native Pennsylvania.

He takes a dynamic approach to decoying geese, altering his spread several times throughout the season. Like a lot of waterfowlers, he looks to the birds to tell him how many decoys to deploy. He starts the season using a handful of blocks to mimic the family groups present, but really ramps it up when he starts encountering large flocks of migrating geese. At the very end of the season, he decreases his spread again to match the dwindling number of birds. He also keeps a keen eye on other hunters in his region and tries to give geese a different look than others are presenting.

"If we're running traffic, we put out a lot of decoys in order to get the attention of high-flying flocks of migrators," says Friendly.

He fills the field with as many dekes that will reasonably fit, but he makes sure to leave plenty of space for birds to land. He compares the strategy to eating out.

"You don't want to make it look like the restaurant is full, but you don't want to make it look like the food is bad either," he says.

Friendly believes that geese get conditioned when they see the same spreads repeatedly, so when dealing with late-season resident geese, or migrators that have been around for a few weeks, he changes his spread dramatically.

"If the birds have been in the area for a while, it's time to give them something new," says Friendly.

If local hunters have been putting out five-dozen full bodies, he doubles or triples that. If you don't have enough decoys to greatly outnumber the local competition, Friendly suggests drastically downsizing your spread to stand out by using a mere 8 or 10 of your best decoys.

The Final Word: When possible, present migrators with a huge spread to increase visibility. When not, at least give skittish, late-season geese something different to lure them in—even if that means using only a few decoys.

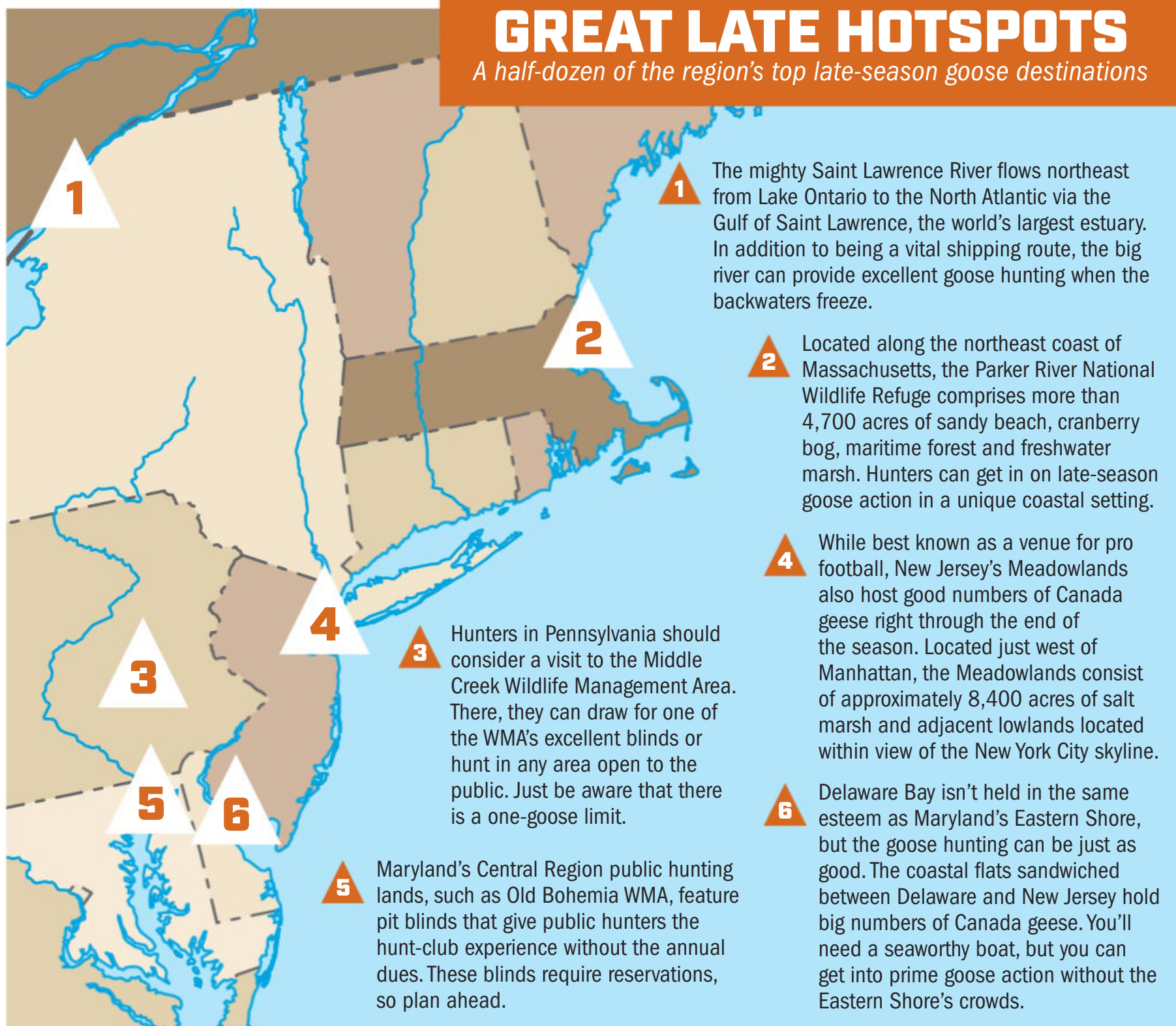
Tailor your calling strategy for late-season geese based on whether the birds are residents or migrators. Talk softly to the former and ramp it up for the latter.



TOM MARTINEAU, THE RAW SPIRIT (OPPOSITE; RIGHT)

GREAT LATE HOTSPOTS

A half-dozen of the region's top late-season goose destinations



OVER WATER

The Expert: Michael Bard, Banded pro-staffer

The Game Plan: Mike Bard, a pro-staffer with Banded and owner/operator of The Game Hogg Hunt Club (gamehogghuntclub.com) in central New York, is a master of decoying geese over water.

Bard loves to hunt the small farm ponds and backwaters of New York's Finger Lakes region in the early season, but when those ice up he takes his game to big waters like Lake Ontario. The cold weather that causes the freeze often concentrates geese, so Bard puts out oversize spreads—as many as 200 floaters when he sees large flocks on

the water or big flights of birds passing through.

One of his favorite tricks is adding motion to his spread with a jerk string.

"If you watch geese on the water, you'll see that they're always moving," he says.

Bard likes to rig a pair of goose butts, which are highly visible from great distances. Pulling on the cord works just like flagging does in a field and draws geese from remarkable distances. Two are good, but more are better, so rig up as many as your party can handle.

Hunting geese over water is rewarding, but it offers some unique challenges. To hunt from a boat, it must be quite

sizeable to transport a full rig of goose floaters, and such a large vessel can be tough to hide. So, Bard skips the boat. Instead, he sets up layout blinds along the shore whenever possible and partially submerges them to help them disappear, wearing waders to stay dry. To add further concealment, he surrounds the blinds with full-body dekes or silhouettes. If the shore isn't hospitable to layout blinds, he'll set up an A-frame in the water, screening it in with standing vegetation such as cattails.

The Final Word: Head to the big water when the freeze hits and bring along as many decoys as you can and a couple of jerk cords.



MADE IN USA



ADK

ADIRONDACK SERIES

OKC¹⁸₈₉

ONTARIO KNIFE CO[™]

WWW.ONTARIOKNIFE.COM





When the temperature plummets and ponds and smaller lakes freeze up, the nearest open big water will hold concentrations of birds for as long as the food holds out.

ON THE COAST

The Expert: Lawrence Seaman III, third-generation commercial fisherman and waterfowl junky

The Game Plan: “The biggest factor in scoring with coastal geese is the weather,” says Lawrence Seaman.

He ought to know. His job as a bayman keeps him on the water seven days a week, no matter what the calendar—or the thermometer—says. Fortunately for him, he can take a break from pulling crab pots on Long Island’s South Shore and chase geese whenever the weather turns nautical.

If you, too, have the luxury of planning your hunts according to the meteorologist, Seaman says the days following


a heavy snowfall are best. With the fields covered in snow, geese are forced to forage out in the bay. The extreme cold that often accompanies a snowstorm locks up the inland ponds, too, driving birds out to the salt.

You can ditch the watch when targeting coastal geese, as the tide has more of an effect on movement than time. Geese loaf on sandbars and mudflats exposed during the low-water periods, so you can expect them to show up just before the tide bottoms out. The food sources they look for in the bay, such as seed clams, periwinkles and submerged aquatic vegetation, are also more readily available at low tide.

If you plan on decoying geese,

Seaman says to get in a likely position about two hours before low tide and stay all the way through the swing. Most of the movement will occur just as the water disappears, but you’ll want to be in place and set up well before that happens.

As for decoys, Seaman likes to set anywhere from 2 to 6 dozen blocks. Whenever possible, he incorporates full-body decoys in his spread, placing them on a mudflat or along the shore of a salt pond. On days with bad weather, he’ll put out a larger spread to signal safety to passing flocks.

The Final Word: Wait for wicked weather and a dropping tide to score big with coastal geese. 

Look for coastal geese to occupy sandbars and mudflats during low tide. They’ll loaf and feed there until the water rises again.



TOM MARTINEAU: THE RAW SPIRIT (TOP); JOSEPH ALBANESE (BOTTOM)

WHAT YOU CARRY, CARRIES YOU.



The M&P Shield® Plus. Our most comfortable, high-capacity, concealed carry, Micro-Compact EVER.

The Shield™ Plus pistol is the next evolution in everyday carry. With a standard capacity of 13+1 rounds, the M&P Shield® Plus delivers a natural point-of-aim and a newly optimized grip texture to help you manage recoil to keep you on target round after round. The new flat face trigger design allows for consistent finger placement that helps with repeatable, accurate, comfortable shooting.

See the full lineup including ported barrel, optics cuts, and longer slide options at smith-wesson.com.

THE ROOSTERS NEXT DOOR

WHILE THE HEYDAY OF PHEASANT HUNTING IN THE EAST IS LONG BEHIND US, THERE ARE STILL OPPORTUNITIES TO BAG A RINGNECK OR TWO WITHOUT HAVING TO ROAD-TRIP IT TO THE PRAIRIE STATES.

By M.D. Johnson

A story about pheasant hunting in the Eastern U.S. actually begins in the Pacific Northwest. In the late 1800s, then ambassador to China, Owen Denny, brought several Chinese ring-necked pheasants back to his Oregon home by boat. Why? He thought the birds were nice to look at and exceptionally good on the table. Those not eaten by the ambassador and

his family were released in the Willamette Valley and along the Columbia River, where they flourished.

In time, most of the northern half of the nation was home to good pheasant populations, including much of the Northeast. Pennsylvania sportsmen enjoyed exceptional hunting during the 1960s and '70s, with annual harvests of a million or more birds. Same with New

York, where the first pheasant season was in 1908. Maryland supported a thriving pheasant population, as did other areas where existing or manufactured habitat and the birds' needs meshed.

But times and landscapes changed. Gone were the old farms; the abandoned pastures; the stretching fields of horse weeds, goldenrod and thigh-high grasses. Agriculture became clean, leaving little

STEVE OEHLenschLAGER



Although truly wild pheasants are nearly non-existent in the East, just about every state in the region releases some number of birds on public hunting areas each fall.

cover for ground-dwelling birds like pheasants. Then came housing developments and shopping malls. Squeezed onto smaller and smaller parcels, many of the eastern U.S.'s pheasant populations slipped into obscurity, and then, eventually, non-existence.

Unfortunate? Yes, but it's a tale with glimmers of hope. Many game agencies throughout the East are working with

private landowners to recreate what was once prime pheasant habitat. These same agencies, too, are providing pheasant hunting opportunities through active and, in some cases expanding, put-and-take programs. Additionally, hunting preserves throughout the region are turning back the proverbial hands of time and bringing uplanders opportunities to hunt this storied gamebird.

PHEASANTS STATE BY STATE

A rundown of ringneck seasons, limits and public-hunting opportunities



PENNSYLVANIA: The Keystone State offers a special youth pheasant hunting opportunity this month (though the application deadline was in September), with a general statewide split season that began in October and runs in segments through the end of February. Either-sex harvest is allowed statewide, though no hunting is permitted within the state's Wild Pheasant Recovery Zone. Zone boundaries and stocking information can be found at the Pennsylvania Game Commission's web site (pgc.pa.gov). A special pheasant permit is required in addition to a general hunting license.

NEW JERSEY: The Garden State releases both ringnecks (50,000 on 20-plus WMAs, Fort Dix and the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area) and bobwhite quail (5,000 on a pair of WMAs) throughout the season, which runs on select days and segments from early November through mid-February. A Pheasant and Quail Stamp (\$40) is required on select areas, as well as the DWGNRA. Visit njfishandwildlife for more.

NEW YORK: As with much of the East, pheasant hunting in New York is but a shadow of what it once
(continued on p. 58)



A dog can help locate birds in heavy cover, but dogless hunters should work backward, from the heaviest cover to less dense sections.

EASTERN ROOSTERS AT A GLANCE

For the past 11 years, Pennsylvania's Kurt Bond has served as the Mid-Atlantic regional representative for Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever. In that role, he provides support to some 25 volunteer chapters across the region, as well as assists private landowners with habitat programs and projects and works with the conservation organization's Farm Bill Biologist Program.

"There's a lot going on," he says, "and a lot still to be done."

Bond's blunt when it comes to wild pheasants in the East.

"Although it's not necessarily a rosy picture, it's the reality: Wild birds aren't common in this region anymore," he says. "In fact, Pennsylvania currently is the only state in my region with an identifiable wild bird population. They're there in two or three small areas, and it's not a huntable population, but I use this reality as a rallying cry for more [upland] habitat."

Perhaps there's not a lot of light at the end of the tunnel, but the situation

is by no means an end-all to pheasant hunting, according to Bond.

"Most state agencies in the region have some allocation of pen-raised birds going onto state game lands," he says. "Pennsylvania is the most robust in terms of stocking programs, with 175,000 to 225,000 birds being released annually. Those numbers do drop a bit as you go through New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, mostly due to fewer hunters and a lesser number of game-land acres. But we've [recently] seen more license sales in this region, and hopefully that translates into more birds being released."

Another option Bond speaks highly of are the numerous hunting preserves scattered throughout the region.

"There's an enormous opportunity there," he says of the preserve system. "One thing Covid demonstrated last year was that there is interest in these preserves. A lot of people use them for dog training, and many of the operations afford the opportunity to educate or recruit new hunters, mainly because

(continued from p. 57)

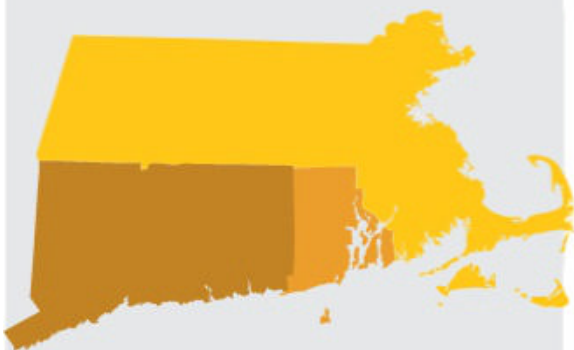
was; however, there are pockets of wild birds to be found in a handful of western counties, and the state stocks more than 20,000 ringnecks on select WMAs each fall. A youth season is on the docket; general seasons start in mid-October and run through December 31, depending on the area. Information, including release sites, is at dec.ny.gov.



MAINE: Upland hunting in the Pine Tree State may be focused on ruffed grouse and woodcock, but pheasant hunters aren't left totally out of the picture. The state game agency stocks some 2,000 birds on roughly 20 sites across Maine, the pheasants provided by funds raised from the sale of requisite pheasant permits sold to sportsmen and -women who hunt in York and/or Cumberland counties. The season started in late September and continues through year's end. Details are at maine.gov under "Pheasant Hunting."

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Like many places across the country, New Hampshire has a long history involving the ring-necked pheasant, with initial stockings dating back more than a century. Today, hunters enjoy the opportunity courtesy of the Fish and Game Department's stocking efforts. For 2021, some 11,000 birds will be released at 64 sites near 44 different municipalities. The season runs October 1 through December 31, with various closures for stocking. More can be found at wildlife.state.nh.us.

VERMONT: Here again, bird hunters focus their efforts on ruffs and timberdoodles, and with apparent good reason. The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department characterizes the wild ring-neck as being “practically non-existent.” Remnants may be found in the Champlain Valley, but any birds found are likely the result of private stockings. There is a season, though, which opened in late September and runs to December 31, with a two-bird daily bag limit. Details are at vtfishandwildlife.com.



MASSACHUSETTS: Hunters may apply to the Department of Fish and Game for a free one-day permit that allows the private purchase, release and hunting of ringnecks and bobwhite quail on selected WMAs from January 1 to March 31. This is first-come, first-served with no restrictions on stocking numbers or bag limits. The 2021 general season runs October 17 to November 27, with a daily bag of two (either-sex on all WMAs). Plans for '21 stocking are roughly 40,000 birds statewide. Go to mass.gov for details.

CONNECTICUT: The Nutmeg State is in the same pheasant boat as the rest of the Northeast. Birds were introduced in the early 20th century, but urbanization and habitat loss have contributed to the virtual demise of a wild population. Today, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, with the support of many entities, releases some 20,000 birds and offers multiple opportunities, including a Junior Pheasant Hunter Training Day. Details are at portal.ct.gov.

it's such a controlled and understandable environment.”

At the end of the day, though, it boils down to one word: habitat.

“If everyone did a little bit,” Bond says, “and added a piece to the puzzle, we would see a significant increase in all upland bird populations, especially those that have been on a downward trajectory for the last 20 to 30 years.”

Stocked pheasants, he admits, are never going to create a wild bird population. And because those wild birds are gone, it's going to be difficult to get them back.

“But there are so many other species that can benefit,” he says. “It's important to all upland wildlife to have more upland habitat on the ground.”

Hunting pheasants in the East comes

down to perspective, and Bond chooses to look at the glass half-full.

“I hunt with my dog and my 5-year-old daughter,” he says. “Neither of them knows the difference between a wild pheasant and a stocked bird. But at the end of the day, it's all about the experience and the opportunity. The smile on her face. The energy in the dog's step. Those opportunities are out there. You just need to go look for them.”

SOLO TACTICS

Basically, there are two types of pheasant hunting: With a dog and without. Many, myself included, prefer the former for perhaps obvious reasons. However, the lone hunter isn't at (much of) a disadvantage if he or she remembers three keys to dog-less pheasant hunting.

PAY TO PLAY

Top private pheasant hunts across the region

Pheasant preserves often get a bad rap as being unrealistic, but that's often an unfair representation. Many operations feature a variety of natural habitats, along with top-notch hunting scenarios. Here are a few that offer hunters a memorable day afield.

MARTZ'S GAP VIEW HUNTING PRESERVE Dalmatia, PA

Offering ringnecks, Hungarian partridge and chukars, Martz's Gap View has been supplying hunting experiences to the public since the late 1950s on its now over 1,300 well-managed acres. (martzs.com)

EASTERN VIEW OUTFITTERS Plattsburgh, NY

As real as it gets, thanks to well-flighted birds and thousands of privately-managed acres of mixed habitat. Of note, only non-toxic shotshells are permitted on this facility. (easternviewoutfitters.com)

ORAPAX HUNTING PRESERVE Goochland, VA

Conveniently located just 30 minutes from Richmond and 45 minutes from Charlottesville, Orapax Hunting Preserve encompasses over 700 acres

of picturesque Virginia landscape. Ringnecks, bobwhites and chukar are available. (orapax.com)

BENT CREEK PRESERVE Allentown, NJ

Now in its 20th season, Bent Creek provides 500 acres of upland opportunity, with a variety of hunt packages on the menu. The season here is long, lasting from September 15 through the end of March. (bentcreekpreserve.net)

PEACEABLE HILL FARM Shoreham, VT

Whether training a new pup or mentoring a young hunter, Peaceable Hill Farm offers a relaxing natural setting surrounded by the splendor that is western Vermont. (peaceablehill.com)

MARKOVER HUNTING PRESERVE Danielson, CT

The kind folks at Markover Hunting Preserve near Danielson have been serving the sporting public for over 50 years and know how to do it right. Traditional field hunting, as well as challenging tower shoots, can be enjoyed. (markover.com)



GUNS AND LOADS

What you'll need to bring down a rooster

My favorite pheasant shotguns are characterized as fast-swinging, easy-to-carry pieces. My 20-gauge Browning Citori Lightning Feather O/U tips the scales shy of 6 pounds and points like an extension of my arm. An admitted fan of the 16 gauge, my 1952 Winchester Model 24 side-by-side weighs about a half-pound more than the Citori yet is nonetheless a joy to carry. At the upper end, my Mossberg Silver Reserve in 12 gauge weighs 7 1/2 pounds. All perform equally well afield if the man behind the stock does his job right. The truth is, any shotgun a hunter shoots well can be used for pheasants.


As for shotshells, a 2 3/4-inch hull is plenty, especially when stoked with a 1 1/4- to 1 1/2-ounce charge of No. 5 or No. 6 lead. However, many WMAs and preserves require hunters to use non-toxic shotshells, making Hevi-Shot's Hevi-Bismuth or Hevi-Shot Duck in No. 6, or Kent's Upland Bismuth in No. 5 or No. 6, an excellent choice.

1. HUNT SMALL: Given a 50-acre field, the solo hunter must cut it down to a manageable size; otherwise, birds will find a way to escape, typically by running. Pheasants prefer to make their escape from lighter cover to heavier cover. Therefore, hunters should work in reverse, when possible, moving from heavy cover to thinner, less dense sections, and, eventually, to no cover in the form of a plowed field, short-grass pasture, waterway or some other type of non-human blocker.

"Run 'em out of cover," my father always told me, "and those roosters won't have any choice but to flush."

2. GO SLOW: Many pheasant hunters are notoriously in a hurry to get to the next field, the next fence line or the next strip of corn. By moving slowly and stopping often, it's possible to make that already high-strung rooster even more nervous by thinking he's been discovered and can't run, his only alternative being flight. Take your time.

Zigzag back and forth across your chosen downsized piece of cover as you work to that aforementioned natural blocker. Stop often and be prepared for that noisy clatter of wings.

3. SHOOT WELL: A trained dog can be a tremendous help afield, not only in locating live birds, but finding them after the shot. A wounded pheasant can be nigh-on impossible to find without a dog, making it extremely important to use the proper ammunition (see sidebar, above) and not hesitate to follow up the first shot with another should the hit be questionable. Mark downed birds well and get to them quickly. Best case, that rooster's lying right where he should be. If not, stand fast and listen. If he's running, the sound of dry leaves rustling may betray his escape. If you don't hear him, hang your blaze orange hat where you think he fell and make ever-expanding circles as you look for feathers or other sign. Don't give up. He's worth it and deserves an all-out effort. 

RHODE ISLAND: Block Island, a 109-square-mile isle off Rhode Island's southern coast, supports a tiny population of wild ringnecks, and allows a few days (five this season) of hunting with landowner permission. "There are no predators on the island, which helps greatly," says Jennifer Kilburn, state upland bird biologist, "It's a cocks-only season and a small, limited population [of birds]." Elsewhere, it's a state-stocked put-and-take deal, with more information at dem.ri.gov.



DELAWARE/MARYLAND: Currently, Delaware (dnrec.alpha.delaware.gov/fish-wildlife) offers a cocks-only season, with a two-bird daily bag, beginning in late November and continuing through early February. Maryland sports a similar season structure, but runs through the end of February with a two-bird, either-sex daily bag. Information about upland bird hunting in Maryland can be found at dnr.maryland.gov.

VIRGINIA/WEST VIRGINIA: For many an upland bird hunter, coastal Virginia (dwr.virginia.gov) means rails with a side of snipe for good measure. Travel west just a bit, and there are bobwhites to be had. Further into the Blue Ridge Mountains and north to neighboring West Virginia, and the game changes to ruffed grouse. Pheasants are decidedly fewer and farther between, though both states have a season. Virginia's runs from early November to Jan. 31, with no daily bag or season limit—presumably due to the state's lack of wild birds. West Virginia's (wvdnr.gov) runs the months of November and December, with a two-bird, cocks-only daily bag.



FIOCCHI HUNTS

FIOCCHI HYPERFORMANCE

Fiocchi's Hyperperformance ammo combines the latest in material and component technology to deliver cartridge performance seasoned hunters across the globe depend on. Fiocchi's new polymer-tipped copper solid bullets ensure long-range accuracy and reliable terminal performance with every shot.



FUEL YOUR PASSION AT

FIOCCHIUSA.COM



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>

STAND AND DELIVER

SUCCESS DURING THE RUT IS OFTEN ABOUT BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME. HERE'S HOW TO HUNT THE STANDS THAT WILL PUT YOU IN A POSITION TO SCORE.

By Doug Howlett

It is hope that drives the deer hunter, and that hope is never higher than it is as the rut begins to kick into overdrive. This is the time deer are on the move the most, and even trophy bucks, in their drive to breed, get a little dumb and are apt to make mistakes.

Every season, Instagram and Facebook feeds are loaded with nice bucks taken during the rut, but we all know that many more hunters come up empty-handed. Don't be one of those hunters. Go into the rut with a game plan for success. Know how you are going to put yourself in a position to take the trophy you dream about. The key to making such a game plan is knowing where to hang your stand or set up your ground blind and being there when opportunity comes walking by. Here are four spots to target this fall as the rut heats up.

1. FOCUS ON FUNNELS

If I were to choose a single terrain feature for an all-day sit as rut activity begins to peak, it would be in a funnel. A

funnel is any piece of terrain that narrows or forces deer movement into a tight, predictable location or corridor, and the best ones allow a hunter to hang a stand that offers a relatively close shot at a buck on the move.

Examples of common funnels are necks or slivers of woods and cover that connect two larger stands of trees; hillsides that run tight together to form a narrow passage or bottom; and waterways such as a deep stream or river that pinches up near a field and leaves just a small strip of trees and cover for deer to pass without stepping into the open. Keep in mind that not all funnels are natural. Converging fences, low wires or even gaps in fences that allow deer to pass through more easily, as well as wooded lots or greenways between houses in suburban areas, all serve to funnel deer traffic into a fairly predictable pattern.

Why are these features so good? Even as bucks chase or seek out does, they'll still try to avoid open areas, particularly during midday when they know they are

When it comes to the best terrain feature for a rut stand, it's hard to beat a funnel. Narrow strips of woods connecting two larger stands of timber are highways for cruising bucks.



more visible. They will use these corridors as they cruise, and the narrower the funnel, the better it will be to force the deer to walk closer to a good stand location.

One of my all-time favorite funnels is a fence with low or missing wires. Deer are a lot like people in that they will choose the easiest route to travel as long as they aren't spooked, so an area along a fence where they can pass through rather than jump over becomes a high-traffic location.

2. FIND OAK FLATS

While bucks will be more focused on breeding than eating right now, does are still more interested in food as they get bred and become pregnant. Acorns, particularly those from white oaks, are a preferred, high-protein food of white-tails. Find an oak dropping acorns along the spine of a big-woods ridgetop or on a raised piece of dry ground surrounded by swamp or thicker cover, and you may have just found a buck magnet.



While bucks aren't focused on feeding during the rut, does certainly are. Find an oak flat littered with acorns and wait for hungry does to bring the bucks to you.

RISE AND SHINE

Two great stands for the run-and-gun hunter

During the rut, having the ability to change stand sites from one day to the next, or even during a single day, can be the difference between being in the game and merely being a spectator to the action. These two stands enable mobility and adaptability to whatever the rut throws at you.

COMPLETE HANG-ON

With the **Lone Wolf Assault Hunt Ready System**, every piece necessary to create the ultimate rut stand setup is included. The system features Lone Wolf's Assault II compact treestand, a four-pack of Lone Wolf Climbing Sticks and the convenient Alphatech Stick Quiver, which snaps onto the stand and holds the sticks so they can all be carried with the optional padded backpack straps. The combined weight of all components is just 20 pounds. (\$469.99; lonewolfhuntingproducts.com)

ADVANCED CLIMBER

When it comes to climbing stands, Summit's Viper has been the standard for years. Now **Summit** offers the **Viper Pro SD**, an improved version over past models. It features the company's new QuickDraw Pro cable system that allows for even faster, easier and quieter attachment to a tree. Also included is Summit's FastTrack system that enables the easy addition of hooks, a phone holder and/or a rifle holder to the frame, keeping gear readily accessible while on stand. The Viper Pro SD weighs just 22 pounds but can support a big ol' country boy up to 300 pounds. It'll climb trees from 8 to 20 inches in diameter. (\$479.99; summitstands.com)



As they search for does, bucks will cruise the edges of these open dining areas daily. Early and late in the rut, they may even stop to browse a little themselves. Hang your stand where prevailing winds will cast your scent away from the acorn-littered ground and be there well before sunup. These spots are ideal for early-morning sets into the late morning, but as the rut hits its peak, don't overlook them for all-day sits, as well, particularly if a nasty cold front that brings rain or snow is in the forecast. Does will feed like crazy on the front edge of these disturbances, and the bucks will be right there with them.

3. KEY ON REMOTE OPENINGS

In the afternoon, many hunters gravitate to open-area stands—be they on recently harvested crop fields, food plots or even overgrown, grassy fields—that allow for seeing more deer and possibly making longer shots. As the rut action heats up, don't dismiss these traditional afternoon hotspots in the morning or midday, either. Conventional wisdom says, "woods in the morning, openings in the afternoon," but bucks will cruise these areas throughout the day to scent-check for estrous does, and they'll be apt to pop into the open at any time during the day.

COURTESY OF BILL WINKE

HERE AT MOSSY OAK, WE BELIEVE THE ONE
PERFECT ANTIDOTE FOR THE NOISE AND
DISTRACTION OF MODERN LIFE IS TO GET
OUTSIDE, AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE.
SO GET OUT THERE,
MAKE SOME MEMORIES IN
THE GREAT OUTDOORS.
WE'LL SEE YOU THERE.
IT'S IN OUR DNA.

INTRODUCING
ALL NEW
MOSSY OAK®
COUNTRY DNA®.



MORE THAN CAMO
CONCEALMENT. CONSERVATION. CONNECTION.


However, don't waste time on roadside fields where every passerby will slow or stop at the sight of deer. While coming darkness will give deer the confidence to browse in such spots late in the afternoon, extended light and human interaction combine to make an open area near a field a potential waste of time. Find a field or plot set back in the woods, though, particularly a long, narrow one where deer will cut across during a day's normal travel, and you are on to something. If sitting right on the field edge, make sure to stay alert. Unless a doe locks down in the open with a buck standing near her, the action you're likely to see is bucks chasing or cruising, which means they'll cross the opening rather quickly.

For a more likely early-morning setup off an opening, position yourself 10 to 20 yards inside the edge, as bucks are more apt to cruise the inside line of woods looking for field-feeding does than stroll right into the open. That said, if hunting inside the line of woods, make sure you have a shooting lane or two clear to the opening.

4. WORK THE WATER

When hunters start filing into the woods en masse and guns begin going off, even rutting deer will move to where they feel safe and removed from human intrusion. Few areas offer them the security that a swamp or a boggy area such as a recently

flooded river bottom does. The harder it is for a person to get back in there, the more likely it is to harbor a bruiser. On my Virginia property, nearly a third of it lies in swamp. During the rut, deer can be spotted working the winding creeks or padding through the shallow waters as they run and chase. Find a creek that runs alongside a high piece of ground with oaks dropping acorns several hundred yards deep in a swamp and you've found a trifecta of terrain features that provide food, security and seclusion. Make sure you are there all day as the rut begins to peak. This will be a great spot early in the rut, too, when acorns first begin to drop.

No swamps where you hunt? Look for brush-choked creek bottoms and tree-lined streamside management zones (typically referred to as SMZs) lining through recently timbered terrain. These land features provide natural white-tail highways where does and trailing bucks cruise under cover and will do so throughout the day at the height of the rut. Tall trees fed by the standing water are ideal perches for a quick setup with a climbing stand or a more permanent setup with a hang-on or ladder stand. Look for creek crossings where hooves have rutted and cleaved away the soil on both sides of the creek, as well as worn, muddy trails paralleling the banks, to know where exactly to hang your stand. 



Overgrown fields tucked back in the woods are good places to set an ambush any time of day during the rut. Bucks and does alike will be on the move, though, so stay alert.

MATT HANSEN

Statement of Ownership,
Management and Circulation
(Required by 39 USC 3685)

1) Publication Title

Game & Fish East

2) Publication Number

0897-8808

3) Filing Date

10/01/21

4) Issue Frequency

Published ten issues per year, including two double issues:
Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun/Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec/Jan

5) Number of Issues Published Annually

10

6) Annual Subscription Price

\$19.97

7) Complete Mailing Address of
Known Office of Publication

Outdoor Sportsman Group
David Madrid
1040 6th Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10018-3703, 212-852-6600

8) Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters
or General Business Office of Publisher

Outdoor Sportsman Group
1040 6th Avenue, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10018-3703

9) Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses
of Publisher, Editor, and Production Director

Publisher: Michael F.X. Cassidy, 6385 Flank Drive, Ste 800, Harrisburg, PA
17112
Editor: John Taranto, 6385 Flank Drive, Ste 800, Harrisburg, PA
17112
Editorial Director: Adam Heggentaler, 6385 Flank Drive, Ste 800, Harrisburg,
PA 17112

10) Owner

Outdoor Sportsman Group, 1040 6th Ave, 17th Flr, New
York, NY 10018-3703. Stockholders owning or holding
1 percent or more of the total amount of stock: None

11) Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security
Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total
Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities.

None

12) Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations
authorized to mail at nonprofit rate) (Check one)

The purpose, function, and nonprofit status of this organization
and the exempt status for federal income tax purposes:
☒ Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
☐ Has Changed During the Preceding 12 Months

13) Publication Title

Game & Fish South

14) Issue Date for Circulation Data Below

October 2021

15) Extent and Nature of Circulation

Average No. of Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date	
a) Total Number of Copies	67,290	67,272
b) Paid and/or requested circulation		
1) Paid/requested outside/county mail subscriptions stated on PS Form 3541	56,237	56,949
subscriptions	0	0
3) Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter	1,622	1,600
4) Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
c) Total paid and/or requested circulation	57,859	58,549
d) Free distribution by mail		
1) Outside-county as stated on PS Form 3541	67	73
2) In-county as stated on PS Form 3541	0	0
3) Other classes mailed through USPS	0	0
4) Free distribution through the mail	0	0
e) Total Free Distribution	67	73
f) Total Distribution	57,926	58,622
g) Copies not Distributed	9,364	8,650
h) Total	67,290	57,272
i) Percent paid and/or requested circulation	99.9%	99.9%
16) Electronic Copy Circulation		
a) Paid Electronic Copies	0	0
b) Total Paid Print Copies + Paid Electronic Copies	57,859	58,549
c) Total Distribution + Paid Electronic Copies	57,926	58,622
d) Percent Paid (Both Print & Electronic Copies)	99.88%	99.88%
X I certify that 50% of all my distributed copies (electronic and print) are paid above nominal price.		
17) This statement of ownership will be printed in the November 2021 issue of this publication.		
18) Signed by Peter Watt, Vice President, Consumer Marketing Date 10/1/21		

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete.
I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information
on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form
may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment)
and/or civil sanctions(including civil penalties).

66 NOVEMBER 2021 GAFMAG.COM

THINKING ABOUT SELLING YOUR LAND?
CALL US, THE ORIGINAL LAND SPECIALISTS.



WHITETAIL PROPERTIES REAL ESTATE

HUNTING | RANCH | FARM | TIMBER

CORPORATE OFFICE: **217.285.9000**

WHITETAILPROPERTIES.COM

Whitetail Properties Real Estate, LLC DBA Whitetail Properties. In the States of Nebraska & North Dakota DBA Whitetail Trophy Properties Real Estate LLC. Licensed in IL, MO, IA, KS, KY, NE & OK - Dan Perez, Broker. Licensed in AR, CO, GA, MN, ND, SD, TN & WI - Jeff Evans, Broker. Licensed in FL, OH & PA - Jefferson Kirk Gilbert, Broker. Licensed in TX & NM - Joey Bellington, Broker. Licensed in IN - Bill Minor, Broker. Licensed in AL, GA, LA, & MS - Sybil Stewart, Broker. Licensed in TN - Tim Burnette, Broker. Licensed in TN - Bobby Powers, Broker. Licensed in AR - Anthony Chrisco, Broker. Licensed in NC, SC, VA - Chip Camp, Broker. Licensed in NC - Rich Baugh, Broker. Licensed in MI - Edmund Joel Nogaski, Broker. Licensed in MD, WV - Debbie S. Laux, Broker. Licensed in MT, ID, UT, WY, OR - Aaron Milliken, Broker. Licensed in NY - John Myers, Real Estate Broker.



BIG WATER, BIG ACTION

Big, hardy surf scoters are a popular target of sea duck hunters on Chesapeake Bay.

On active duty with the U.S. Navy, my son Daniel lives within sight of Chesapeake Bay. He and I both grew up hunting ducks, but neither of us had ever seen a sea duck, let alone hunted them. So, when I visited Daniel and his family last fall, he and I jumped at the opportunity to hunt the fabled waters of the bay.

We met Joshua Bourne of Wingman Guide Service (facebook.com/WingmanGuideService) in Cape Charles

on the Eastern Shore of Virginia one chilly December morning. Well after shooting hours started, we pulled out into Chesapeake Bay, kicking up flocks of ducks. We anchored in open water more than a mile from shore and watched ocean-going ships dominate the endless horizon.

Growing up hunting waterfowl in various habitats, everything about this scene went against my nearly six decades of duck hunting instinct. Normally I sit

in a pit buried next to an inundated field, stand in freezing flooded timber, crouch in marsh grass or watch for mallards to settle into a pothole from a camouflaged boat, so I felt strange crouching behind reed matting lining the gunwales of Bourne's 23-foot boat that any bird could see for miles.

"Hunting sea ducks is different from hunting puddle ducks in the marshes," said Bourne, who also operates a full-service lodge in Somerset County, Md.,



FOR AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT BRAND OF WATERFOWLING, HEAD OUT TO SEA.

By John N. Felsher

for various types of waterfowling and fishing. “With puddle ducks, we go into the marsh or flooded timber in the dark to set up at a previously scouted location. For sea ducks, I very rarely hunt without first seeing birds that day. Scoters dive for clams, oysters and mussels. They sit over their food sources during the day, so we set up where they’re feeding.”

That strange feeling quickly vanished as a single large, dark bird rocketed low over a small cluster of black decoys

bobbing in the waves 30 yards away. As it approached my end of the boat, I had the honor of taking the first shot of the morning. With one blast of No. 2 Hevi-Shot, I bagged our first bird of the day, a drake surf scoter, and my first sea duck.

With the wind and bay currents, Chesapeake hunters must retrieve their kills quickly or risk losing them to the sea. When hunting, Bourne attaches his anchor line to a buoy, and when he

doesn’t have a retriever along, he simply unhooks the line from the buoy and motors over to pick up the bird. Then, he returns to the buoy and resumes hunting in the same spot minutes later.

“We’re sitting in about 10 feet of water, but sometimes I’ll hunt in water out to 30 or 40 feet deep,” Bourne said after collecting my future wall prize. “Scoters prefer shallower water. They also like to feed where oystermen or clammers are working. When the watermen work the

Joshua Bourne's 23-foot-long boat may look conspicuous in the middle of Chesapeake Bay, but scoters love to feed where oyster and clam boats work and aren't deterred by his craft.



bottom, they expose food for the ducks. The birds absolutely see the boats, but that means food to them, so they are not shy about landing near boats in open water.”

TIPS AND TACTICS

When setting up, we followed the old maxim of “coming at them out of the sun.” Flying toward the rising sun, birds couldn’t see us in the silhouetted boat.

“Currents affect the boat,” Bourne said. “Probably 99 percent of the time, the boat will be parallel to the decoys with the wind coming from one side or the other. In this part of Chesapeake Bay, currents run north and south, and the predominant winds are always north or south and a little eastern.”

On previous open-water hunts, I’ve always put out massive decoy spreads. Bourne doesn’t do that for sea ducks.

He usually uses two-dozen decoys that match the species common to the area. We set out all surf scoter decoys attached to a decoy net for quick deployment. He used mostly drakes but sprinkled in a few hens for realism.

“When I learned to hunt as a boy from my father, we used milk jugs or crab buoys that we painted black,” Bourne recalled. “Now, we use realistic decoys attached to a decoy net. With it,

FROM BAY TO PLATE

Sea ducks can make for a surprisingly delicious meal.

Sea ducks don’t enjoy a favorable reputation as table fare, but the birds are quite tasty if prepared correctly. Some describe the mild, flavorful meat as tasting like venison tenderloin, and the birds can be prepared in many ways. You could breast them out and fry the boneless chunks, or wrap the breasts in bacon and grill them. Add a little barbecue sauce and season to taste. Others put the breasts or quarters in stews and gumbos. Or you can slow-cook them with assorted vegetables, mushrooms and other ingredients of choice.

I cooked ours by first seasoning the skinned duck breasts with Cajun seasoning, garlic powder, onion powder and a hint of ginger. Next, I heated a cast iron skillet to a low to medium-low heat and melted bacon grease in the skillet. Once the grease was melted, I added the seasoned duck breasts and slowly sautéed the meat and seasonings in the skillet, flipping the meat every five minutes. After four flips, the breasts were ready to eat. The meat was served over rice with gravy and some bread on the side to soak up the gravy. —Daniel J. Felsher

CLEAN. DRAIN. DRY.

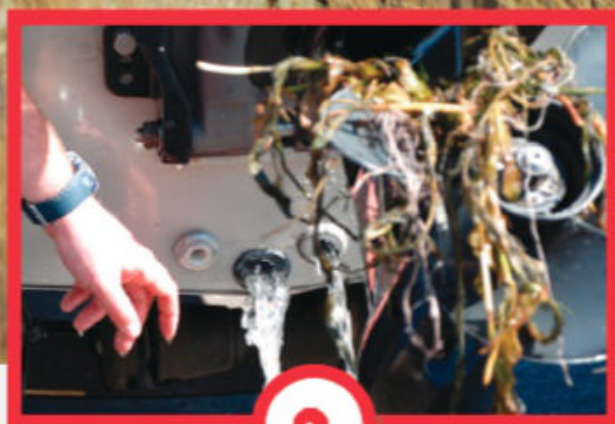
STOP INVASIVE SPECIES

After a day of hunting, always remember to follow the Clean Drain Dry steps to prevent the spread of invasive species.



1

Clean all plants, mud and debris from trucks, trailers, gear and pets.



2

Drain all water from boats and recreational vehicles.



3

Dry boots/waders and all equipment for at least 5 days.



www.blm.gov



www.wildlifeever.org

**CLEAN
DRAIN
INITIATIVE**

www.cleandraindry.org

Learn to identify invasive species in your area. Report findings to a local fish and wildlife agency!

Historic
Jamestown



AREA ATTRACTIONS

Explore the storied national and hunting history of Chesapeake Bay

Perhaps no other waterbody more richly connects with both the history of the United States and waterfowl hunting than Chesapeake Bay. Europeans first visited the area in the early 16th century, but Native Americans hunted here for millennia before that.

Just up the James River from Newport News, Va., visitors can explore **a replica of the Jamestown settlement established in 1607** or visit the colonial capital of historic Williamsburg (visitwilliamsburg.com). A short drive from either, history buffs can tour the Yorktown battlefield (nps.gov/york) where George Washington defeated the British Army in the last major battle of the Revolutionary War.

On the Maryland side, waterfowlers might visit the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (cbmm.org) in St. Michaels. The museum highlights the history, environment and culture of the Chesapeake Bay region and includes a section on the history of waterfowling in the area. If visiting the weekend of Nov. 12, check out the 50th annual Waterfowl Festival (waterfowlfestival.org) in Easton.

Local communities provide accommodations and facilities on both sides of the bay. Sample the famed Chesapeake Bay crab cakes and other seafood at many waterfront restaurants.

A ship passes by on the horizon as dawn breaks on Chesapeake Bay. In the foreground, drake surf scoter decoys await the next incoming flight of sea ducks.

we can put out a cluster of decoys in a tight area. The birds naturally swim into the current, so I clip a long line to the back of the net. That allows decoys on that line to look like they're in a perfect line to approach the other birds in the cluster."

Sometimes, sea duck hunters wave black flags at birds flying in the distance. Similar to the concept of mechanical spinning-wing decoys, birds see the flash from long distances. That black flash replicates the wings of scoters preparing to land.


During our hunt, surf scoters steadily

came into our decoys in singles, pairs and small flocks all morning until we bagged our limit of drakes. It's hard to judge distances in open, featureless water, so it's crucial to place the decoys within shooting range of the boat. Magnum No. 2 or BB loads with tight chokes are necessary to down these tough birds. Sometimes, we easily dropped a duck on the first shot, only to have it dive and resurface at extreme range. Some swimming cripples required multiple shots to kill them.

"Surf scoters are a little bigger than mallards, but 5,000 times tougher,"

Bourne quipped. "They can take a lot of punishment.

Surf scoters and black, or common, scoters are the predominant sea duck species in Chesapeake Bay. A white-wing scoter is a trophy here. White-wings are larger with a very significant white patch on the wing. Bourne also shoots long-tailed ducks, though they typically prefer deeper water than scoters.

Both Virginia and Maryland set different seasons for sea ducks and other waterfowl and designate special sea duck hunting zones, so be sure to check the regulations before hunting. 

**AUTHENTIC
WWII STEEL
CENTS**

**SAVE OVER
\$60**



SECRET HOARD DISCOVERED:

World War II 1943 Steel Cents

When our buyer received the call, he nearly fell out of his chair. In his 19 years in the coin business, he had never seen a hoard like this. 20,000 coins—all 1943 Lincoln Steel Cents!

He quickly secured as many as he could, and now you can secure full rolls of this historic World War II-era coin at an incredible price.

What is a Steel Cent?

When the United States entered World War II, copper quickly became a coveted material. Required for our communications as well as munitions, every major supply of copper needed to be turned over to the war effort. That included the large supply of copper used by the U.S. Mint to strike Lincoln Cents!

The Lincoln Cent is the U.S. Mint's longest-running series, sitting in the pockets and piggy banks of Americans for more than 100 years. But for one year only—1943—the Lincoln Cent was struck in steel-coated zinc instead of copper. This unique, historic mintage is now one of the most coveted in U.S. history!

Authentic Pieces of WWII History

Each 1943 U.S. Steel Cent is an authentic piece of World War II History—an example of America's dedication to aiding the Allies and winning the war.

Buy a Full Roll and SAVE!

Look elsewhere for these coveted World War II Steel Cents in this same condition, and you could wind up paying as much as \$1.80 per coin, or a total of \$90 for a full 50-coin roll's worth! But while our supplies last, you can secure a roll of authentic World War II 1943 Steel Cents for just \$29.95 — a savings of over \$60!

In addition, you'll also receive a **BONUS** Replica WWII newspaper, reprinting front-page news from 1943!

There's no telling when or if another hoard of these historic WWII coins will be found.

Don't wait — secure your very own piece of the Allied victory now!



1943 U.S. Steel Cent 50-Coin Roll - \$29.95 + s/h

FREE SHIPPING on 5 or More!

Limited time only. Product total over \$149 before taxes (if any). Standard domestic shipping only. Not valid on previous purchases.

Call today toll-free for fastest service

1-800-329-0225

Offer Code RLC363-01

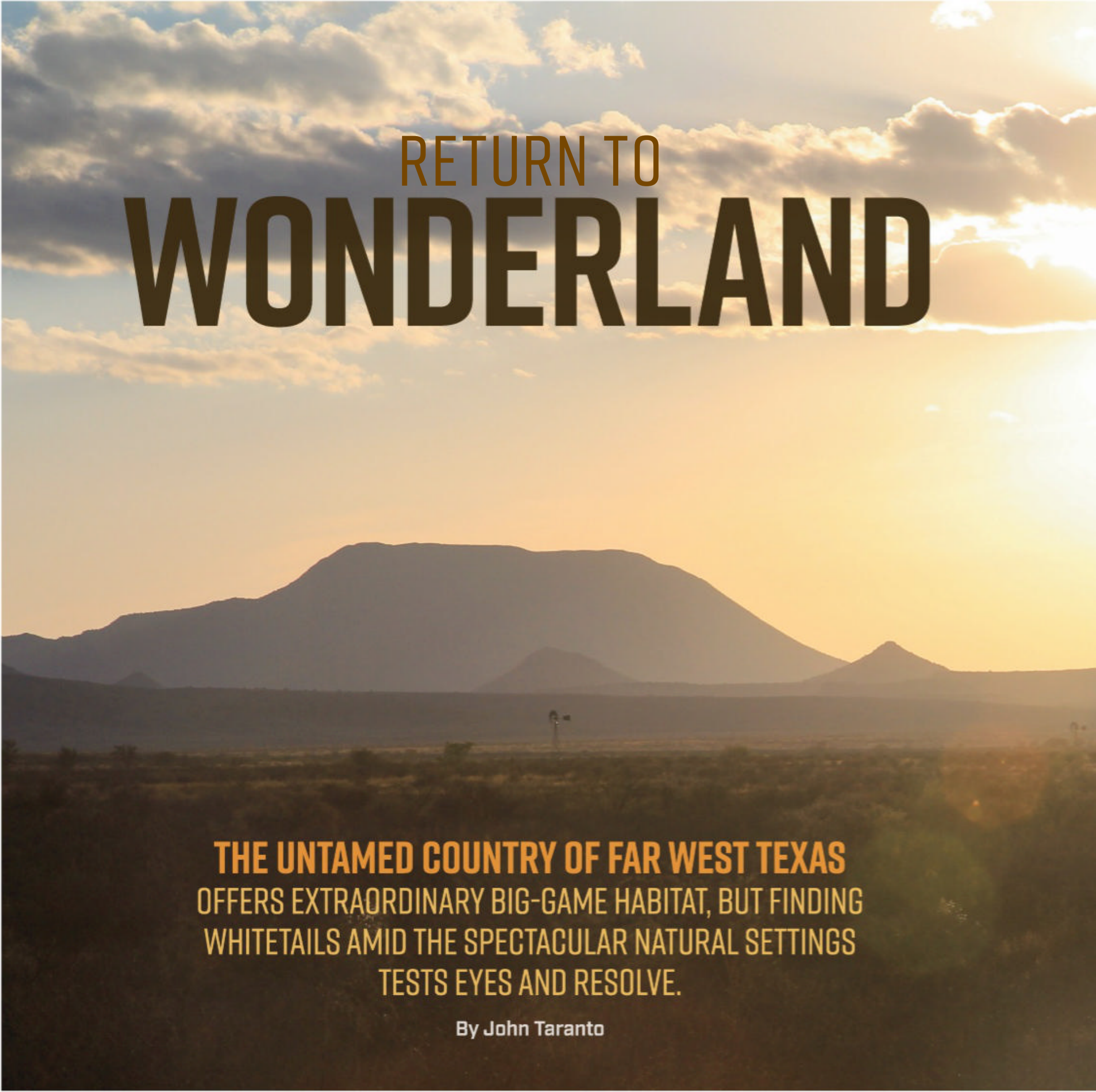
Please mention this code when you call.

GovMint.com • 14101 Southcross Dr. W., Suite 175
Dept. RLC363-01 • Burnsville, MN 55337



GOVMINT.COM®

GovMint.com® is a retail distributor of coin and currency issues and is not affiliated with the U.S. government. The collectible coin market is unregulated, highly speculative and involves risk. GovMint.com reserves the right to decline to consummate any sale, within its discretion, including due to pricing errors. Prices, facts, figures and populations deemed accurate as of the date of publication but may change significantly over time. All purchases are expressly conditioned upon your acceptance of GovMint.com's Terms and Conditions (www.govmint.com/terms-conditions) or call 1-800-721-0320; to decline, return your purchase pursuant to GovMint.com's Return Policy. © 2021 GovMint.com. All rights reserved.



RETURN TO WONDERLAND

**THE UNTAMED COUNTRY OF FAR WEST TEXAS
OFFERS EXTRAORDINARY BIG-GAME HABITAT, BUT FINDING
WHITETAILS AMID THE SPECTACULAR NATURAL SETTINGS
TESTS EYES AND RESOLVE.**

By John Taranto

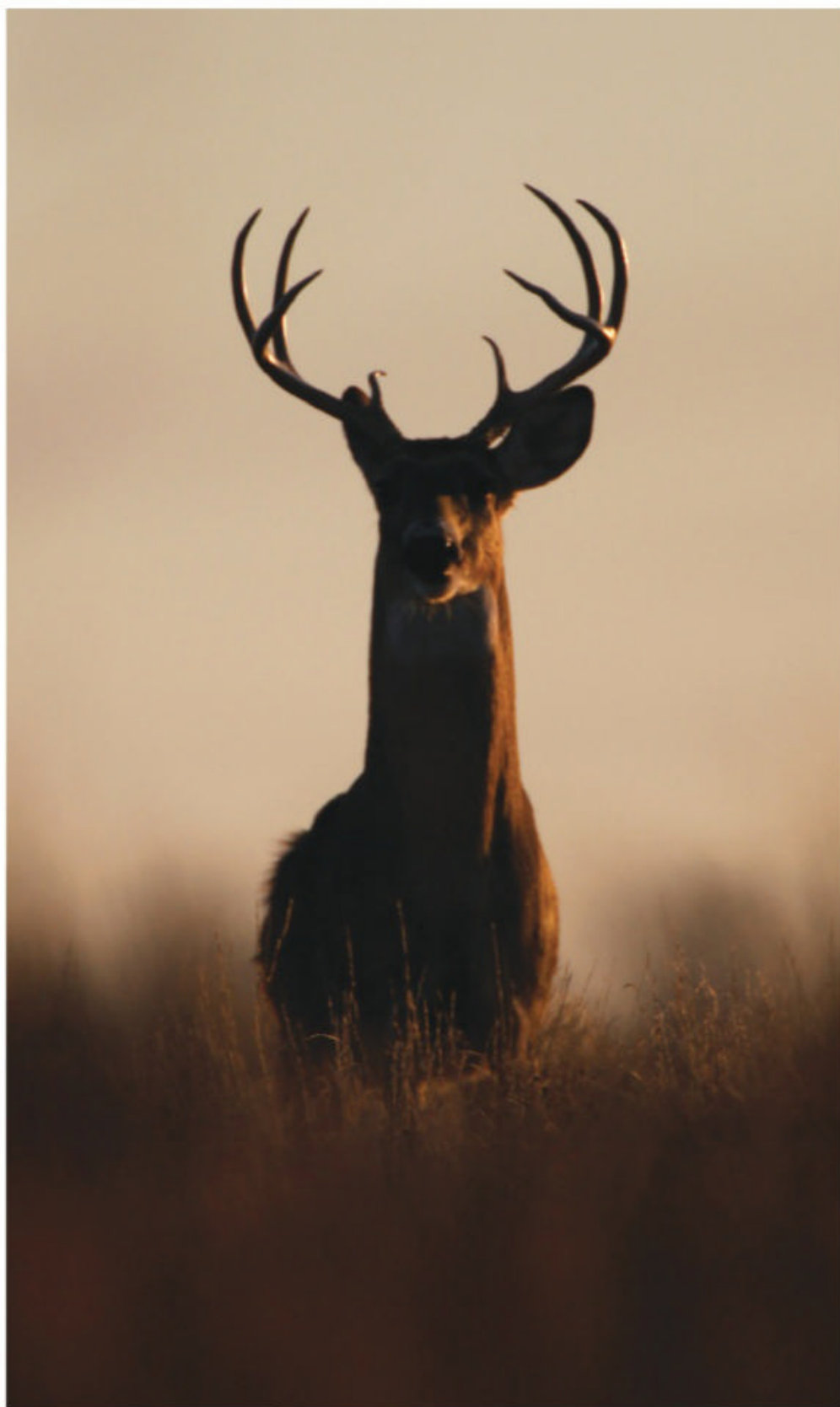
As Steve Jones' 1985 Dodge Power Ram began to backslide down a cattle trail faintly etched into the side of a steep bluff, I immediately started thinking about which way I was going to bail. I was sitting atop an elevated bench in the bed of the truck, far better off than my cohorts trapped within the cab, who would have to fumble with 35-year-old door handles and clamber over one

another to avoid plummeting to their deaths. Fortunately, our skid ended a few feet short of the switchback, and Steve gunned the engine to deliver us from near-certain peril. He would later tell me it was a "controlled slide" to better position the truck for the run up the incline. Whatever it was, I was now fully awake. As we continued up the bluff and my white-knuckled grip on the rail in front of me loosened, I looked

out over the valley below and remembered how grateful I was to be in this place again.

It's difficult to oversell the rugged beauty of Far West Texas. Peaks and bluffs rise dramatically from an endless sea of mesquite, cedar and low-slung bushes that can cause puncture wounds without much effort. Tortuous canyons gouge the landscape. Red and yellow cliffs pop against an impossibly blue

JOHN TARANTO (MAIN)



Whitetails move furtively through the vast ranchland surrounding Mitre Peak and the mountains near Fort Davis, Texas.

sky. Everywhere you look feels like the set of an old western movie.

The first time I visited this magical corner of the Lone Star State, in 2006, was for a pronghorn hunt. My second pilgrimage, a half-dozen years ago, was a hunt for free-range aoudad that live in the craggy mountains of this picturesque land. In addition to those species, the region is home to elk, black bears, mountain lions, feral hogs, mule deer

and whitetails. Few areas in the Lower 48 can rival the region's abundance of big game and staggering beauty.

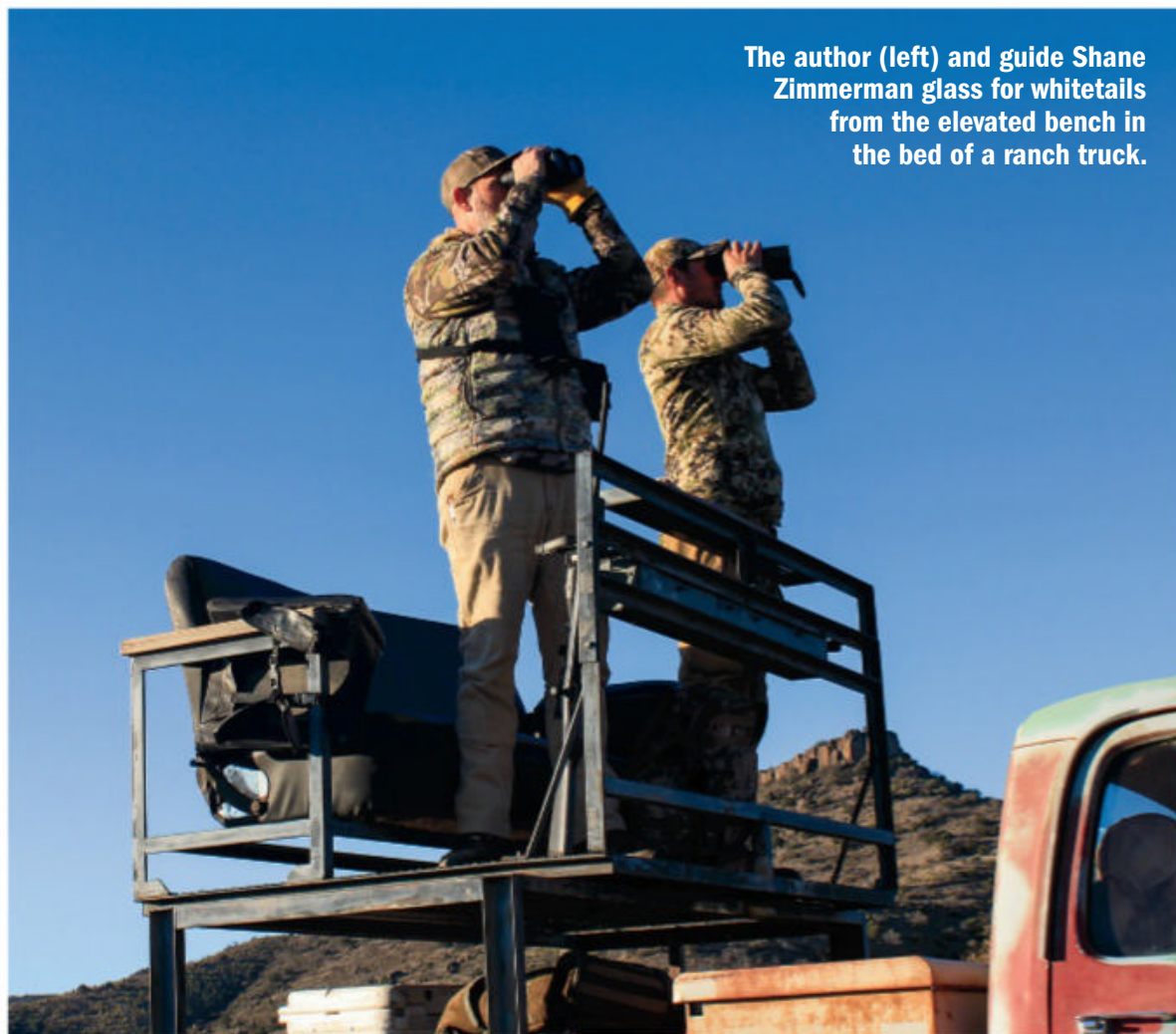
So, when I was invited to hunt whitetails on the Kokernot O6 ranch, an expanse of land totaling nearly 300,000 acres between Fort Davis and Alpine, I eagerly accepted the opportunity to return to the scene of two of my most memorable hunts and a part of the world that continues to captivate me. What

further piqued my interest was this was being billed as a spot-and-stalk affair that would, ideally, allow us to put Mossberg's new Patriot LR Hunter rifle, chambered in 6.5 Creedmoor, to the long-range test. Essentially, it was to be the antithesis of the typical Texas whitetail hunt, most often characterized by interminable sits in a stuffy box blind positioned approximately 100 yards from a feeder.

GLASSING GAME

Dawn of opening day of deer season found me bouncing around a section of the O6 known as the King Pasture with Mike Holm of Federal Ammunition and Shane Zimmerman. A guide with Jones' Backcountry Hunts (backcountryhunts.com), Zimmerman is a real-estate agent by trade, but he spends the fall months guiding with Steve in their home state of New Mexico and on several ranches in West Texas. The plan that first morning of the hunt was to pick our way around the pasture, in the shadow of 6,000-foot Mitre Peak, in hopes of intercepting a buck that had yet to bed down for the day.

As we rolled along, we cut multiple tracks but spotted no bucks, so we decided to park the truck and climb a knob to do some glassing. Already, I was bolstered by the active pursuit of our quarry. I'm OK with sitting in a treestand in an Ohio woodlot or on a field edge in Iowa, but country like this demands to be explored. Picking bedded deer out of the scrubland below us proved



The author (left) and guide Shane Zimmerman glass for whitetails from the elevated bench in the bed of a ranch truck.

AT HOME ON THE RANGE

An affordable rifle built for wide-open spaces

Since its introduction in 2015, Mossberg's Patriot line of bolt-action rifles has grown to include predator, youth and tactical models. For 2021, the company introduced a long-range hunting iteration called, fittingly, the LR Hunter. The **Mossberg Patriot LR Hunter** carries forth several standard features found on the original Patriot—a polymer drop-box magazine, a spiral-fluted bolt, an oversized bolt handle, a user-adjustable (2 to 7 pounds) Lightning Bolt Action trigger—and it also has a number of attributes that tailor it to long-range shooting and hunting.

Perhaps most noticeable is the polymer-coated Monte Carlo stock with its raised comb and flat-bottom, benchrest-style fore-end. These design characteristics are meant to maximize comfort and stability when bearing down on a distant target.

The fore-end, too, has dual swivel studs for a sling and a bipod. Lest you think this is an overtly heavy rifle meant for stationary shooting, the un-scoped weight is a mere 6 1/2 pounds.

The free-floating, fluted, 22-inch barrel is threaded for a muzzle brake or suppressor. A one-piece, 6-inch Picatinny rail offers ample mounting space for optics. The push-feed action features dual locking lugs, a sliding-plate extractor and a plunger-type ejector. A two-stage, rocker-style safety is easily manipulated aft of the bolt handle. Aluminum bedding pillars lend rigidity to the barreled action's interface with the stock.

You might expect such a nicely appointed long-range rifle to retail well north of \$1,000, but the MSRP is a very palatable \$766. You'll find it for less at many dealers (mossberg.com).



JOHN TARANTO (2)



10 POINT BUCK

MEN'S CAMO HOODIE

10-POINT BUCK
EMBLAZONED ON BACK
FEATURES AL AGNEW'S
ART IN A CUSTOM
CAMOUFLAGE DESIGN



A Custom Apparel Design
from The Bradford Exchange

GET READY FOR YOUR NEXT WILDERNESS ADVENTURE

A one-on-one encounter with the regal woodland king known as the American Whitetail is an experience that avid sportsmen never forget. Now, you can wrap yourself in that wilderness adventure wherever you go with our "10-Point Buck" Men's Camo Hoodie, featuring the work of acclaimed wildlife artist Al Agnew. Crafted in a black cotton-blend knit, our hoodie features a custom camo-print created from the work of Al Agnew on both the sleeves and the hood lining. A dramatic close-up portrait of a 10-point buck with the same camouflage artwork is captured on the back in appliqué, and the front of the hoodie showcases an embroidered 10-point buck. This versatile hoodie has two

front pockets, rib knit cuffs and hem, and metal toggles on the cords... perfect for year-round comfort. Imported.

AN EXCEPTIONAL VALUE... SATISFACTION GUARANTEED
This jacket is a superb value at \$99.95*, payable in 3 convenient installments of \$33.32 each, and backed by our 30-day guarantee. Size XXL, add \$10. To reserve yours, send no money now; just return the Priority Reservation. You won't find this custom design in stores. So don't miss out—order yours today!

Order Today at bradfordexchange.com/camodeer

Connect with us!



©Agnew 2021. Al Agnew® is a registered trademark of The Al Agnew collection Trust.
©2021 The Bradford Exchange 01-20391-001-BIRR4



Where Passion Becomes Art

The Bradford Exchange

9345 Milwaukee Ave, Niles, IL 60714-1393

**PRIORITY RESERVATION
SEND NO MONEY NOW**

YES. Please reserve the "10-Point Buck" Men's Camo Hoodie for me in the size indicated below.

☐ M (38-40) 01-20391-011 ☐ XL (46-48) 01-20391-013

☐ L (42-44) 01-20391-012 ☐ XXL (50-52) 01-20391-014

*Plus a total of \$13.99 shipping and service (see bradfordexchange.com). Please allow 2-4 weeks after initial payment for shipment. All sales are subject to product availability and order acceptance.

Signature _____

Mrs. Mr. Ms. _____

Name (Please Print Clearly)

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Email _____

E44202

The Glass Mountains provided a beautiful backdrop to the view from the rickety blind from which the author shot his buck.



THE GLASS AND THE BRASS

A look at the scope and ammo used on the hunt

To my LR Hunter I mounted the new **6-18x50 mm Bushnell Banner 2 riflescope**. The entire Banner 2 line offers a ton of value, with most models retailing for around \$100. The glass is above average for the price and the second-focal-plane BDC reticle is clean and easy to use. Best of all, it pairs with the free Bushnell Ballistic app, which provides yardages for each of the hashmarks on the vertical axis once you enter your scope configuration and load data (bushnell.com).

I fed my rifle **Federal Premium ammunition** loaded with 130-grain Swift Scirocco II bullets. The Scirocco II is a bonded bullet featuring a pure-copper jacket and lead core. Its distinct black polymer tip aids in expansion at both far and close range, but it really shines at longer distances thanks to a sleek design that leads to a high ballistic coefficient of .571. The Federal Premium round produces a reported muzzle velocity of 2,800 fps, and the bullet retains 2,054 fps at 500 yards. It dumps 2,012 foot-pounds of energy at 100 yards and 1,218 at 500. A box of 20 costs about \$66 (federalpremium.com).



JOHN TARANTO (4)

to be a challenge, but the glint off an antler would occasionally betray a mule deer buck here and there; unfortunately, muleys were not on the menu for this hunt. We spotted herds of aoudad and a couple cow elk, too, but no whitetails.

After returning to Shane's truck, we spent the rest of the morning driving the serpentine roads of the pasture, glassing feeders and water tanks from afar. These checkpoints produced only does, javelin- as and a group of hogs that disappeared at full speed into a creek bottom before Mike or I could put one in our crosshairs.

For the afternoon hunt, we crossed Highway 118 to the east side of the ranch, opposite the King Pasture, where the vast majority of the O6 lies. Somehow, this part of the ranch is even more breathtaking than the west side, and we spent the last few hours of daylight alternately shaking our heads at the incredible landscapes and the fact that the only deer we could seem to find were of the mule persuasion.

Drive. Stop. Glass. Drive. Park. Hike. Glass. Hike. Drive. It's not a terrible way to spend an afternoon in Far West

Texas, but the only critter we found willing to cooperate was a too-trusting coyote that stood broadside 109 yards from Shane's truck for too long. The passenger-side rearview mirror proved to be the perfect rifle rest, and I dropped the 'yote where it stood.

HOLED UP

Two other hunters in camp fared better than me on Day 1, both taking good bucks with single shots from their Patriots, and they decided to join us for Day 2. I was glad to have the extra sets of eyes along as we explored another part of the eastern side of the ranch, though my partners were probably wishing they'd slept in during Steve's "controlled slide." Having escaped that episode unscathed, we spent most of the morning glassing canyons and flats from high vantage points.

At one stop, Steve produced an odd-looking whistle from his coat pocket and proceeded to blow an ear-splitting series of high-pitched notes that reverberated off the canyon walls. Upon closer inspection, the "whistle" was in fact two .30-30 casings with primers removed, welded together at the bases, and with a reed stuck in one end. Steve told me his homemade predator call often prompted bedded deer to stand up and reveal



Steve Jones often uses a homemade predator call to locate deer.



8 CIGARS *only* \$10*

FIRST-CLASS PREMIUM CIGAR SAMPLER

When it comes to cigars, no one even comes close to Cigars International and we're ready to prove it to 'ya with an outrageous intro offer: 8 premium handmade cigars for just \$10.* Go ahead, price shop this one and prepare to be stunned. When you're ready, we're here waiting with the world's largest selection of premium handmade cigars at the planet's lowest prices, delivered fast and fresh. That's our guarantee.

Visit: CigarsIntl.com/SA8299

Enter complete web address or search keyword: SA8299

1-888-244-2790 Mention code SA8299

Item #: CA49-SP

Includes 1 each of:

Macanudo • Hoyo de Monterrey • Arganese • Gurkha
Villazon • Sancho Panza • Bahia • CAO



\$5 UPGRADE

ADD A TRAVEL HUMIDOR

CRUSHPROOF | WATERPROOF | \$30 VALUE

*Plus \$2⁹⁹ s/h. Purchase may be subject to state, local or excise taxes where applicable. First-time purchasers only. One per customer. No sales to anyone under the age of 21. We do not ship to Utah or South Dakota. For shipping information & restrictions please visit www.CigarsIntl.com/SHIP. Offer expires 12/15/21.





While the author's hunt didn't play out the way he envisioned it, he had no complaints with its outcome or the time spent in Steve Jones' camp.

themselves in the thick cover at the bottoms of canyons, but none responded to the call that day. Nonetheless, it was an exhilarating morning of spotting game and seeing parts of the ranch that Steve himself had previously never explored. One such spot, a pond at the top of a

butte that was loaded with ducks, had countless deer hoofprints in the mud surrounding it, but nary a live whitetail to be found.

Over lunch, we met up with Dave Callaway, another of Steve's guides, who had seen a couple good whitetails earlier in the morning. One of his hunters shot one of them, and Dave was confident he had the other, a solid 5-by-5, pegged, but he felt the best way to kill him was to sit in a box blind approximately 100 yards from a feeder—the very scenario I had hoped to avoid. However, a day and a half of driving, hiking and glassing had produced few whitetail sightings, so I agreed to hole up in the blind that evening and see what transpired.

Later, as we prepared to leave camp for the afternoon hunt, I noticed Dave loading an extension ladder into the bed of his truck.

"What's that for?" I asked as I set my rifle and pack in the cab.

"This is how you're going to get into the blind," he replied matter-of-factly.

Turns out, this box blind was something of a relic. Once I'd ascended the ladder, I found it to be well ventilated, with several large holes in the walls and floor. A stuffy box blind it was not. I managed to position my seat so that I could properly shoulder the rifle if need be, and settled in for my sit.

The feeder, complete with bales of alfalfa, was to the south of me, and that's the direction from which a strong, steady wind blew for most of the afternoon. On one hand, there was no chance of my scent wafting into the cover from which the buck was supposed to arrive. On the other, a few of the gusts had me wondering if this decrepit structure would topple over with me inside.

**WORK FROM HOME
\$500 WEEKLY**

Assemble Products From Home
Free Information Available
Call 860-357-1599

ADVERTISE HERE


CONTACT

Brendan Vorobiev
730-800-6666

Brendan.Vorobiev@outdoorsg.com



Around 5 o'clock the wind mercifully laid down, and a half-hour later a buck fitting the description Dave had given to me—a big-bodied 5-by-5 with good G3s—materialized from the brush and slowly approached the feeder, making a wide loop. Once he cleared the brush, I centered the crosshair and pulled the trigger. The buck ran about 40 yards straight toward me and piled up behind a mesquite bush.

As I sat there in the aftermath of this brief encounter, after radioing Dave that the deed was done, I quietly soaked up the sights and sounds that surrounded me. Out the side window of the blind, Mitre Peak rose in the distance, bathed in the hazy yellow light of dusk. Birds chirped and old steel windmills creaked, keeping me company on yet another memorable evening in Far West Texas. 

Texan is America's Preferred Big Bore Air Rifle

TEXAN 50-CF

Thousands of hunters agree, the AirForce Texan is the world's most powerful and most reliable production big bore air rifle. Capable of over 800 foot pounds of muzzle energy and available in a wide variety of calibers and configurations, no other airgun even comes close.

Serious airgun hunting starts at AirForce Airguns.

www.airforceairguns.com
or contact us today at 877-247-4867

Shown with optional scope and rings.

AIRFORCE
airguns



"...with average 5-shot groups shrinking by around 25%"

- John Barsness, Rifle #311, July 2020



EXPERT SUPPORT

Stocky's
ph (561) 584-8500
America's Gunstock Specialists!

INSTANT SHIPPING

www.NewRifleStocks.com

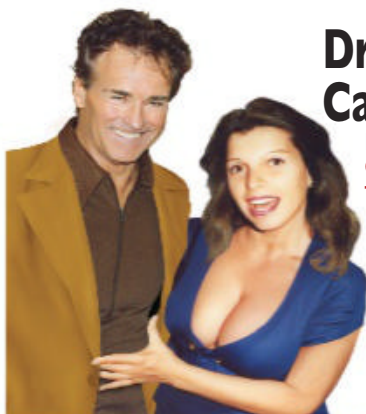
Dr. Bross All Natural Herbal Liquid Can Work Faster Than The Blue Pill

PRO+PLUS XTREME

Can Work In 30 Minutes Effective Up To 12 Hours.
Take with or without your favorite beverage.

Greater Stamina & Longer Lasting Performance
Pro+Plus Xtreme is a professional strength liquid formula that digests quickly for immediate erections, increased blood flow and can help you maintain a firm erection.

Liquid is shown to work faster than pills or lube.
However some men prefer PRO+PLUS XTREME pills or lube as an excellent alternative.



I'm Sheri, My man takes the Pro+Plus Xtreme. He satisfies me everytime. See my fantasy DVD.

EVER-LAST AUDIO CD

Control Premature Ejaculation
Programs your mind to help blood flow and help give you more control, firmer erections and performance.

Super Formulas See FREE Special Offer Online

SEXCITER LIQUID
Excites women better than Spanish fly. A couple of drops mixed with or without her favorite beverage can increase libido.

ATTRACT-A-MATE
Human pheromone spray can make women desire you.



Easy To Use • Quick Absorption • Fast Acting • Be Ready Anytime

For more than thirty years Dr. Bross has satisfied millions of men.

PRO+PLUS MYTMAX TESTOSTERONE BOOSTER
Can Help Raise Testosterone Levels. Increase Drive, Libido, Performance, Energy Stamina And Strength. Reduce recovery time between intervals. Can increase performance in 3 to 4 days.



POWER SEX-ESS AUDIO CD ATTRACT WOMEN
Programs your mind to make you irresistible. Hidden subliminal messages sends commands into your subconscious mind to achieve confidence and sex appeal.

Credit Card Orders Call Anytime • 24/7
1-707-931-1001
Customer Service 1-747-230-5000 Se Habla Español



Call us about our products. We'll give you important information you can trust.
Be careful of discounters and imitators that sell the same type of products on Amazon, Ebay and Google.
Our products are not authorized to be sold through these companies. Don't buy from sellers who don't disclose where their products are made, use inferior blends and cannot call them.

Mail Payment to: Avid Pro Medical Dept. 111GEA

22287 Mulholland Hwy Box #416, Calabasas, CA 91302

www.ProPlusMed.com

☐ Credit Card ☐ Check ☐ Money Order ☐ Cash **Money Back Guarantee**

Name (Print. I am over 18 and agree to the terms of ProPlusMed.com)

Address / City / State / Zip

Credit Card Number

Expires

CVC Code



— EVERLAST AUDIO CD \$29.95 \$
— POWER SEX-ESS AUDIO CD \$29.95 \$
— SEXCITER LIQUID to Excite Women \$25.00 \$
— ATTRACT-A-MATE Pheromone to Attract Women \$25.00 \$
— SHERI FANTASY DVD \$20.00 \$

MYTMAX Testosterone Booster 30 Days + 30 Days FREE \$45 \$
Can increase sex drive and performance 120 Days + 120 Days FREE \$110 \$
One Year Supply \$150 \$

Pro+Plus XTREME Lube or Pills or Liquid

Lube <input type="checkbox"/>	Pills <input type="checkbox"/>	Liquid <input type="checkbox"/>
Results in 2-3 Hours.	Results in 1-2 Hours.	Results in 30 Minutes to 1 Hour.
1 Jar 60 Applications	1 Bottle 60 Capsules	1 Bottle 60 Servings
1 Jar <input type="checkbox"/> \$50	1 Bottle <input type="checkbox"/> \$60	1 Bottle <input type="checkbox"/> \$75
2 Jars <input type="checkbox"/> \$85	2 Bottles <input type="checkbox"/> \$100	2 Bottles <input type="checkbox"/> \$125
3 Jars <input type="checkbox"/> \$100	3 Bottles <input type="checkbox"/> \$120	3 Bottles <input type="checkbox"/> \$150
Total From Other Side \$		
Shipping, Rush Service and Insurance \$20.00 VALUE ONLY \$14.95		
Total Enclosed \$		

© 2020 Avid Pro Medical. Individual results may vary. These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease.

V167

MODERN CLASSIC



THE HENRY X MODEL IS A LEVER-ACTION RIFLE BUILT FOR TODAY'S HUNTERS.

By Adam Heggenstaller

Lever-action rifles are steeped in tradition and soaked with nostalgia, but that doesn't mean a lever gun isn't just as useful now as it was at the turn of the 19th century. Henry Repeating Arms is one manufacturer that recognizes there is a lot of life left in lever guns. They are by far the company's primary focus, and with manufacturing facilities in Rice Lake, Wis., and Bayonne, N.J., Henry is among the top five long-gun makers in the U.S.

Although part of the company's mission is to embody the history and heritage of lever guns—it takes its name from Benjamin Tyler Henry, the inventor of the first lever-action repeating rifle

patented in 1860—it also strives to update its firearms' features to address the current needs of hunters and shooters. The Lever Action X Model line is one example of how Henry marries classic form with modern function. I tested the sleek-black Model H009X .30-30 Win. version and, while I've long been a fan of traditionally styled lever guns, I can appreciate several contemporary characteristics of the X Model that give it some advantages over its predecessors.

Let's start with the stock. Rather than hardwood, which the company uses on the majority of its lever-action rifles, the X Model sports a polymer buttstock and fore-end. A benefit of polymer is that it permits desired features to be

molded into the stock, such as integral sling-attachment points. There are no screw-in studs to come loose, rust or squeak. Angled relief cuts at the attachment points provide clearance for sling hardware. In addition, panels of stippling are molded into the sides of the fore-end and the buttstock wrist to improve grip.

Unique to the X Model, the fore-end is one of the rifle's defining features. Molded into its bottom in front of the sling-attachment point is a four-slot Picatinny rail, and two Magpul M-Lok slots are located at the 3 o'clock and 9 o'clock positions. These provide options for attaching accessories, such as lights and lasers.

Some traditionalists may question the practicality of this update, but keep in



The Henry X Model in .30-30 Win. is equipped to fill the roles of deer rifle, truck gun and camp-defense firearm.

mind that hog and predator hunting is often done at night, when a light or laser on the gun can be the difference between hitting a target and simply making noise. A lever-action .30-30 Win. is about perfect for hogs in many situations, and it will certainly work on coyotes while serving as a multi-purpose truck gun.

In addition, the bottom rail provides a convenient way to attach a bipod. Many shooting rests are not ideal for lever-action rifles because they do not allow the action to be fully cycled without raising or tilting the gun. A bipod on the fore-end, combined with a sandbag of adequate height under the buttstock, solves this problem by allowing room for the lever to move during cycling while the rifle remains in a consistent position.

Also remember that lever-action rifles have a history of being used for home defense and personal protection. Henry optimizes the X Model for these tasks

with a means to mount two types of accessories that can provide huge advantages in low-light situations.

Perhaps the best characteristics of the rail and slots are what they do not add to the rifle. They are not bulky or obtrusive, and they do not interfere with handling. Most of the fore-end has traditional lines that give it a familiar feel.

Along with the fore-end and buttstock features, the X Model's threaded muzzle sets it apart as a lever-action rifle built for today's hunters and shooters. Suppressors have become more popular in the field and on the range, and the muzzle's 5/8x24 thread pattern permits easy attachment of many models. Adding a muzzle brake is another option. The X Model comes with a checkered cap that protects the threads when a suppressor or brake is not in use.

A tubular magazine with a brass liner and a loading port beneath the barrel is a

SPECIFICATIONS

HENRY X MODEL

henryusa.com

TYPE: lever-action centerfire rifle

CALIBER: .30-30 Win.

BARREL: 21.38"; blued steel; 5/8x24 threaded muzzle with cap; 1:12" twist rate

TRIGGER PULL WEIGHT: 4.38 lbs.

SAFETY: transfer bar

MAGAZINE: tubular; 5-round capacity

STOCK: black synthetic; solid-rubber recoil pad; Picatinny rail and Magpul M-Lok slots on fore-end

SIGHTS: fully adjustable fiber-optic rear, fiber-optic front; receiver drilled and tapped for scope bases

OVERALL LENGTH: 40.38"

WEIGHT: 8.07 lbs.

MSRP: \$1,019

hallmark of Henry rifles. Loading requires twisting the checkered-steel liner cap to unlock the liner from the magazine's exterior tube and then sliding the liner forward to open the port. Insert cartridges through the port, push the liner—which includes a follower and spring—back into the tube, and turn the cap to lock the liner in place. Cartridges in the magazine do not have to be cycled through the action to unload the rifle. Remove the liner and dump out the rounds either through the port or the front of the tube. The X Model keeps this design, although the liner cannot be removed with a suppressor in place. Current .30-caliber cans have diameters that are too great to permit clearance.

In 2019 Henry introduced its first rifles with a loading gate in the side of the receiver, and the X Model also includes this feature. The magazine can be loaded through the gate with a suppressor in place. Moreover, whether the



A 2-inch length of Picatinny rail molded into the fore-end allows easy attachment of accessories to cover a variety of situations.

rifle is equipped with a can or not, this loading method is faster than removing the magazine's brass liner and loading through the port in the tube.

There are two other areas of the X Model where Henry enhances the functionality of the traditional lever-action rifle. First, the lever loop is widened and extended to match the curve of the buttstock's grip perfectly. It's not an overly huge shape, which can lead to excessive hand movement within the loop, but it's large enough to accommodate nearly any size of gloved hand.

Sights have disappeared on many hunting rifles, but Henry gives them emphasis on the X Model. The front and rear sight both contain fiber-optic inserts for better visibility. The rear sight is adjustable for windage and elevation. The receiver of the X Model is also drilled and tapped for mounting an optic. Henry offers low and medium, one-piece Talley mounts and an Evolution Gun Works Picatinny rail for the H009X model via its direct-to-consumer Henry Pride website (henrypride.com). In addition, the hole pattern is compatible with a Weaver 63B one-piece Top Mount base.

I went with the latter option when setting up the rifle for testing, topping the Weaver base with a Leupold VX-3HD 2.5-8x36 mm scope in quick-detach rings. I found that if I removed the scope, I could look through the trough that runs the length of the base and use the iron sights. It's always a good idea to have a backup plan, and in really thick brush, iron sights might be the better option.



SHOOTING RESULTS

LOAD Hornady LeverEvolution MonoFlex
BULLET WEIGHT 140 grs.
MUZZLE VELOCITY 2,336 fps
AVERAGE GROUP 1.24"

LOAD Hornady Custom InterLock FP
BULLET WEIGHT 170 grs.
MUZZLE VELOCITY 2,128 fps
AVERAGE GROUP 1.47"

LOAD Winchester Super-X Power-Point
BULLET WEIGHT 170 grs.
MUZZLE VELOCITY 2,143 fps
AVERAGE GROUP 1.07"


Muzzle velocity is the average of 10 consecutive shots fired through an RCBS AmmoMaster chronograph at 10 feet. Accuracy is the result of five consecutive, three-shot groups fired from a sandbag rest at 100 yards.

During testing I put more than 140 rounds through the rifle, and it functioned without fail. Every cartridge fed smoothly from the magazine, and the rifle threw empty cases clear of the action with no hang-ups. I appreciated the easy loading offered by the side gate, and the transfer-bar safety provided peace of mind when lowering the hammer.

The transfer-bar mechanism prevents the gun from firing unless the hammer is fully cocked and the trigger is pulled. Removing pressure from the trigger while lowering the hammer keeps the transfer bar, located within a slot cut into the face of the hammer, from contacting the receiver-mounted firing pin. If the hammer accidentally falls while it is being lowered and there is no pressure on

the trigger, the rifle will not fire. There is no half-cock position, and the rifle can be safely carried with the hammer down while a cartridge is in the chamber.

The X Model was among the most accurate .30-30 lever-action rifles I've ever shot. The average of 15, three-shot groups with three different loads fired from 100 yards was 1.26 inches. The Hornady MonoFlex and Winchester Power-Point loads both produced a couple sub-MOA groups.

In terms of performance and appearance, the X Model .30-30 more than meets modern expectations. At the same time, though, the rifle retains many of the features hunters love about lever guns. The lever-action rifle is alive and well, and Henry proves it with the X Model. 



Two orange rods border the notch of the fully adjustable, semi-buckhorn rear sight, while the ramped front sight consists of a green rod within a metal housing.

ADAM HEGGENSTALLER (TOP LEFT, BOTTOM MIDDLE, BOTTOM RIGHT)

**IT'S MORE THAN CAMOUFLAGE.
IT'S A WAY OF LIFE.**



We're hunters. We're passionate. And we live for the moment.
Every Tuesday night, join Mossy Oak's all-star lineup of sportsmen and women
as they head into the field — and bring those special moments to life.



MOSSY OAK

MOSSY OAK MOMENTS

**TUESDAY NIGHTS
BEGINS**

7P ET Outdoor

- 7P ET** Primos Truth About Hunting
- 7:30P ET** The Lindsey Way
- 8P ET** Beyond The Hunt
- 8:30P ET** Ted Nugent Spirit of the Wild
- 9P ET** The Gamekeepers of Mossy Oak
- 9:30P ET** Driven with Pat & Nicole
- 10P ET** Drury's THIRTEEN
- 10:30P ET** Critical Mass



PICK A PACK

WHETHER IT'S AN ALL-DAY VIGIL IN A TREESTAND OR AN 8-MILE HIKE IN THE BACKCOUNTRY, THESE PACKS WILL KEEP YOUR GEAR ORGANIZED DURING THE HUNT.

By Game & Fish Staff

There are two main things hunters pay for when they buy a pack: capacity and technology. Capacity's influence on price is pretty straightforward; the larger the pack, the more material required to make it and therefore the higher the price. Technology is a more complicated subject and covers pack features from the design of the frame to the materials used in construction and the type of water-proofing applied to the fabric.

To get the best pack for your needs without overpaying, analyze how you're going to use it. For example, it makes no sense to pay for a lightweight pack that can hold a few days' worth of gear if most of your hunts are three-hour sits that require a 15-minute walk to the stand. In that case, the number of pockets and their arrangement may be the most important features to consider. On the other hand, don't sell yourself short on capacity. Make sure a pack will hold all

the gear you're planning to take into the woods without being so jammed you have to yank on the zippers to close it. And remember, as the season progresses and temperatures drop, you'll need more space for hauling heavier clothing.

Here are four packs at four price points with features that cover the gamut of big-game hunting. Finding the right pack has never been easier, as options like the following meet specific sets of hunter needs perfectly. **G&F**

COURTESY OF ALPS OUTDOORS

ALPS OUTDOORZ IMPULSE

CAPACITY: 1,850 cubic inches
TOP FEATURE: Quiet access
MSRP: \$150
alpsoutdoorz.com

Some do-it-all daypacks are too big. Some are too small. But the ALPS OutdoorZ Impulse is just right. The wide, fold-down top secures in place via silent magnets and offers unhindered access to the main compartment. The pack features a square base so it sits upright, or it can be hung from a tree via the carry handle. Its fleece exterior is quiet and backed by a soft fabric that also minimizes noise when contents are moved around as you dig for that last Snickers bar.

TENZING HANGTIME

CAPACITY: 1,600 cubic inches
TOP FEATURE: Tons of pockets
MSRP: \$220
tenzingoutdoors.com

No matter if you're heading to the tree-stand or the ground blind, this pack will carry all the essentials for a successful day in the woods. The Hangtime Day Pack was designed with the archery hunter in mind. Easily strap your bow to the back on the ambidextrous bow carrier while all your other gear remains at hand in the pack's 15 pockets. The Hangtime's rigid EVA-molded shell holds its shape for hassle-free accessibility to all your gear. If you're hunting on the ground, attach your quiver to the side of the pack for quick access to arrows.



KUIU PRO 2300 KIT

CAPACITY: 2,300 cubic inches
TOP FEATURE: Interchangeable bag sizes
MSRP: \$489
kuiu.com

The Pro pack kit includes a bag made from 500-denier Cordura Ripstop material treated with K-DWR for water resistance, carbon-fiber frame with Spread Tow technology for increased rigidity and strength, padded suspension with 4 inches of torso adjustment, and two hip belt pouches. Four other Pro bags come in capacities of 1,850 to 7,800 cubic inches, and all are interchangeable with the Pro frame and suspension. Each bag includes a 2,500-cubic-inch load sling that enables carrying meat or additional gear outside the pack. The Pro 2300 pack setup weighs less than 4 1/2 pounds.



STONE GLACIER EVO 6900

CAPACITY: 6,900 cubic inches
TOP FEATURE: Lightweight storage space
MSRP: \$684
stoneglacier.com

Born out of necessity for backcountry excursions, this pack has a 6,400-cubic-inch main bag and an additional 500-cubic-inch hood. With that amount of space, you shouldn't have any issues loading all your gear for a multi-day hunt. In case you need extra room for cold-weather clothing or other bulky items, you can put more stuff on the 2,500-cubic-inch load shelf, which doubles as a meat hauler for the pack out. This pack weighs just a little more than 5 pounds empty when attached to Stone Glacier's Medium Evo Frame, and it can carry 150-plus pounds comfortably.



BRAGGING RIGHTS

SOME GUYS DON'T KNOW HOW TO SHARE SUCCESS.

When Shane was younger, the boy's father hunted ducks with a fellow named Robert. Bob, as Shane's father called him, was in his early 30s, ambitious and outspoken. Many considered him an up-and-comer at the company where Shane's father worked.

Robert was always outfitted with the latest gear, and it didn't take long for Shane to recognize that the former high-school quarterback star was a darn good shot. Robert shot at everything that flew or paddled by, and he was seldom short on shells. He was quick to call out his triumphs and even quicker to tease anyone who missed a duck, young Shane included. Despite all this, Robert was a decent enough guy and so he was often invited when Shane and his father ventured afield.

One overcast morning the three were hunkered in a blind on Charlie's Pond. They were bagging a few birds, but the flights of ducks weren't exactly coming fast. A duck or two would pass cloud-high every 20 minutes or so, and it was just enough to keep them in the blind.

Since Shane's father was the most experienced duck hunter in the group, he was also the shot caller. It was back in the days of the 100-point-maximum bag-limit system, where each species and gender of duck was assigned a conservation value by the game department based on the population's overall health. The shot caller's job was not only to tell the rest of the crew when to start shooting, but also to identify ducks on the wing and call them out to



minimize the risk of any hunter breaching his daily point allotment.

Robert had shot at the majority of the ducks that morning as usual, and as usual he had claimed them as fast as they fell. Everyone in the blind realized who was killing the most ducks, but as even young Shane knew, sometimes when companions shot at the same bird at the same time, it didn't matter whose pellet administered the fatal blow.

A courteous duck hunter would simply declare, "We got 'em!" or "Good shooting!" and go on. Yet Robert seemed to shoot by the mantra of "If it falls, it's mine!" Shane could tell his father was growing increasingly annoyed at this behavior.

Around 9 o'clock Shane heard the tell-tale whistle of wingbeats overhead and glanced up to see a familiar silhouette.

He was surprised when his father yelled, "Take it!"

A volley of shots planted the bird on the far bank with a spectacular thud.

"I nailed it!" exclaimed Robert with glee.

"You did, did you?" asked Shane's father.

"Yes sir!" replied the brash Robert.

"Dang it, Bob," interjected Shane's father, clearly irritated. "How do you know you killed that bird when all three of us were shooting at it?"

"Because when I pulled the trigger I saw him fall right away," said Robert matter-of-factly.

Shane's father looked at the young executive and nodded his head as he untied the boat's anchor line. The hunters paddled to the opposite side of the pond where the duck fell. Before

reaching the dead duck, Shane's father turned to Robert.

"And you're sure you got it?" he asked again.

"No doubt about it," Robert said, smiling at his success.

"OK, Bob," said Shane's father as he pulled the mottled brown body of the mallard hen from the reeds. It was the crown jewel of ducks, worth 100 points by itself. Every duck hunter knew you could only shoot one mallard hen per day. That's why most hunters avoided shooting them, and it was a big reason why mallards were making such a comeback.

"Congratulations, laddie! You're done for the day," said Shane's father.

Robert's smile vanished as he accepted his mallard hen. He kept his muzzle, and his mouth, quiet for the rest of the morning.

MOSSBERG | PRO-SERIES WATERFOWL

**BUILT FOR
THOSE WHO
PREFER
CARRYOUT.**

TAKE THEM DOWN. CARRY THEM OUT.

Pro-Series autoloaders were built for serious hardcore waterfowling — with internal parts, finishes and coatings that perform smoothly and reliably under the muddiest, muckiest, and wettest conditions. Allowing you to protect your decoys, and take home fresh carryout — hunt-after-hunt and season-after-season. Available in 930® (3" chamber) & 935 Magnum™ (3.5" chamber).

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


**LEARN MORE AT
MOSSBERG.COM**

MOSSBERG®
SINCE 1919

#85141

930 Pro-Series
Waterfowl

12GA, 5-Shot
Fiber Optic Sight

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

**SPECIAL GOLDEN
ESTRUS®**

30TH

ANNIVERSARY



**FRESH AND SUPER PREMIUM
ON A LEVEL OF ITS OWN!**

- Originally only available to industry insiders, now available to you!
- Dated for use during this year's hunting season
- Limited Quantities
- It's the smell your trophy buck has been waiting for!

THE GOLD STANDARD® 100% MONEY-BACK GUARANTEED!



RHSA DEER PROTECTION
PROGRAM PARTICIPANT
www.RHSADPP.com



Urine used in Wildlife Research Center® products is being RT-QuIC
tested and certified by CWD Evolution™ that no CWD is detected.



WWW.WILDLIFE.COM

* The color gold for a cap is a registered trademark of Wildlife Research Center, inc.
* The color gold for a bottle is a registered trademark of Wildlife Research Center, inc.

FIRE UP YOUR HUNT™