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Volume 2  
Number 4

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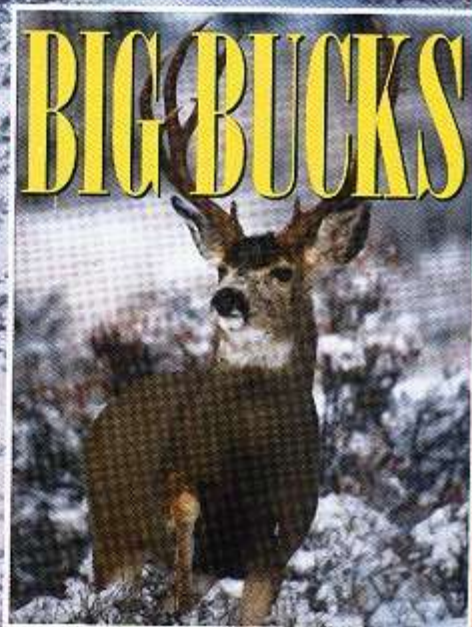
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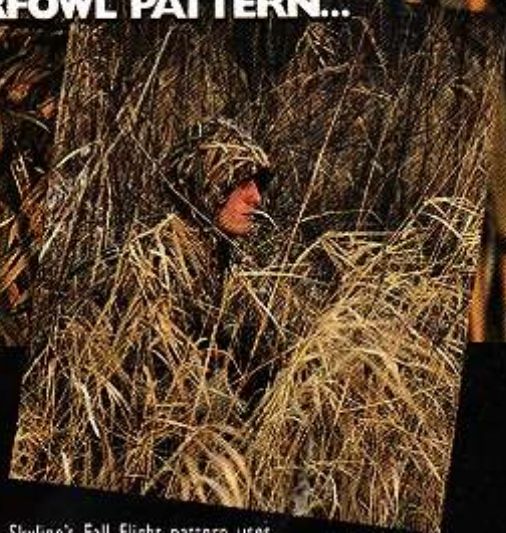
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# Longbows & Recurves

TRADITIONAL BOWHUNTING AT ITS BEST

Winter 1997

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Getting a big mulie from the rough country of the West. This hunter succumbed to the magic.



Cover photograph by Tony Kinton  
Inset photograph by Judd Cooney

WINTER 1997

Longbows & Recurves™

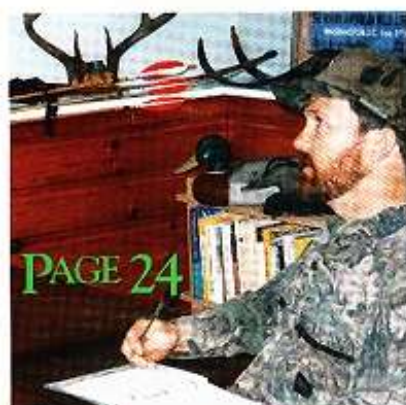


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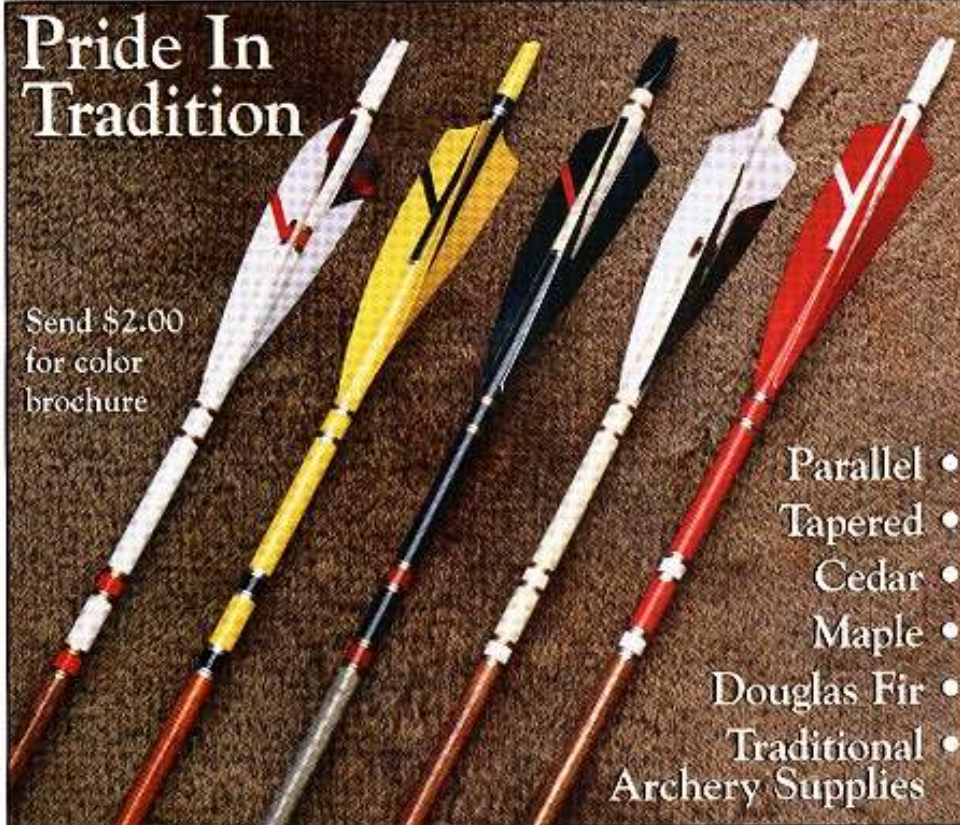
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### DEPARTMENTS

FROM THE WHISPERIN' PINES—Bob Wesley

SOUTHERN REVIEW—Don Francois

WILD GAME RECIPES—Claire W. Stanley

EQUIPMENT EDITOR—Sam Fadala

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# WRITE ON TARGET

The views expressed by letter writers in Write on Target are not necessarily the views of the magazine, *Longbows & Recurves*™. The publisher does welcome your comments and opinions, but reserves the right to condense and edit letters due to space availability and/or appropriateness. Letters should not exceed 300 words.

## It's the Bow and Arrow

I really enjoyed [the] first issue. Keep in mind many of us archers have a love for the bow and arrow first. Hunting is just a means of being able to fully enjoy the bow and arrow. By example of this, I mean if I were not able to hunt, I would still shoot a bow, still make arrows, go to shoots, etc. It's the bow and arrow that got me here.

John McCormick  
Palm Bay, Florida

## 3-D Shooting At the Top



about shooting vanes off the shelf. [You] need much more on 3-D shooting, especially the technical part. I have gotten calls from all over the country on this article.

Tom Frye  
Lovettsville, Virginia

## Thank You for Feature

Thank you for the article. I enjoyed the calls from other archers, especially

L&R: Writer Don Gasaway featured Tom Frye in our Summer 1997 issue in an article on 3-D Shooting at the Top.



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## A Reader's Critique

I agree that any animal legally harvested with a bow is a trophy, but that is because of the overall experience, not its size. I could write stories all day of great hunts ending in the harvest of mediocre animals. I think people (myself included) want to see other people living their dreams by taking exceptional animals. It makes us think, yeah, that could be me next year! That said, let me address content.

I agree that a certain amount of "how-to" is a necessity, but please keep it to a minimum! It is common knowledge that most recurve and longbow shooters today started out with compounds. Therefore, we have had "how-to" (meaning on a hunting standpoint) crammed down our throats. Nowadays, if I pick up a magazine and it is full of "how-to garbage," I put it right back down. I just quickly lose interest. What I'm saying is "keep it original!" I think that most traditionalists have evolved beyond the

elementary stuff such as scrapes, rubs, and moon phases. We've heard it all before. What we need are stories that bring us closer (in spirit) to other bowhunters and the way, mature animals we wish to harvest.

This is my first issue, so please don't think I am making judgements. I am very excited about another magazine devoted solely to traditionalists and wish you the very best of luck....

By the way, I hunt with a Lanham Traditional 60" recurve, 62# @ 28" with cedar arrows and Magnus or Journeyman broadheads.

*Buddy English  
North Dakota*

P.S. I have several stories written if you are interested. I have been hunting for fifteen years, am a biology major at Minot State University, and am currently on active duty in the Air Force stationed in North Dakota.

## "Refreshing" Departure

Excellent magazine. A great refreshing departure from the "I'm really trying to sell you more equipment" articles in most bowhunting magazines. I feel like I'm in the company of hunters.

*Todd Trahan  
Rayne, Louisiana*

## Ethics Concern

I have never written to the editor of a magazine before, but the article I recently read titled, "A Longbow in Elk Camp," prompted me to take action.

The author, Don Stokes, begins his article by describing his first of several misses at thirty-five yards. He goes on to describe how his second and third arrows "hit near the elk." My question is, why is he continuing to shoot an animal that is obviously out of his range? Is his desire to make a

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"Hank, I know archery season opens today, but you should have stayed in bed."




kill, to impress his compound shooting buddies, so strong that he is willing to wound an animal for the sake of pride! It is bad enough to have such an irresponsible attitude, but to write a story about it, and worse yet, to have it published is giving bowhunting and traditional bowhunting a black eye.

Mr. Stokes' story could have had a very different ending with his lack of accuracy and self control. I wonder how he would have felt if one of his "Hail Mary" arrows buried itself in the elk's hind quarter or paunch. Would we be reading about that as well?

We as bowhunters and traditional bowhunters have to be ever watchful of allowing the anti-hunters to use our own words against us. Mr. Stokes article is exactly what they are looking for.

I enjoy your magazine very much, and I trust I won't be reading about someone's lack of common sense again.


Keith Harmish  
Wernersville, Pennsylvania

*L&R: We appreciate your concern; L&R is dedicated to ethical bowhunting. As Don, a well-respected traditionalist, explained in sharing his story of his misses, however, this was not an issue of being out of range, but of suffering "bull fever." "I was well within my effective range had I been in control of my wits, but I just flat missed," Don said in response to your concerns. As he shares in the story, he calmed himself and was successful on his last shot.* 

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## Comments From Readers

I'm a beginning bowhunter, using a compound; my brother-in-law has made his own longbow and arrows and created an interest for me... Keep "How to" percentage high... Continue stories on Howard Hill and add Ben Pearson, Fred Bear, Maurice Thompson, Saxton Pope... I truly enjoyed this magazine. I shot bows for about seven years, quit shooting bows about twenty years ago. Just bought new recurve three months ago and getting back into it... I read the entire magazine in one night. I got excited enough to consider getting back into traditional hunting... Congratulations on your magazine! I wish you well. It's good to open up and see faces such as Howard Hill, Paul Brunner, and not see all the high tech add-ons. That's what brought me to the recurve, it's so simple and natural. Thanks for a great magazine... Articles that promote certain products kind of turn me off... I really liked your short one or two page articles. I don't like articles that take three or four pages where you have to keep turning to the back of the magazine... Less ads! I know they help pay the bills but I hate to pay \$3.95 per issue for advertisements... Mag is not 60 percent advertisement, this is good... I very much appreciate the fact I didn't have to go through the whole magazine to finish an article, as continued on page... Great magazine. I like one article after the other without continuations to some page in the back of the magazine. Keep 'em coming uninterrupted... Needs more in-depth features—eight to twelve page pieces... Hunts for bowhunters only are not easy to find—maybe a page on specialty guides might be well read. All in all "I'm in."... I have been shooting recurves [more than thirty] years but I don't see people having fun. This should be fun... I am very "turned off" by equipment arguments. You should be able to use whatever you enjoy, so long as it is legal and you behave ethically. I enjoy being with friends, even if they use a compound... Impressive publication. Hope you keep it common sense, and promote responsible and ethical hunting and shooting. How about articles on some of the greats—Hill, Bear, Pope and Young, etc?... I don't think compound shooters should be put down like they are by most traditional mags. I don't agree with all of the new gadgets for compounds, either way I say keep it simple, I've killed deer both ways... Use pictures and descriptions of bows in hunting articles. More bowhunting articles. Use pictures on "how-to" articles for aids... I like your regular departments. A very nice range of info is covered. Well done... I would like to see some hunting stories from Maine... Wife thought magazine was a little high on price. Oh well... I enjoy articles which emphasize the history and simplicity of archery... Good magazine. Articles invoke a lot of emotions and memories... I enjoy the variety of articles and the multi-state coverage. You give a lot of helpful tips... [You] did not have an article in this issue that I did not enjoy... I would like to see both custom-made and factory-made bows featured... I used to practice with my compound because I felt I had to. Now I practice because I enjoy shooting more than ever... Do not change anything... Have re-read it four times in two days... Great magazine—another co-worker and I devour it when it comes... 



# BIONOTES

Well-known and respected writer and bowhunter **Gene Wensel** puts his book-learnin' knowledge to paper in a bowhunter's trivia quiz to try to stump *Longbows & Recurves* readers. His official address is Montana, but don't expect to find him in his office often—he is usually in search of the hunt and the story.



Gene Wensel

From Locust, North Carolina, traditionalist **Larry Long** said he has shot a bow most of his life. "Most kids shoot a bow sometime or another when they're growing up," he said. "I just never grew up." Maybe so, but *Longbows & Recurves* guarantees that everyone but turkeys will benefit from his grown-up gobbler stories.



Lee Foote

**Lee Foote** is a native Louisianan who wrote about rabbit hunting in a previous *Longbows & Recurves*. A wetland ecologist, Lee bowhunts, builds archery equipment, writes, and plays bluegrass in his spare time. Hopefully he won't be the only bluegrass musician in Alberta, Canada where he moved not long ago.

He has been talking turkey for over twenty years, so **Jim Spencer** of Cabot, Arkansas offers sage (and humorous) advice to the turkey hunter. Jim is assistant editor of *Arkansas Wildlife*.

A bowhunter for over thirty years, **Dave Stewart** admits antler game is his primary interest. Retired now and living in Oklahoma, Dave said writing about antler hunting also has become an important interest.



Dave Stewart

An active traditional bowhunter, **Matt Schuster** is as good a writer as he is a bowhunter. Home for him is in Georgia.

Living in Anchorage, Alaska for the past twelve years has given **Mike Phillips** plenty of opportunity to bowhunt. In conjunction with that, he builds longbows and enjoys writing about bowhunting.



A.B. Swan

**A.B. Swan** is a pseudonym for a well-known bowhunter who enjoys writing fiction.

Living in the foothills of the Allegheny Mountains in Pennsylvania, **George Stout** hunts not only whitetails, rabbits, squirrel, and pheasant with his longbow and recurve, but an occasional groundhog too.

**Tony Kinton** is a Mississippi outdoor writer/photographer who travels North America in search of good bowhunting. He also speaks with authority on the subject of "The Longbow As A Cure For Frustration; The Longbow as a Cause of Frustration."



Tony Kinton



Gil Blue

**Gil Blue** of Anchorage, Alaska, writes of a special hunt trip with a good friend to Prince of Wales Island. Gil is usually hard to reach up there in Alaska; he seems to be always out hunting.

**Ted W. Wells** was born and raised in Alabama where as a boy he met and got to know Howard Hill. Ted is one the Charter members of the Alabama Bowhunters Association.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Steven Donaldson

Sam Fadala

Richard Stubler

Don Francois



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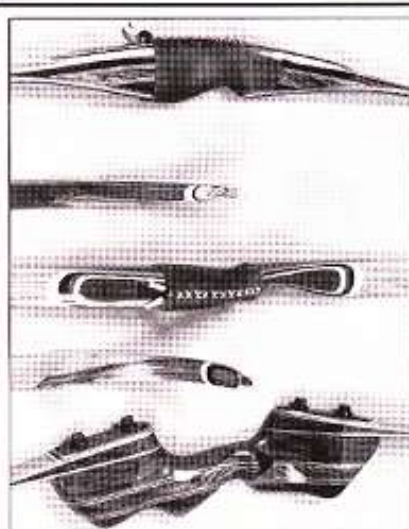
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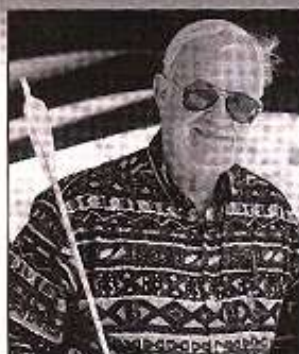
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# FROM THE WHISPERIN' PINES by Bob Wesley



## Traditional Bowhunting Means Fluid, Yet Accurate, Shooting

**“W**ayne Stotler, Ed Hill, and I were following Casumway, our native tracker, along a hippo trail close to the Rutshuru River while hunting a bull elephant. As we moved through a narrow opening in thick thorn brush, we suddenly came upon the big bull only thirteen yards or so off the trail. Luckily for us, the wind was in our faces and the elephant was facing the opposite direction intent on eating vines. Wayne and Ed carried .375 Magnum rifles. Casumway had my rifle while I carried my elephant bow. Without thinking it through carefully, I motioned for Casumway to come stand near me with my rifle, just in case. Without thinking through the danger present, I drew one of my forty inch, seventeen hundred grain arrows, judged the distance, picked my spot, and let drive my arrow.”

It was years ago and I was sitting on the porch of Howard Hill's home in Vincent, Alabama, soaking up each exciting word of this great bowman's adventure. I could almost feel that I was there with him as Howard's story unfolded.

*“In a hurry to get the arrow into the bull's chest before the wind shifted, I failed to allow for a hanging vine. The end of the shaft grazed the vine and deflected to hit the elephant in the jaw. The bull screamed and bolted straight ahead. The four of us fell to the ground and lay still. At least four times the bull elephant reared up and turned completely around looking for us. Finally he*

*succeeded in pulling the shaft from his jaw and returned to the river forest. I could feel the hair on the back of my neck stand up.”*

Even in this tense situation Howard had judged the distance and picked a spot. The one variable that perhaps he did not consider was the extra length and weight of the arrow

---

*Judge the  
distance,  
pick a  
spot.*

---

which most likely required a larger opening free of vines for him to shoot through clearly.

Important to this story from years ago is the fact that the archer must learn how to judge distance to his mark. Some archers practice this until they can very quickly divide distance into ten yard increments in a matter of seconds. One method of practicing this is to face the target and raise one arm in front towards the target keeping it as parallel to the ground as possible. Then while keeping the head erect, allow the line of vision to strike the ends of the

fingers of the upraised hand and pass on the ground in a straight line. For a six-foot person, this will be about ten yards and for a five-foot six-inch person, about eight yards. By trial and experimentation the archer can establish “his arms length distance.” Once ten yards is established, then this can be doubled or tripled, etc. to estimate approximate distance.

How does a bowhunter evaluate size when dealing with a variety of animals? By shooting a 3-D range using McKenzie or Delta animals, the bowhunter can quickly learn that the average whitetail's chest center, or ten ring location, is twenty-four inches from the ground. A mule deer is twenty-seven inches, an antelope is twenty-seven inches, a medium walking bear or boar is twenty inches. The standing bear is thirty-six inches. The bobcat is twelve inches. The significance of knowing the exact location of the ten ring or the center of the chest of various animals is that it establishes the vertical height of the point where the arrow should hit. To find the center of this vertical line, the archer simply comes up from the back of the front leg with an imaginary continuous straight line to pass through the center of the ten ring. By imagining a horizontal line from back to front half way up the animal's body, the horizontal location of the center of the chest or ten ring can be located.



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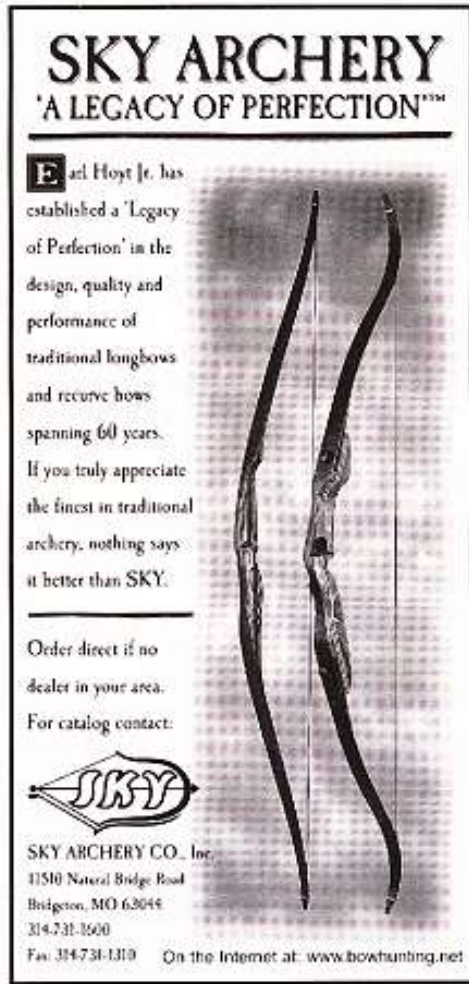
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Using indirect instinctive aiming, the secondary aiming point (the point where the bowhunter places the point of his arrow with his secondary vision) may be two feet below the primary aiming point (which is the focus of the primary vision and where the arrow is to hit) from a distance of twenty yards. Then the bowhunter places the point of the arrow on the white-tailed deer's foot line (being twenty-four inches from the ground to the center of the ten ring or chest). If the target is a mule deer, the secondary aiming point is located on the upper part of the hoof of the deer.


If the target is a bobcat (center of kill is only ten inches from the ground) and the distance is twenty yards, then the Bowman must select his secondary aiming point on the ground in front of the bobcat. For me this distance in front will be about six feet. Each archer will, of course, have to work this out for himself.

For a very large animal, a caribou, elk, or even an elephant, the body itself may be used as a reference for establishing the secondary aiming spot. The fold just behind the front leg and a horizontal axis lower than center for the primary aiming spot should be used. The bottom chest line, rather than the ground, may be used as a reference for selecting the secondary aiming spot. With practice, judging distance and animal size evaluation will come more quickly than usually thought.

By doing his homework, the bowhunter can avoid the disappointment of missing the game animal or, even worse, making a poor shot and wounding an animal which cannot be recovered. Practice in distance judging and animal size evaluation will help. Once the archer has worked to establish good shooting form and has "grooved in" indirect instinctive aiming so that it comes with minimal

conscious thought or even becomes an almost automatic reflex, the next step for the archer is to program distance and shot location into his mind. This last step can also be polished through effort and practice so that it also becomes an automatic reflex.

Howard once told me, "Bob, it is a mystery to me how archers can spend large sums of money on equipment and hunts and yet are unwilling to learn to shoot their bows with any degree of consistent accuracy." Traditional shooting of the bow should be rhythmic and fluid but also consistently accurate. Regardless of how the archer aims, being able to judge distance and knowing exactly where to place his arrow are equally important points.

I send my best wishes from the shady glens of the whisperin' pines for much happiness and inner gratification. 



# HUNTING REVIEW

by Don Francois



## News From Around the States

### Traditional Bowhunting Strong in Missouri



Marv Cochran, past president of the United Bowhunters of Missouri, is proud to say that this organization is four hundred members strong and is 99 percent traditional. U.B.M. is also selective; those bowhunters wishing to join must apply for membership and be accepted. The club has long been active in bowhunter education and youth education.

So what has U.B.M. done lately?

Beginning with the 1996 season, the group has gotten fifteen days added to the archery season which now runs from October 1 through January 15. Missouri bowhunters can now take two deer and two turkey per season. Also, their archery tag allows the taking of small game with a bow. According to Marv, those persons pushing crossbows as an archery method are active in Missouri as they are in many states, but they are not yet a significant threat. Organized anti-hunting groups are almost nonexistent except in large urban areas such as St. Louis.

The group United Bowhunters of Missouri is proving to be a strong voice for traditional archers in the show-me state.

### Georgia Bowhunters Busy



The Traditional Bowhunters of Georgia club doesn't stand around just waiting for hunting season to start either. President Joey Buchanan tells us that T.B.G. began a youth education program over the summer and between four hundred and five hundred boys and girls were exposed to traditional archery during August and September. Young people from South Carolina as well as Georgia participated in the camps and returned to school knowing a little more about the enjoyment of archery.

T.B.G. also participated in the Atlanta Buckarama where they had six booths manned by members who showcased traditional archery to the fifty thousand plus visitors to the event.

Joey and five other members have become certified National Bowhunter Education Foundation instructors and now offer bowhunter certification classes to interested bowhunters. After holding the annual banquet in August featuring T.B.G. member Monty Browning as special guest, the organization was to hold its first annual bear hunt in October. Results weren't available at press time, but I will check back with Joey and see how it turned out.

### Caribou in Maryland?



A few years ago, P.B.S. life member Bill Hassenmayer and a couple of his traditional archery buddies were hunting near the Maryland shore when they met up with another party that was bowhunting with traditional equipment. Of course, a lively conversation about traditional archery ensued. Since Bill had recently returned from a successful Canadian caribou hunt and was well-stocked with venison, the other guys were invited to join him and his friends for lunch. By the time the little group had finished their caribou burgers, the Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland had been founded.

Today Traditional Bowhunters of Maryland boasts 175 members. The organization holds four shoots a year around the state plus the Mid Atlantic Classic near Baltimore. The last Classic drew thirty vendors and four hundred participants.

Bill is proud to say that the club sponsors several youths for the P.B.S. 2000 program and that several members are involved in teaching archery to youth in association with Archers Who Care. Members of T.B.M. enjoy several activities including the club's annual pheasant hunt and the annual stingray hunt. For members who don't care to hunt critters that fly and swim, there is a lending library from which they can order a tape or book on hunting somewhat more common archery fare.

### R.O.C.K. Camp

The folks down in Florida are doing a great job teaching archery to youngsters at the American Cancer Society's R.O.C.K. (Reaching Out to






Cancer Kids) Camp. Ron Weatherman, president of Traditional Bowhunters of Florida, said he was able to work with Jim Schultz of Archers Who Care and got several bows and some arrows for use at the camp this past summer. T.B.F. members volunteered to teach the campers, and everyone had a rewarding experience.

## More Crossbow Threats

In the last Review, I mentioned that crossbows can be used legally during archery season by handicapped hunters with a physician's statement in Louisiana. Inadvertently it was left out that people over sixty years of age also can legally hunt with crossbows there.

I also mentioned that the Bayou State Bowhunters Association of Louisiana had been successful in killing a crossbow bill being considered by a state legislative committee that would have made the crossbow legal for everyone during archery season. That wasn't the end of the story. The pesky crossbow bill which would have made the string rifles legal during archery season would not stay dead, and the B.S.B.A. had to fight up until the end of the session to make sure it didn't pass.

This should be a lesson for us all: Don't turn your back on "dead" crossbow legislation. 

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Bob Wesley has been in archery for over forty years. He is a former president of the Mississippi Archery Association, has served on the board of directors for the Mississippi Bowhunters Association, holds many state titles, and the 1982 Howard Hill World Archery Championship. He received personal instruction from Mr. Howard Hill. Bob was inducted into the Mississippi Bowhunters Hall of Fame in 1999.



# WILD GAME RECIPES

by Claire W. Stanley



## Hogs Win Over Carp

I'm happy to say some of you tried our fish recipes in the Fall issue; we received some interesting comments anyway. Richard Horne, a reader from Salt Lake City, Utah wrote that he "liked Wild Meals, but don't think I'll get the nerve to eat a carp." That's OK, Richard, maybe pork will be more to your liking.

Cory Mattson sent in a great sausage recipe for wild hogs: Ocmulgee Andoulli Smoked Sausage. Cory is a chef by trade with the Fearington House in Pittsboro, North Carolina, a traditional bowhunter for twenty-two years, and a really nice guy. He has been married for seventeen years to June and has two young daughters, Kelsy, eleven, and Diana, seven. Both girls shoot longbows which Cory will be writing about in a future issue of *Longbows & Recurves*. The following will give you insight into Cory's philosophy about hunting and eating:

- "It is especially frustrating to be judged by people who only have their "New Age" philosophy.... These people know nothing about... our ties to the land, our traditions, modern scientific wildlife management, or our reverence for God, and that we were placed [here] by Him as the stewards over animals."

- "Children are generally born with a sense of joy and a taste for the chase. Upon seeing a deer or squirrel, a child will try to get closer. Adults [tend] to train this out of kids and teach them that it isn't proper. Further, children basically like the idea of eating their catch—kids have to be taught that cooking is not fun and that eating wild fish and animals is gross."

- "Try sharing your take with non-hunters. I guarantee you will improve the world. You will help hunting in general as well as distinguishing

your own methods of hunting. Feeding people and sharing your traditional values will win over more people than any political lobby ever will."

Well, now that you know a little about Cory, here is his Ocmulgee Andoulli Smoked Sausage recipe. As most of you know, hog hunting is popular in the South especially south Georgia where Cory often hunts. So Cory knows hogs... how to clean, cook, and prepare. Do not let the length of this recipe intimidate you. It is absolutely delicious and once you have gotten over the learning curve, it is a breeze. Be sure to read through this recipe two or three times before you begin. If you have questions, contact *Longbows & Recurves*. This is a great recipe, and I know you will enjoy the final product.

### OCMULGEE ANDOULLI SMOKED SAUSAGE

- 10 pounds wild hog
- 2 each IDAHO potatoes, peeled

Simmered until "fork tender."

Oven dried 10 minutes at 350 degrees.

Potatoes riced in ricer or meat grinder. Do not use food processor. The potatoes will "gum up."

- 1 pound onions, finely chopped
- 2 ounces garlic crushed\*
- 1/2 ounce cayenne pepper\*
- 1/2 ounce red pepper flakes\*
- 1 teaspoon ground thyme

- 1 teaspoon allspice
- 2 ounces salt\*
- 1 cup soy sauce

*\*It is critical that these spices (including salt) are weighed. Use arrow scales or food scales.*

Tip: For very large hogs (200 pounds and up), be particularly careful and remove all glands and all dark fat (tallow) yellow to orange color. Hogs should be worked within a few days and not aged like deer.

**The key to this sausage is the procedure.**

1. Dice hog meat and reserve in cooler.
2. After measuring spices, combine

them (except salt) with the onions and garlic and cook slowly for a long time (30 minutes to 1 hour) over low heat. Stir periodically. Don't scorch. Cool down after cooking.

3. Before grinding, place diced hog in freezer for 20 minutes.

4. Combine everything (including salt, but not soy sauce) together. Mix well, then grind twice.

5. After second grinding, mix thoroughly by hand adding soy sauce.

6. Pipe into casings.

7. Smoke gradually for at least 1 1/2 hours to 3 hours (not too hot) till dark brown. You're done when the links have an internal temperature of 140 degrees. Anything over 140 degrees is overcooked.

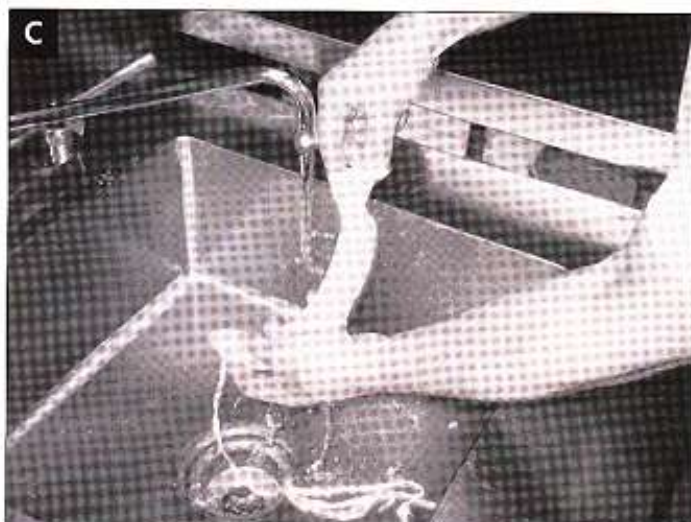




Picking glands and removing tallow (see tip) is a very important step in the cleaning of hogs.



Grinding hogs twice thoroughly mixes all ingredients.



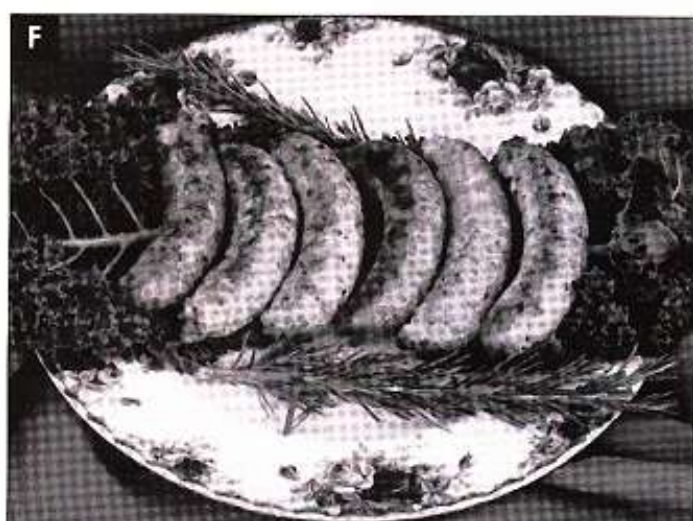
Rinsing the sausage casings removes any unwanted residue and salt.



Piping sausage is the final step before smoking. If you prefer small links rather than one long one, just twist casing to desired length.



Ready to smoke. Smoking to an internal temperature of 140 degrees is essential; BUT do not bring temperature higher than 140 degrees or it will be overcooked.



The possibilities of the presentation in the final step are endless.

Note: Joseph Cotrone at Giuseppe's Original Sausage Company in Memphis, Tennessee, has casings and spices for sausage makings at 800-893-3497.



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## Acknowledgment

*Longbows & Recurves* thanks our readers, advertisers, and supporters for a wonderful first year with five issues in print. Our circulation has dramatically increased recently to reach more and more people in North America expanding the vision of traditional archery and bowhunting.

Max Lucado, one of my favorite writers, says the following in his book, *He Still Moves Stones*: "You are about to entrust me with your most valuable asset—your time. I pledge to be a good steward. Though writing a book can be like a desert journey, reading a book shouldn't be. It should be a pause at the oasis. I hope it is. Drink deeply." I agree with Max. This is your magazine and your time is too valuable to waste. Thanks again for your trust.

Family and friends encouraged me to launch *Longbows & Recurves*. It's refreshing to think that I can work at something that endeavors to have a positive influence on families. Traditional bowhunting/archery is good for families too, and I kinda like that fact especially in the midst of today's not so traditional culture.

The last twelve months have been fun, rewarding, yet challenging. Your encouraging response to our efforts has made it all worthwhile. We'll continue to be responsive to your needs.

Back to the woods,

*Mike*  
Mike







# Late Seasons and Longbows

by George D. Stout



I could hear the gray squirrel cutting a hickory nut somewhere below me in the oak hollow. In the mass of grays and whites of snow-laden January woods, it was difficult to locate the animal. Using a line of large white oaks for cover, I slipped forward toward the grinding noise, hoping to catch a glimpse of old Mr. Gray before he saw me. Finally, I noticed a bushy tail sticking out from a limb about twenty feet off the ground. His body was hidden from me by the tree and only his tail was visible; I decided to wait him out.

In a moment or two he swapped ends and sat upright on the limb, clutching the hickory nut in his forepaws. In a second, Ol' Buck, my lemonwood longbow was at full draw and a blunt-tipped arrow was on its way. Smack! went the arrow as it slammed into the limb just under the squirrel. It didn't take Mr. Gray long to figure out something was after him; he nearly turned himself inside out getting out of there. The last I saw of him, he was crossing the ridge into the brush on the other side.

This is usually how a late season hunt for squirrels goes. Not too much meat to take home, but plenty of shooting during the hunt. Hunting squirrels with the bow and arrow can be as much or more fun than hunting deer, especially when friends are involved. Working together makes for some good shooting at grays as they take cover in the big oaks and hickories.

Squirrels have a tendency to slip around to the other side of the tree as the hunter approaches, so when I hunt with a buddy, we can team up to make them more accessible. After locating the critter, it's a matter of one archer staying in position while the other circles around the other side of the tree. It still is not as easy as it sounds because the squirrel usually decides to get to the top-most part of the tree, making the shot much more difficult. Harvesting a squirrel under these conditions, however, is extremely rewarding.

Any kind of small game hunting with the bow and arrow can be a humbling event. At times a hunter will approach within mere feet of the quarry and still come away empty-handed. At other times, a shot of Olympic proportions will bring home the bacon. Each time the hunter goes afield, he will learn something he didn't know before about his targets; such as, a gray squirrel has a great propensity to dodge arrows at relatively close distances. I can personally attest to this on several occasions. I'm not sure, though, whether they are dodging the arrow itself, or the sound of it. At any rate, they can go into the "Yikes" mode at a relatively fast clip.

In my thirty-plus years of bow hunting, I have taken probably around a dozen squirrels. My first was harvested while hunting with my father-in-law during the early 1970s. We were hunting rabbits and saw a gray squirrel watching us from the side of an oak tree. We both circled the

tree and forced the squirrel to go higher up. At that time we saw he also had another squirrel up there with him, so during the next forty-five minutes or so we had all the vertical shooting we could ask to have. I was using a fifty pound Wing recurve bow and my father-in-law a Ben Pearson. We got both of those squirrels, but it took a lot of shots.

In the years since then I have learned a thing or two about hunting squirrel. As for equipment, a longbow, recurve, or flatbow, will suffice. Any type of arrow is also okay as long as it is tipped with blunts. The broader types, such as "HTM" blunts, are very effective on squirrels. Another effective homemade blunt can be made by gluing a .38 caliber revolver ammunition case on a wood shaft. These can be made cheaply and are very effective. Broadheads are a "no-no," as most shots are taken into the trees. A shot to the head or chest area with any broad type blunt will kill instantly, eliminating any wounding-loss problems. Besides that, with a quiver full of blunts, you can also tackle the wily stump while you are hunting.

Late season small game animals, especially squirrels, are particularly wary. They have just come through three months of living in close proximity with hunters and are ready to run at first encounter, so the hunter obviously has to be much more wary himself. This just adds spice to the recipe, though. Remembering the teamwork way of operating will help locate the nervous critters.

Squirrels can be found in just about any patch of woods, but they will be most numerous in stands of hickory and oak. Brushy areas of second growth that are producing mast should not be overlooked. Gray squirrels seem quite at home in these thick areas and, additionally, can be approached surprisingly close. Once while hunting whitetails, I walked to within about ten yards of a large gray. He let me take a blunt-tipped arrow from my quiver, place it on the string, draw it to cheek, and loose the arrow. I thought I heard him snicker as he took off up the ridge.

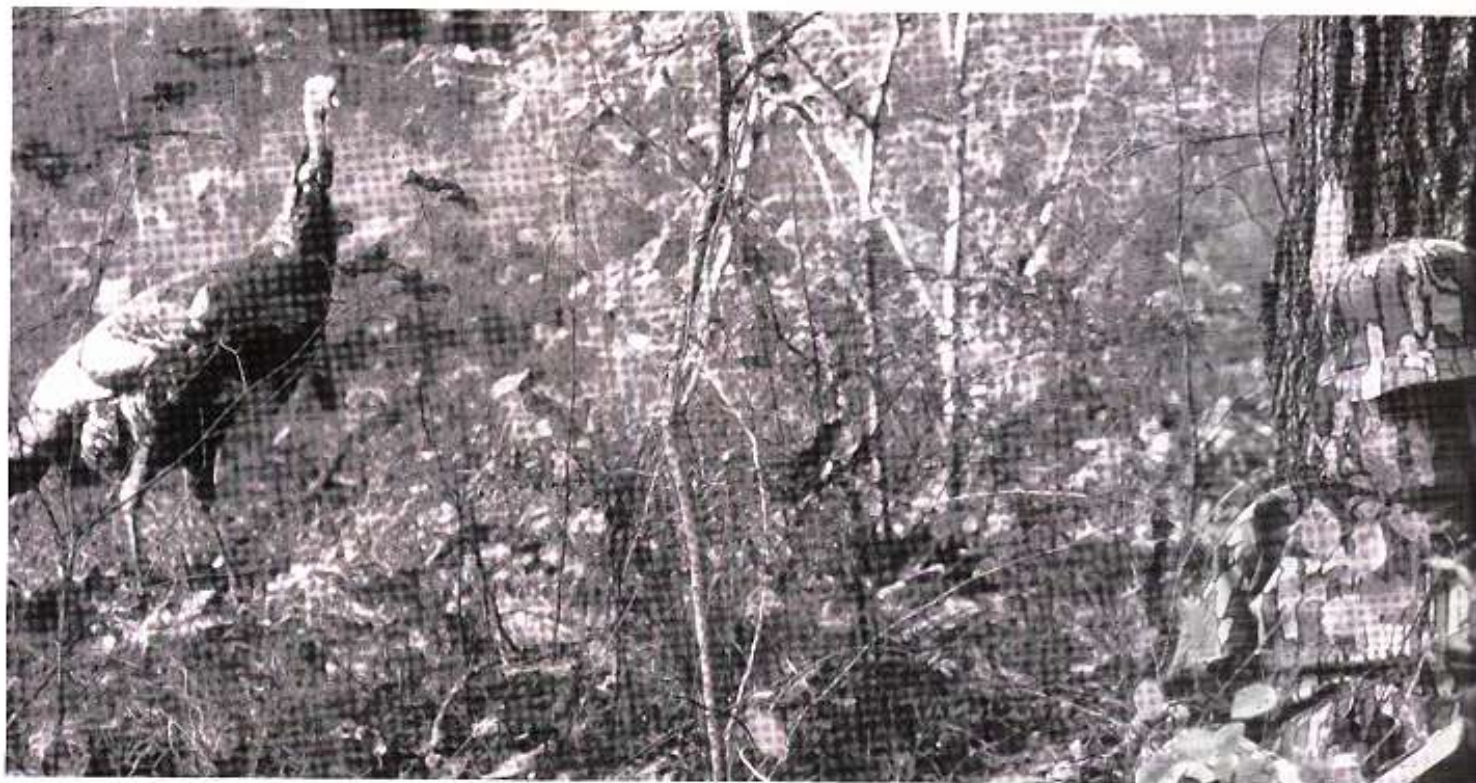
Hunting late season small game is interesting. In most areas of the country this is when it is coldest, but the right clothing helps. The best bet is to wear a good quality wool pant over fleece sweatpants. Felt Pacs on the feet, if it is very cold, and several layers of polyester and wool tops, topped off with a fairly heavy wool shirt/jac, such as Woolrich or Codet, a pair of wool gloves and cap will complete the outfit. I generally cut out the first three fingers of the right hand glove to facilitate using a shooting glove with it.

Late season squirrel hunting offers an opportunity to get out of the house and partake of excellent shooting opportunities. I have learned that if it is approached with the same anticipation as opening day, with plans for where to hunt, with whom, and where to meet, it is one of the best times of the year for good friends to be afield together. ■



# Words of Wisdom on

by Jim Spencer, photograph by John Phillips



**I**t was twenty years ago that the turkey "virus" first entered my blood. I've not been the same since.

You who are similarly afflicted know what I'm talking about here. The disease isn't fatal, but it is seasonally debilitating. The only cure is prowling through the mountains, swamps, or piney woods during the spring with eyes burning from lack of sleep, searching for a bird whose call sounds like a cross between a mugging and a train wreck. When you do find him, you then don't know how to deal with him.

I have survived hundreds of encounters with turkeys and so, incidentally, have most of the turkeys. Still, some of them have come home over my shoulder. This coming spring, if I stay out there long enough, I expect another bird or two will make that same final trip.

Turkey hunting is a confusing, frustrating, aggravating game, but when you

participate in an activity as long and as zealously as I have been hunting turkeys, you inevitably learn a little about it. And that's about what I have learned: little.

Here, in no particular order, are some of the pitifully few things I have learned.

- If you "roost" a turkey (that is, hear him fly up and/or gobble late in the afternoon on the day before you are planning to hunt), he will either change locations, develop lockjaw, or be killed by a bobcat during the night.
- Always get high to listen. No, that doesn't mean what it sounds like. It means climb to the top of a ridge rather than listen from the valley floor because you can hear better from up there. Never mind that the turkey you hear gobbling will be back down in the bottom of the valley you just climbed out of; get on up to the top anyway.
- Never hunt within hearing distance of a stream you are not willing to wade or swim in, unless you are heavily into beating yourself on the head with sticks and other forms of masochism. When you hunt close to one of these unwadeable streams, every gobbler you hear will be on the other side, and there won't be a boat within five miles.
- An adjunct to the above item says that on the smaller, deeper, colder streams, there will usually be a flimsy crossing log that looks like it just might bear your weight. It won't.
- Blinds are generally useless for hunting turkeys. A gobbler can see in much better than a hunter can see out. Blinds also slow you down on those all-too-frequent occasions when you need to pick up stakes and change positions.



# a Grand Spring Sport



*One stationary turkey, probably just one shot.*

- The frequency of a turkey's gobbling is directly proportional to the number of competing hunters within range of his voice. Stated another way: if you are the only hunter within five miles of a turkey, he won't make a peep. If there are fifteen other eager hunters on the same mountain with you and the bird, he will gobble with every breath.
- A turkey possesses the ability to see up, down, and behind himself, all at the same time. It is a fallacy, however, that turkeys can see through rocks. Only Superman can do that. Instead, turkeys see around them.
- Turkeys cannot hear your heart beating at forty yards, as some hunters


claim. That's ridiculous; no bird can hear that well. Instead, they feel the pressure waves your pulse sends through the air.

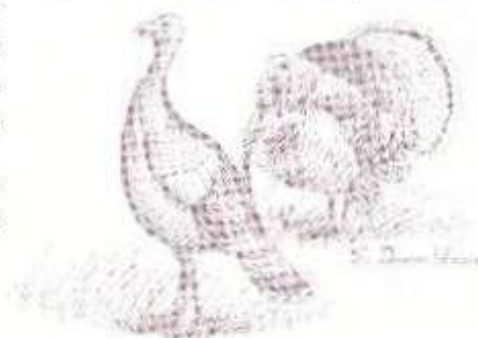
- Turkeys are allergic to many things, including movement, the sound of twigs breaking underfoot, shiny objects such as glasses or noses or the sharpened edge of your broadhead, and any object in their home range which has not been in the same spot for at least three years.
- If there are three possible directions from which a turkey can approach your calling, and two of them afford good visibility, the turkey will always come in via the third route. That is, if he comes at all, which is highly unlikely.
- Turkeys have the ability to turn invisible at will. How they achieve this I can't say, but I know it to be true.
- Calling turkey gobblers is very simple; any cretin can do it. Making them come to the calling is what's hard.
- There are five basic calls from which to choose, including yelp, cluck, purr, cutt, and cackle. All are equally effective in making a gobbler go the other way.
- When you do succeed in calling a gobbler within bow range, nine times out of ten he will (a) come up directly behind you and gobble in your ear, (b) come into view while your bow is still in your lap, (c) let

you come to full draw and then show himself ninety degrees from where you are facing, or (d) stay just out of sight under the crest of a hill and gobble and drum until some other hunter comes along and gets him or scares him away.

- If you stop to answer a call of nature when you are turkey hunting, a gobbler will pick that moment to walk up and catch you, so to speak, with your pants down. Turkeys have an uncanny sense of timing on this.
- Contrary to what other turkey hunters will tell you, a gobbler is very predictable in his habits. For example, it is possible to accurately predict the precise tree a gobbler will roost in for the six nights before the season opens, and then it is possible to predict that on the night before opening day he will move to an undetermined location at least two ridges away.
- In any given hunting situation, there has never been more than one shot at a stationary turkey.
- A double corollary to the above rule states (a) a running or flying turkey is nearly impossible to hit, and (b) any turkey that has been shot at and missed is so pumped up with adrenaline he is practically unshootable anyway.

I could go on and on with this; my wisdom on the subject of turkeys is bottomless. But, I don't want to tell you everything there is to know and thereby wreck your enjoyment of the sport.

There are just some things a turkey hunter ought to learn on his own. 





# Gobbler Stories

by Larry Long

There's no doubt about it. Hunting turkeys with a bow and arrow is just about as much fun as a hunter should be allowed to have. But, it ain't easy. Turkeys are wily critters.

Knowing the habits of turkeys can greatly increase the odds of getting a shot, however. As one of the fortunate hunters living near good turkey populations and having the time to scout thoroughly in the areas I hunt, each year I usually locate several toms. One reason for turkey hunting success, I'm convinced, is because I probably spend more time in the woods before season than I do actually hunting. Being in the right spot to intercept a tom headed for his strutting zone is probably 90 percent of successful turkey hunting. The other 10 percent might be divided equally between calling and some old fashion luck.

"Elmer" is an example of all three.

## "Elmer"

The mosquitoes were making so much noise buzzing around my ears that I almost missed the first low gobble on the next ridge, nearly three hundred yards away. Cupping my hands behind my ears made the next gobble sound a little louder. After hearing a third gobble I knew that the big tom I had named "Elmer" was on the move. He was headed around the ridge toward his "strutting zone," where he went each day to strut and gobble. This small opening in the swamp bottom was probably only twenty yards wide and thirty yards long.

Picking up my longbow, quiver, and dove stool, I started downhill off the ridge on which I had been listening. I was careful to move as quietly as possible, knowing that it was necessary to beat "Elmer" to his chosen spot if there was any hope of getting a shot at him.

Crossing a small creek and stepping in water that went over my boot top, I heard "Elmer" gobble again. Wondering if beating him to his chosen spot would be possible, I quickened my pace. With two more creeks to cross and a cane thicket to go, it didn't look good.

After getting through all the obstacles, however, I realized I had won the race. As quickly and quietly as possible I set up. My dove stool went against a wide bush for background cover. The turkey decoy was placed about fifteen yards out into the opening. I adjusted my camo face mask

and placed myself on the dove stool. Picking my bow up, I placed an arrow on the string and leaned the bow against a tree limb to my right. Grabbing the wingbone call around my neck I clucked twice. Suddenly I heard the sound of a turkey drumming! Knowing not to move, I moved only my eyes around to be greeted by one of nature's most beautiful sights.

"Elmer" was standing about five yards past the decoy in full strut. He was facing me so I couldn't move at all without risking his sharp eyes detecting my movement. Dancing from one foot to the other, he soon turned as he displayed for the decoy. When his head was hidden from sight by his fan, I began drawing. Before I could complete my draw "Elmer" turned broadside and once again I was exposed to his sharp eyes. I continued to full draw, however, and as my finger touched the corner of my mouth, the arrow was on its way. I had aimed at the wingbutt but the arrow hit three or four inches to the right of my intended target.

Thinking I had only hit feathers or just nicked him, that "You Blew It" feeling rushed over me as the turkey gained altitude. When he reached tree top level suddenly the wingbeats slowed rapidly and he did a slow barrel roll to the ground.

"Elmer" weighed in at twenty-three pounds, had a 10 9/16 inch beard, and 1 1/8 inch spurs.



While my hunting buddy and fellow longbow shooter Bob Mones calls most of my hunting successes "Blind Dumb Luck," I like to think the hunter is successful when intercepting a turkey for other more practical reasons—like skill, equipment, experience. Even so, Bob has a point about dumb luck. Take "Jake," for example.

## "Jake"

About nine days before "Elmer," I had been in the same area working a gobbler. After two hours of playing "cat and mouse" with this hunter-wise old gobbler, another hunter trying to slip into the middle of the action spooked the bird out of the area. While the other hunter had as much right to be there as I did since this was public hunting land in the North Carolina Game Lands program, it was still frustrating.





Photograph courtesy of Larry Long


*Turkey success comes from spending much time in the woods before season.*

But, a good hunter keeps on keeping on. Later I realized that some luck did enter in. Had this hunter not "busted" up my hunt, I probably wouldn't have been successful on this particular hunt.

So, I slowly climbed the trail out of the beaver swamp. The road makes a ninety degree turn to the right then goes about fifty or sixty yards and makes a ninety degree turn to the left. At the left turn there is a small clover patch, where on almost every trip out a deer blows at me as I round the first turn in the road. The day seemed like a good day to slip around the turn and see if I could get a pre-season look at the deer.

As slowly as possible I slipped around the turn looking for the deer but instead spotted a gobbler walking down the trail toward me. Somehow the turkey hadn't seen me. There was a dirt bank to my right that was too steep to climb and to my left was an impenetrable briar thicket. Running out of

time and options, I lay down in the grass growing in the ditch next to the dirt bank. Laying my longbow parallel to the road bed, I put an arrow on the string and waited for the bird to appear. It was probably less than a minute till the gobbler walked in front of me. Less than ten feet from me as he dropped his head to peck at something in the road, I drew the bow to about half draw and released the string. The razor sharp Zwickie broadhead struck the turkey just below the wingbutts and completely penetrated. The turkey was a jake weighing about fourteen pounds with a seven inch beard but only nubs for spurs.

My advice then for turkey hunting includes knowing turkey habits, being in the right place at the right time with equipment, including calls, adaptable to the situation, and being ready for just a little old fashion luck. 



# Keeping A Hunter's Journal

by Lee Foote

When a bowhunter brings a longbow or recurve to full draw on a game animal, time seems to compress much like the very bow limbs. Time then seems to rebound with a blur of activity upon release. A bowstring thrum, the hiss and arc of the arrow, possibly a quick crashing, then an almost magical silence and often the question "Did that really happen?" There may be dull thudding in the hunter's ears as the adrenaline plays out its course.

These are deeply special moments. To record such moments, an approach befitting the smell of beeswax and the quiet cast of a longbow is the hunter's field journal. In my small hunting room/study are some things I hold dear, including just such field journals.

The bookshelf holds the seven field journals written so far; journals that speak volumes to me, about me, and someday may speak volumes for me. Included are details of memorable and forgettable hunts, shots, scouting trips, weather, companions, insights, inspirations, and frustrations. These volumes are mostly modest cloth-covered accountant's ledgers and three-ring binders. I do believe an embossed leather hunting log is in my future from my venison-loving wife, however.

What does a hunter gain from keeping a hunting journal? I suggest the following six benefits.

## Insight and Personal Evaluation

Experiences, satisfactions, the motivations for specific hunts, the conditions under which game animals are taken, or the observations accumulated from time afield are memories held by the gossamer of recollection. To faithfully reconstruct them,

the hunter needs to write quickly and accurately hours immediately after the hunt or at least in the first few days after a hunt. When my field-weary feet are propped up on a hard bunk and a hissing gas lantern lights my journal, I can scratch down a pretty good slice of the day's adventures.

Years later as I re-read my journals, they become a window into what sort of hunter I was at various stages of life. As much as I regret it now, there is no denying that I once tied a deer to a car hood for transport (Polaroid photo, Ford truck, eight point, 188 lbs., 1973), or that in the old southern ritual, my first deer earned me a blood-dabbed face (mature doe, 35 yards, neck shot, 280 Remington, bottom-lands near Tallulah, Louisiana, 12 December 1966). The color photographs in my journal keep this history real and embedded in the context of the times.

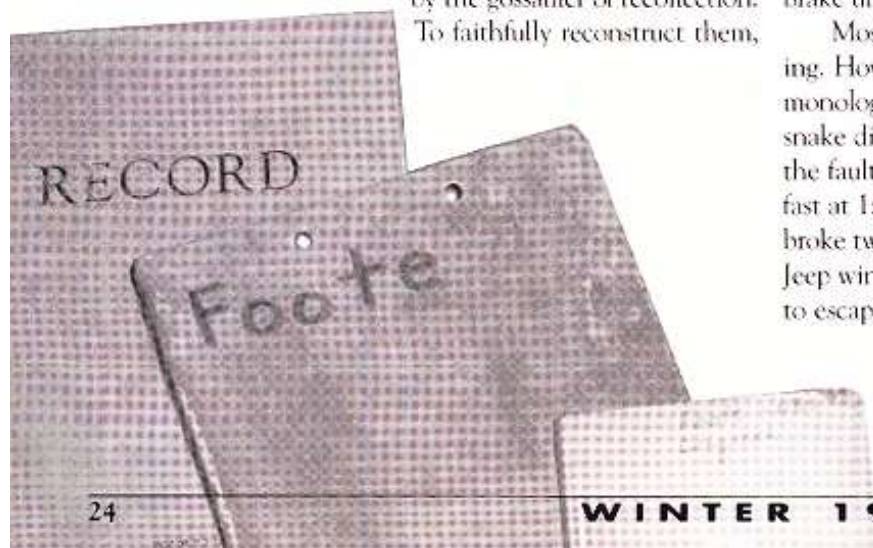
The hunter can gauge his hunting best against the standards he sets for himself, whether they are handed down from mentors, or formulated each season. When hunters pick up a bow it might be to increase their hunting opportunity. When they opt for a longbow or recurve they are choosing a somewhat different and possibly more difficult set of standards. This bears remembering in future years.

## Recollections

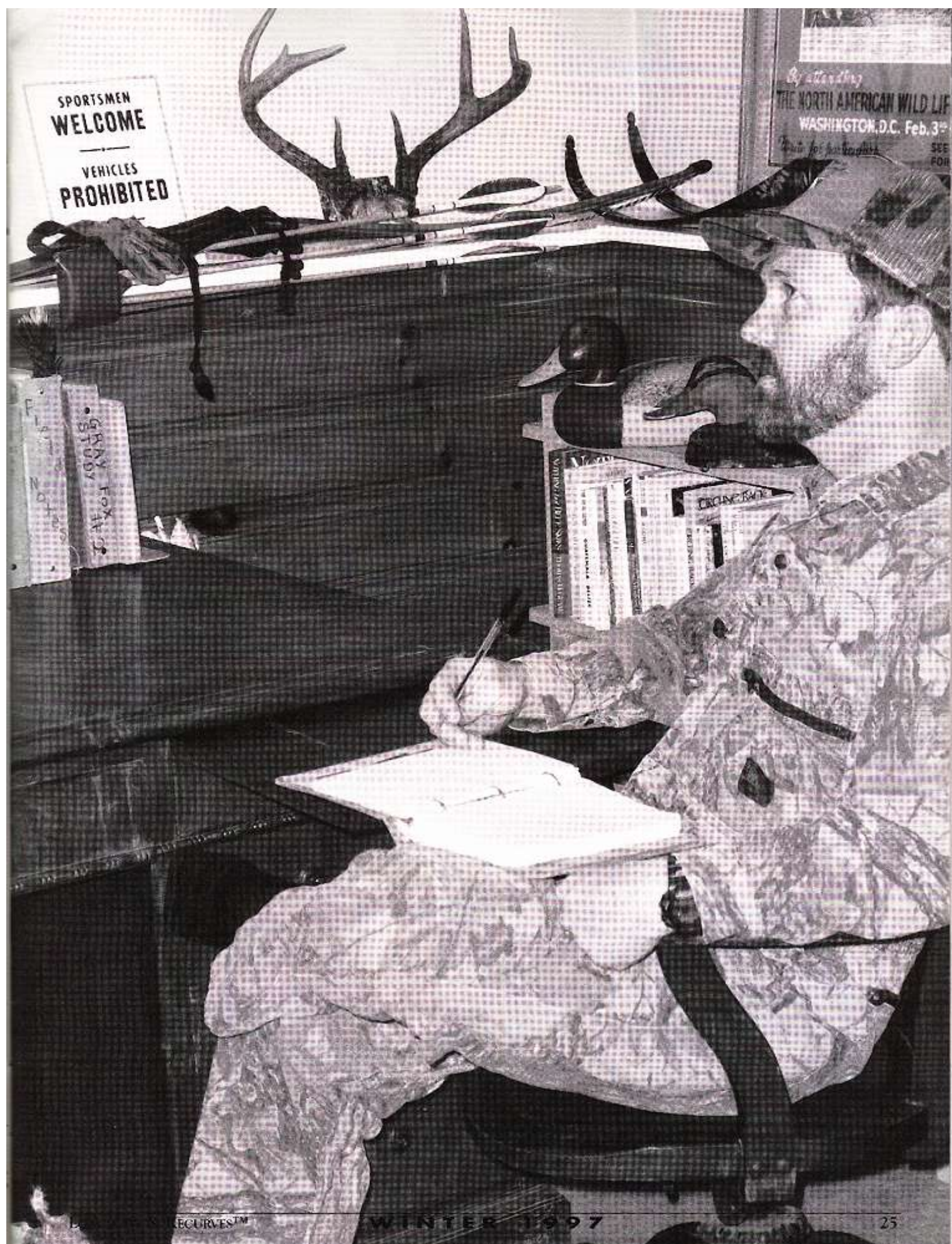
My writing reminds me that on the morning I killed that first doe I also saw lots of dark phase fox squirrels and one set of black bear tracks in what is now acres of soybeans. It reminds me when I drive along I-20 near Mound, Louisiana thirty years later of that doe sneaking through a now gone cane-brake under a twisted hackberry tree.

Most journals include so much more than simply hunting. How easy it would be to forget the exact bluish-tinged monologue that was delivered as the last three feet of a bull snake disappeared into the bedsprings at our hunting camp; the faulty alarm clock that had us cooking a prehunt breakfast at 1:15 a.m.; how six-foot seven-inch Eric overdrew and broke two borrowed bows in the same week; the 1948 Willis Jeep winched twenty-five feet straight up into a cottonwood to escape a rapidly rising Mississippi river; the "squeeze and

Lee Foote's hunting journals document worthwhile memories.









sling" gutting technique for rabbits that lofted viscera into a friend's parka hood; the gill-netted alligator gar that firmly clamped a buddy's index finger, or the arrow that pinned a cereal-robbing mouse to the barn rafters. These memories are of hunting but not necessarily hunting itself.

The material in my journals will fuel hunting memories forever. This journal spells out where the turkeys were feeding last year, which antler had the forked brow tine, and why I should never again use bread sacks to "waterproof" my socks.

If hunting ends through some turn of health, geography, or—heaven forbid—legislation, these pages of memories will let the hunter carry a little bit of the hunt with him. The day may come when half of an old hunter's hunting activity is thinking about hunting and the other half is talking about it. A journal is the raconteur's scepter in reigning over the retirement home social hour.

## **An Accurate Historical Record for Future Generations**

My grandfather was a hunter. I know this mostly from one weathered black and white photo of men in oilskin boots standing beside a barn door covered with scores of ducks, geese, rails, snipe, and gallinules. That is the extent of what I know about his hunting, but what a treat it would be to read of his exploits in his own handwriting.

What will great-great-grandchildren think of the passion for bowhunting? Should the hunter leave it to others to explain what sort of man or woman would hunt deer with this rather frail tackle? It is doubtful anyone can tell these experiences better than the one who actually drew the bow. Some wonderful history-steeped essays of hunting come from venerable journal keepers of previous eras: the Lewis and Clark journals of exploration of the headwaters of the Mississippi River or the travel journals of William

Bartram, an early naturalist/collector/explorer. Archers Earnest Thompson Seaton, Art Young, and Howard Hill tell us of hunts and observations now through their journals and field notes. The true stories captured in journals may be as moving and informative to any hunter's descendants as these works are to the public.

## **Hunter Success**

Bowhunters sometimes find formulas that produce shot opportunities year after year. The popular literature dwells on natural funnels, mast crops, agricultural attractors, scrape lines, etc. Though it makes enticing, formula-based reading, wildlife movements are rarely a simple  $A + B =$  shot opportunity. Certainly, location is important but a more three-dimensional overview of the hunting setting and conditions would incorporate location, weather conditions, time of day, seasonality of food sources, disturbance, animal behavior (particularly the rut), huntability (e.g. a hunter's ability to withstand the bugs, cold, rain, sun glare, etc.), and how these factors mitigate or militate each other.

Wild hogs, whitetails, and wild turkeys wade through a sea of decisions with every step they take. Hunters have to sort through and visualize the quarry's decision sequences and more often than not they guess wrong. However, some exceptional hunters are uncanny in their ability to make decisions that parallel those of



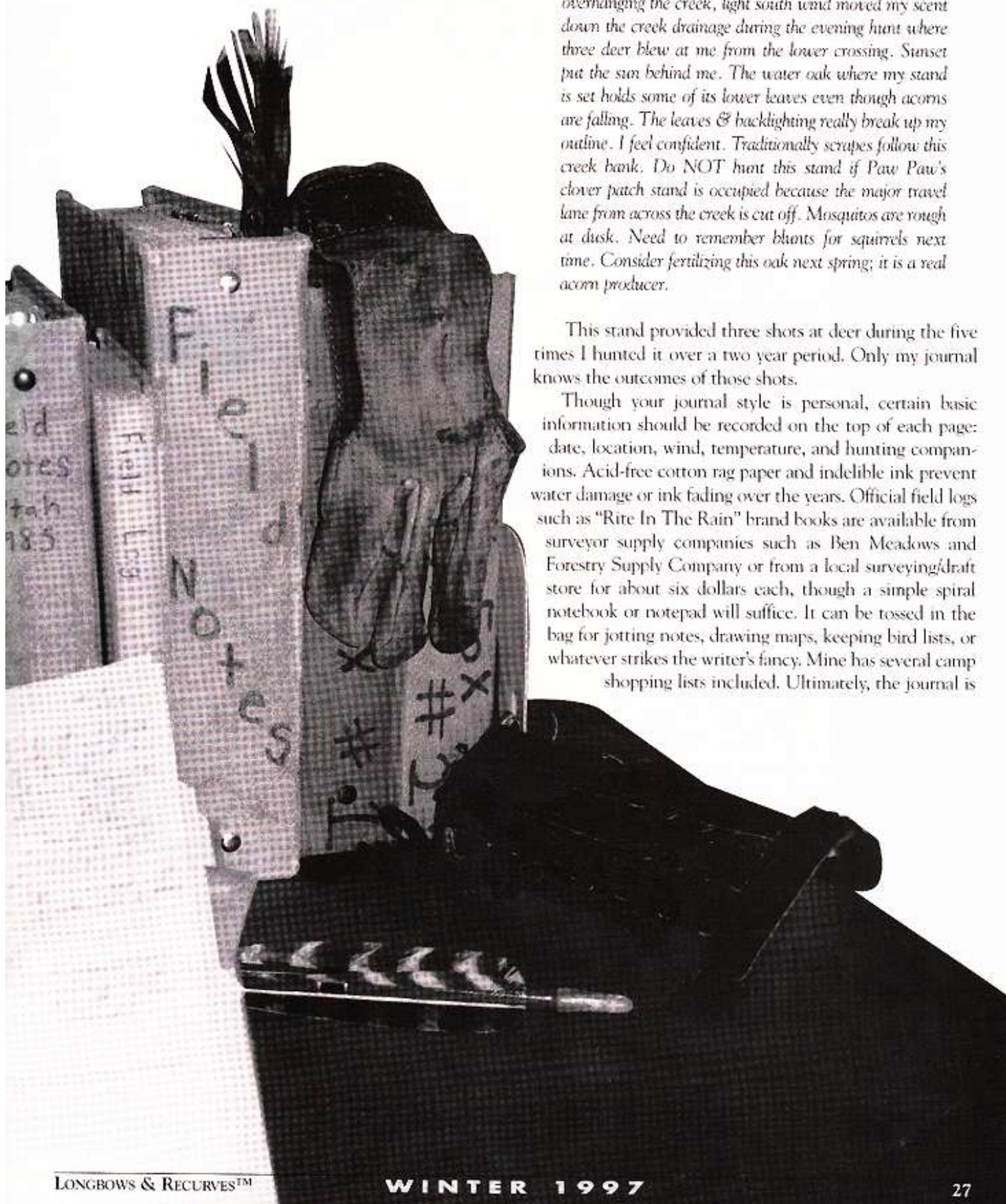
their quarry. How is this skill developed? A key ingredient is to build on the past observations, successes as well as failures. Careful note taking and rereading helps this learning process.

For example, the following actual journal passage will help me to plan future hunts.

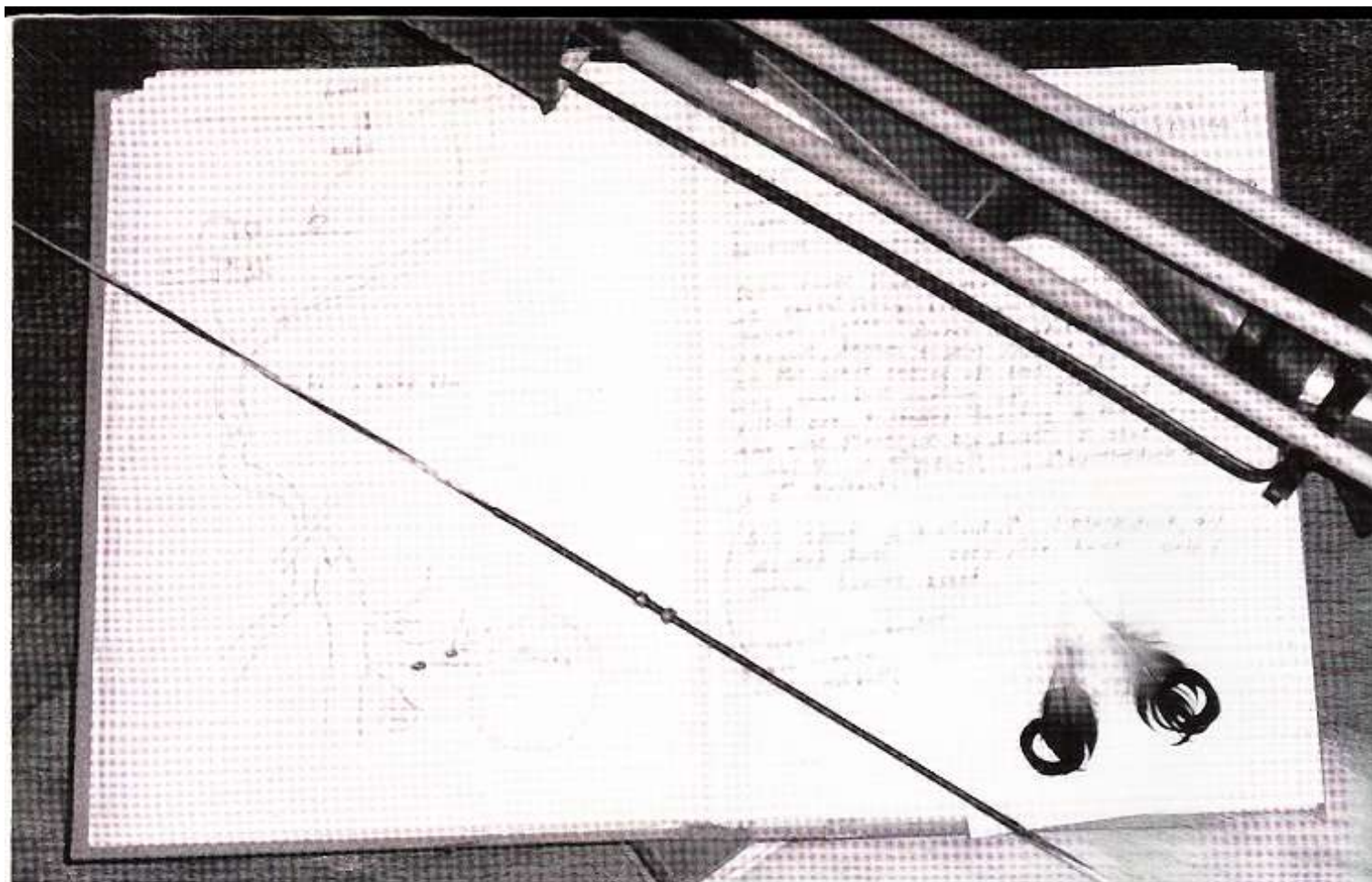
*4 January 1996 - Thompson Creek stand in water oak overhanging the creek, light south wind moved my scent down the creek drainage during the evening hunt where three deer blew at me from the lower crossing. Sunset put the sun behind me. The water oak where my stand is set holds some of its lower leaves even though acorns are falling. The leaves & backlighting really break up my outline. I feel confident. Traditionally scrapes follow this creek bank. Do NOT hunt this stand if Paw Paw's clover patch stand is occupied because the major travel lane from across the creek is cut off. Mosquitos are rough at dusk. Need to remember blunts for squirrels next time. Consider fertilizing this oak next spring; it is a real acorn producer.*

This stand provided three shots at deer during the five times I hunted it over a two year period. Only my journal knows the outcomes of those shots.

Though your journal style is personal, certain basic information should be recorded on the top of each page: date, location, wind, temperature, and hunting companions. Acid-free cotton rag paper and indelible ink prevent water damage or ink fading over the years. Official field logs such as "Rite In The Rain" brand books are available from surveyor supply companies such as Ben Meadows and Forestry Supply Company or from a local surveying/draft store for about six dollars each, though a simple spiral notebook or notepad will suffice. It can be tossed in the bag for jotting notes, drawing maps, keeping bird lists, or whatever strikes the writer's fancy. Mine has several camp shopping lists included. Ultimately, the journal is







Journals are good references for the next hunt.

a personal collection of experiences and there is no right or wrong entry. Eventually the post-hunt will not be complete without this little ritual, and future hunts will likely benefit from it.


### **Mementos, Keepsakes and Touchstones**

My favorite journals bristle with hunting "debris." One turkey feather knocked off a spring 1995 jake, a Utah porcupine quill from the nose of a very unhappy Labrador retriever, a white oak leaf containing the entire blood trail of a liver-shot buck, the whistling wing feathers from an arrow-killed woodcock, an entire three-fourth inch antler from the smallest whitetail rack I have ever taken, a page of pintail sprigs and greenhead curlicues, various persimmon, overcup, and beech seeds, a pressed passion flower, flint flake workings found under a creekside bow stand, a broken bleeder blade, and lots of photographs. Every item is a vivid and tangible reminder of a significant story.

### **Reality and Explanations: The Hunter as Teacher**

When I choose to share this book of "trophy memories" with a child or non-hunter, it is

much easier for them to understand than the carcass-and-hunter photograph approach. Prose, drawings, and artifacts conjure up the intricate tapestry of hunting for their imaginations by allowing them some room to insert their own take on the activity. Non-hunters and children often find hunting to be irreconcilable with their image of nature; hunters as kind people who pursue and kill non-threatening animals cause them some confusion. A journal can help dispel this simple black and white picture of hunting. The photos, insights, camaraderie, and naturalist notes are tangible connections to the broader realm of appreciation that surrounds the hunt and even more poignantly, the kill. These are serious matters, and disciplined journal writings give the hunter a chance to make it clear that hunting is not taken lightly.

As I read through my journals, I notice that later journals are those of a mature, thinking hunter. Reflection, family outings, and the solitude of bowhunting have become important themes, and the journals show how hunting continues to grow as a part of my life. Keeping a hunting journal has helped me understand that in hunts involving kills, the kill serves as the tiny, albeit essential, grain of sand around which the pearl of the hunt is formed. That, ultimately, may be its importance to any hunter. 





# How About A Cold One?

by Dave Stewart

**A** cool one can be good, but a cold one can be great. Certainly, that is so with beverages—but I'm talking about deer season. In the mid-south where I live, bow season normally opens while the weather is still warm and only by late October are the days growing shorter and cooler.

Some years it seems as if the cold just won't come. This was one. The weather forecast continued to be pessimistic for a cold day. More Indian Summer, bluebird days the rest of the week with temperatures in the low seventies. My wife was delighted and thankful for the extension of the warm days. Joe, my hunting partner, and I were beside ourselves. So were the mosquitoes who had been using us for dive bombing runs, and with no really cold weather in the foreseeable days ahead, our mosquito bites were soon going to have mosquito bites of their own. I have never understood how those little critters can get under netting and thrive on repellent. I guess God made mosquitoes as food for the birds. But, why did He make ticks and chiggers? Joe and I are convinced that they are really the ones at the top of the food chain.

Yep, you guessed it. We were now spending weekends in the woods praying for a really cold day. Besides, weather forecasters aren't always accurate. So, just maybe we could catch a break and get the type of a day that would make false teeth jump in your mouth and stay there without any stick-um.

Saturday couldn't come quick enough. Unfortunately, the weather forecasters had been accurate, and my wife enjoyed the additional warm days. More of the same was expected for the weekend.

## A Sighting

It was 4:00 a.m. when the alarm and my wife both went off at the same time. Oh, maybe there was a split second delayed reaction on her part, and

honestly, I have always felt sorry for her since she has just never gotten used to the alarm clock going off in what she considers the middle of the night. I was soon in the truck, however, and on the way to Joe's house. The night was warm and clear. It was going to be a great day. For flea markets, garage sales, and mosquitoes anyway.

About four miles from Joe's, my headlights picked up a perfectly symmetrical eight pointer hurrying south across the section line road. He displayed an attitude of no-nonsense focused business as he moved through the bar ditch, jumped the fence, and disappeared into the dark woods. His neck was swollen to the point that his body appeared disproportionately small. We had permission to hunt the land he was on, but in our earlier scouting trips there we had never seen any sign of this rascal's presence.

As soon as Joe opened the door, I shared the sighting with him. Maybe the buck was just cruising through the area, but he sure seemed to know where he wanted to go and was wasting no time getting there. Maybe he had overslept. Our plans changed! We were going to gamble and "still-hunt" that rut-crazed buck.

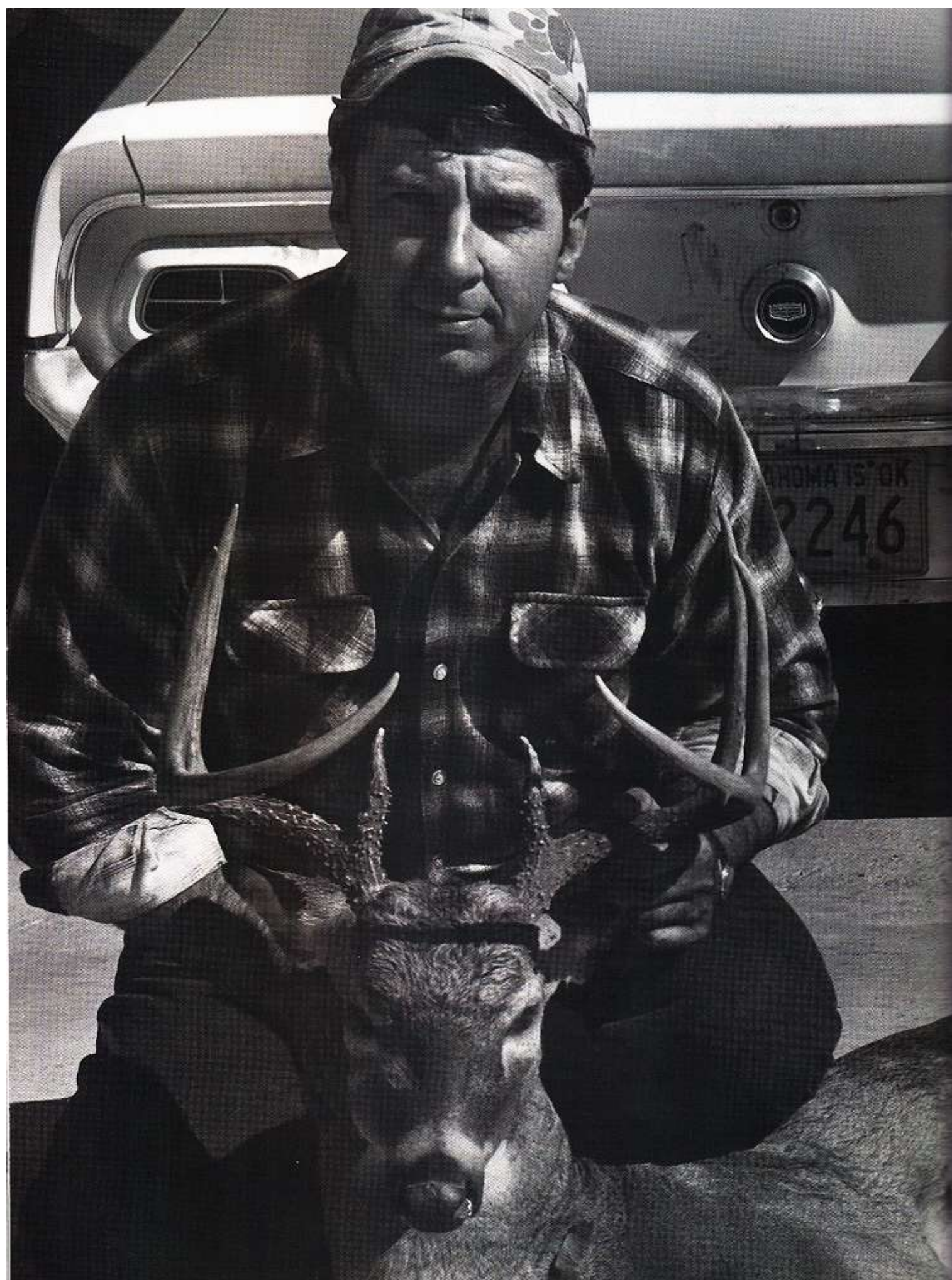
## The Wind Picks Up

As we stepped out the door of Joe's house into the clear beautiful darkness, we noticed that the wind had started to pick up and had also changed direction. Neither of us had heard the weather forecast the previous night but after a warm forecast all week there was no expectation of any change. Riding to the hunting area we discussed the warm morning and the unusual wind change, now coming out of the north. First light saw us in the woods where the buck had crossed. The wind blowing on our backs continued to come out of the north and seemed to be increasing.

Why was he going with the wind instead of into it or at least crosswind? I have never really understood whitetails and sometimes wonder if









anyone does. You can read everything that is written about them, know exactly the way the experts say deer will act, and then the deer do something different. In any event, the wind was continuing to rise and now we began to realize that the temperature had also changed direction and was heading "south" too. First sunlight showed dark clouds coming in from the north. Obviously we weren't dressed for this auspicious occasion, but we would be within an hour of our vehicle so no need for concern, we thought.

The buck had left deep tracks in the soft bar ditch mud and beyond the fence that were easy to see at sun-up. He appeared to be headed south. Quickly we, along with our mosquito squadrons, backtracked to the vehicle. A twenty minute drive around the area over an old logging road brought us to a point where we could enter from the south and hunt with the wind in our face. A shallow creek ran generally from north to south and we each took a side and began the dead slow pace of a good solid still hunt. The mosquito air wing commanders had forgotten to tell their squadrons that the wind was continuing to increase and the temperature was falling rapidly. It was a typical Will Rogers day... "If you don't like the weather, just wait a minute."

## A Temperature Drop


Sleet began to fall. We were elated. The temperature was plunging. We became ecstatic. Deer started to move slowly, conserving energy while seeking energy building foods for warmth. A spike moved off to the northeast and moments later was followed by what looked like a six point. No shot opportunities, but the herd of does continued to feed northward about fifty yards ahead of us. Our buck suddenly appeared from the north to intercept the does. Joe and I froze, which was getting easier to do by the minute, but seeing the buck caused a warming blood rush throughout our bodies.

The buck was focused all right and we were too. Wild blackberry vines in thick

maple, cottonwood, and sycamore trees, along with dead leaves made further advance impossible. We were freezing in our tracks. No wonder the spike and the six pointer got the heck out of there. This buck was all business and would have tolerated no nonsense from the young upstarts. But how to close the gap for a shot escaped us. Sixty yards apart, Joe and I looked at each other and shrugged our shoulders trying to determine a way to move closer.

The creek, the creek, why hadn't I thought about the creek? With a bank six to eight feet high and six inches of water, it would provide perfect cover for the stalk. It was still sleeting and the creek water was cold. For that matter my whole body was cold, including the mosquito bites. In fact, I swear that I saw ticks and chiggers running from my clothes to the nearest leaves and trees trying to find shelter and warmth. This stalk was going to be a challenge. We had made out twenty-two does, so along with our buck, that made twenty-three pairs of ears and eyes and twenty-three noses that had to be overcome. We had no idea where the spike and the six pointer were either. Slowly shuffling flatfooted along the creek bottom kept our noise to a minimum. Blackberry vines provided cover and the wind was in our faces.

Suddenly things began to change. The sleet decreased its intensity. The mosquitoes were gone. The does stopped moving north and began to graze in a small opening. The eight-point buck increased his focus on the business at hand until at twelve paces a feathered shaft prevented him from ever leaving the small opening again. Annoyed only enough to move out of the opening, the does now continued feeding their way north.

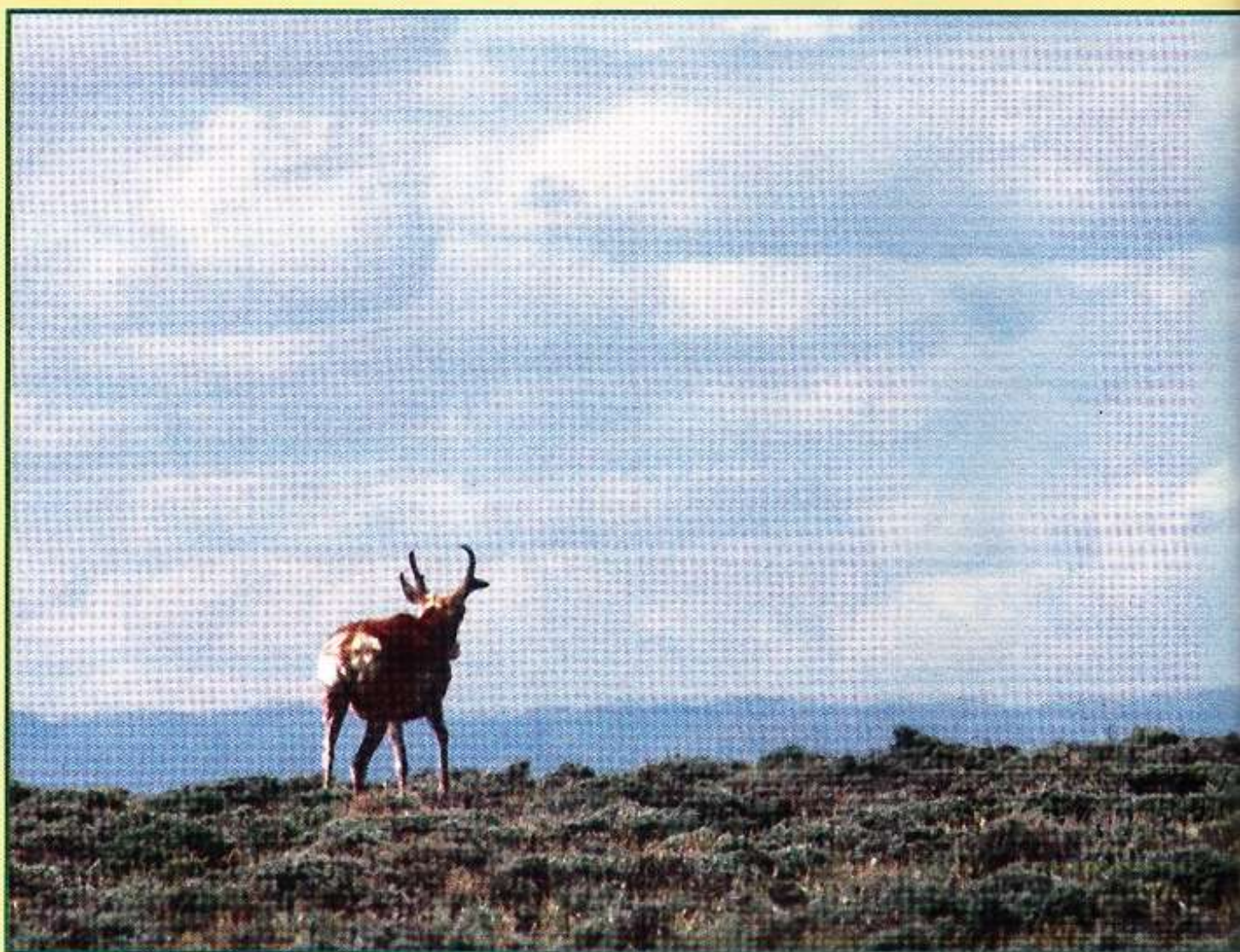
A cool day likely would have found the does bedded and only a rut-crazed buck would have gotten any up. But a really cold day can put everything on its feet. So just remember, that even when a cool one is on tap, a cold one just may appear. 



S. D. Davidson







Above: This is the buck Fadala took still hunting. The bow is a Herb Meland Ferret recurve—sixty-one pound pull at twenty-eight inch draw. The broadhead was a Zephyr Scirrocco 125-grain. The arrow is a tapered cedar shaft with Truflight feathers. Below: Sometimes a still hunter can "dog after" a buck antelope all day long, especially in country with even modest hills like this one. When the buck goes over the hill, the hunter hurries after it, being careful not to show himself as he crawls over to see where his pronghorn is.



# Pursuing Pronghorn in the Badlands



text and photography by Sam Fadala

Still hunting is a challenge with pronghorns, known for their phenomenal vision and noses which are far from useless.

Pronghorn antelope season wound down to a final day. It wasn't over for everyone—only me. I had to leave my camp on the Badlands “on business.” Well, business for me, an elk hunt in the mountains. Only one day of hunting remained, but with a lifetime of experience with the fleetfoot of the flatlands lending confidence, I was pretty sure I could get a buck by still hunting. I had already tagged two additional (non-buck licenses) with my trusted Ferret recurve bow, then concentrated on a buck from a windmill blind for two days. Staying a mile away, the buck never came to my waterhole wait-out, but I knew what he did and about when he did it.

In early morning, he always took a trail that may have brought him to water later. Antelope, very generally speaking, go to water in mid-morning and again in mid-afternoon, with plenty of variation in the schedule. I couldn't see a cattle tank or a windmill, but there may have been a natural seep over the hill out of sight. Two old does, both dry, had come to my windmill water hole, but only thumb-horn bucks, nothing mature.

The outfitter's operation I was at is a masterful set up for bowhunters. Anyone who spends a week on this high desert ranch has plenty of chances to launch arrows at mulies or antelope. But as perfect as the ground blinds, pits, and windmill stands were, I wanted to still-hunt the buck I had seen in the distance, spending a full day trying for a bowshot. So I was up before light, getting ready to spend my day on the ground in the lonely stretch of semi-broken country that was home to my buck. Being early was important, but not

because my buck would slip into the brush later like a deer; he wouldn't do that. Pronghorns are up and about most of the day, and when not, they're in the open and usually bedded where they can be seen by a hunter willing to cover ground and glass for game. The real reason I got up early is because antelope seem to lose some of their natural caution in the morning and in the late afternoon.

Typical of a September day on Wyoming's pronghorn ranges, the air was cool, and the eastern horizon was brilliant as the sun fired its golden arrows through thin cloud banks hovering low. Inside of fifteen minutes, my B&L 10x42 Elites picked up the punctual pronghorn buck making his way along the trail as I had seen him do every morning from my windmill perch. I might get a shot early if I could move in close to the trail. Antelope, once they decide on a route of travel, often stay on the path doggedly.

But no good. The buck didn't see me; I know better than to reveal any part of my anatomy when stalking the binocular-eyed 'lope since pronghorns are known for their phenomenal vision. Instead he caught my scent. I had forgotten to fire a few sprays of deer lure/water mix into the air. Their sense of smell seems much less acute than a deer's, but antelope noses are far from useless. No doubt about it, I was caught by the nose. The buck didn't bolt—he just paced on by a hundred yards away, soon busying himself with making a scrape, even though full rut was a few weeks away.

I just watched him. There was nothing else I could do unless I tried a few toots on my call. Lohman's antelope call really works, but it takes the madness of rut to excite the



bucks with the Yeow! Cha! Cha! Cha! of the challenge call. I tried anyway. The buck stopped in its tracks, walked back a few steps, and stood as still as a Badlands bluff for five full minutes, which would have been perfect for a rifleman, but was well over three times too far for a bow.

I ducked out of sight in a draw. Even with camo and a face mask, however, I stuck a little hunk of brush up in front of my face to peek through whenever I lifted my head above the dirt bank of the draw.

Soon he was gone, having ambled over a hill. I followed. The high desert isn't as noisy to walk as a leaf-covered forest floor, but I still wore quiet, soft-soled hunting boots as insurance, and I remembered to squeeze a powdery puff of Windicator, which reveals more than just direction, into the air as I slowly trailed after my buck. I also had my small bottle of deer scent/water handy. Some hunters contend that an atomized mist of lure in the air will not cover human scent and they may be right, but it helps. I'm convinced of that.

When I caught sight of the buck again, he was now a half mile away, feeding on low greenery along a barren slope. A pronghorn can really cover the ground, and he doesn't have to be running to put plenty of landscape between the two of you. "Take heart," I preached to myself. Luckily, the feed must have been good, and when I looked up again, having sped along the bottom of a wash to hide, I was, for a second time that day, only fifty yards from my buck. But there was no cover left, and I had to watch the pronghorn walk slowly away from me.

I thought about climbing a small hill, hiding behind some brush, and trying to lure my buck with the old waving hanky trick, which has worked for me by drawing a buck in



*Above: During the rut, a buck will pay attention to an antelope call. Of course, if the hunter shows himself the show is over! Inset: This photo is a perfect example of the fact that pronghorns do not always live in the most wide open landscape. The sagebrush on this hill afford the bowhunter good stalking cover.*

for a good 30-30 shot, but never—so far—for a bowshot. I bided my time.

Finally, the buck bedded. I was happy for it. I bedded down, too, about 150 yards away. Max, for that is what I had decided to call the buck, lay on a bare rise with a view all around for hundreds of open acres. I slipped my day pack off, unloading a lunch and two pint canteens, one with water, the other with Gatorade. From time to time I eased up to check on Max, who seemed content to lie quietly in the sun. I was content in the shade, but after two hard-boiled eggs and two little boxes of raisins, I was also ready to go after Max again. But not to be. He wasn't ready. A half hour later,





water like a thirsty giraffe only twenty yards from one of the box blinds. The joke was on me. Waterholes are the key to antelope bowhunting success. But that was okay. I chose still hunting, and still hunting it would be. I chastised myself anyway: "Dummy," I muttered, "you just missed a twenty yard opportunity."


But, how can a hunter be unhappy when he's carrying a bow in interesting country? Besides, I was well-equipped. I had my pack loaded with food and supplies, a rain parka in case of a cloudburst, and of course my Herb Meland Pronghorn Ferret bow, a recurve I am particularly fond of and have a lot of faith in. So I trudged on with a smile, continued confidence, and my knowledge of the buck's pattern. He would be on the flats by now in early afternoon. However, he wasn't there. Max had given me the slip. I climbed to a high point to glass. Antelope were everywhere. I saw three bucks in the distance that were as good as, or even bigger than Max, but I would stick with my plan a little longer. It paid off. I found Max. He was in the best possible terrain for me, too, broken land. I could make a stalk—maybe.

however, the buck was standing and alert. I looked in the direction of his interest.

There was a band of does and fawns out there, all right, along with something else. A golden eagle swooped down again and again, as a large doe reared in the air like a rodeo pony, lashing out at the bird. The huge-winged flying predator finally lost interest and flew away. Max took off, too, right for the does. He made a nuisance of himself for awhile, then learning the does weren't interested in him, he fed with them for a while. I assumed he would join the band when it left, but I was wrong. He watched the does and fawns like a stay-behind at the train station, then he turned and began to feed again all by himself.

It was ten o' clock. Max was right on time for a pronghorn's mid-morning drink. I sprinted after him after he went out of sight on a hill. Carefully, I stole a view over the rise and there he was, sucking

finally tripped Max up was sticking to a path like a typical pronghorn. I saw him on the trail again, and while it took several attempts, the ambush finally worked—Max came wandering by in bow range. My compressed tapered cedar shafts were tipped with the excellent Zephyr 125 grain broadhead. I try to use different heads to learn how they work, and I can say that we're lucky to have such good ones, from the ever-excellent Zwick Black Diamond to the new Zephyr. I ended up putting two arrows through the chest cavity.

I had my buck by still hunting, both of us sharing the same land, eyeball to eyeball, so to speak. Knowledge of his ways turned the trick, just as understanding the quarry always helps. But the fact remains—water is the way to get a pronghorn buck with a bow. That's probably how I will do it next time, if the still hunting bug doesn't bite again. 





# Mule Deer

## *Magic*

by Tony Kinton

No matter the locale, the size of the animal, or the tool used for the pursuit, one constant remains when hunting mule deer: they are incredible.

**T**hat first mule deer was spectacular. He bounced from a clump of oak brush and stood on a Colorado mountain-side, looking below at the intruders. The sun glinted from bifurcated antlers that were bigger than anything I had seen before. "That's what you're looking for," the rancher told us as he smiled and gestured toward the buck. He then drove to other parts of his property to show us boundaries and help select a campsite.

Later that week I watched my arrow zip across sage brush to connect with an animal far less impressive than that first one. Still, it was a memorable occurrence, one that remains as clear today as it did that afternoon almost twenty years past.

Once in Montana, an early blizzard came. Hunting in the Breaks of the Missouri River proved more than unwise, so we moved back to the security of the outfitter's ranch. Some good prairie deer called the area home, and they left farmland alfalfa at daylight to shelter in the creek bottoms and rimrock. I watched a tall-racked 4X4 jump the fence and head up country just as the sun chased a bitter night from the high plains. "I know where he's going," my host told me. "We'll give him some time and go up there." We did, and by noon I had completed a successful stalk and collected my best mule deer.

Regardless of the locale, size of animals encountered, or tools chosen for the pursuit, one constant attaches itself to mule deer: they are incredible. Never has a game animal so quickly and completely endeared itself to me as has this one. I'm not sure why. Perhaps it is the country. Mountains and sage flats and oak brush and early snows are things of romance for a Southerner unfamiliar with such. Perhaps it is the animal itself. Not as abundant or as accessible as the

whitetail, a touch of mystique follows the big-eared critters of the high country. Whatever it is, it has made me an addict—one who hungers to smell sage in the autumn air, one who longs to wake in a quiet camp to find a skiff of ice covering the water bucket, one who tingles at the shimmer of golden aspen leaves in the fall. The central figure in all this is the mule deer.

For those unacquainted, mule deer are creatures of the West, inhabiting the mountains and prairies of the Rocky Mountain states and Canadian Provinces. They differ from the whitetail in several ways. The most prominent feature separating them from their white-tailed cousins is the ear. Mule deer have outsized ears, hence the name mule deer. Unlike whitetails, the mule's antlers are bifurcated. The typical whitetail will have all its points coming from a main beam, but a typical mule deer will have a forked beam with forked points coming from that. A regular configuration for a mature buck is four points to the side—a 4X4 with small or no brow tines (eye guards). As a buck grows older, he may add points and mass, or he may simply add mass. A heavy-racked 4X4 or 5X5 mule with a spread approaching thirty inches is a sight that is altogether wonderful to behold.

Mule deer likely enjoyed their zenith in the 1970s. It seems that the West was literally filled with them then; finding big bucks was simply a matter of looking. That has changed. While a great deal of discussion has gone into the matter by various groups and individuals, the dynamics of the situation are still not clearly understood.

One possible explanation for population decline is hunting pressure. Those great days of the seventies brought much publicity, and hunters responded. Lightly hunted areas became heavily hunted, and mule deer bucks, like whitetails







on non-managed lands, were taken before they reached full maturity. With increased pressure it became more and more difficult to find a place yet undiscovered by the crowds.

In an effort to regulate the taking of bucks before they reached trophy class, some states instituted limited draws and/or minimum antler restrictions that remain in effect today. These have helped. Colorado, one of the most popular mule deer states, is an example. While the state still has an over-the-counter license system, it has minimum requirements for antler size. After this was instituted, an obvious and almost immediate increase in antler size became apparent. The state remains the only one where licenses are unlimited and available upon request. All others have a permit/draw system that limits the number of tags available.

Concerning this over-the-counter method still in place in Colorado, Dale Lashnits, chief of Public Affairs of the Colorado Division of Wildlife, said they are examining the licensing for nonresidents. "There will likely be a change in this in the future," he said. The state already limits all buck licenses for the late season and Lashnits noted, "If we are to produce the deer herd we want, we have to deal with the number of people who hunt them."

Another factor impacting mule deer herds is one that many hunters, especially those in the South, fail to consider. Winter can do tremendous damage to a deer herd. "In the early nineties we had far more winter problems than most realize," said Lashnits. "We have spent the last few years trying to recover. The deer herd is down a little but probably about the same size as in the 1980s. It is in pretty good shape now, and some good opportunities are out there."

Elk numbers are up throughout most of their range, which leads to speculation that there is some sort of correlation between high elk numbers and low deer numbers. Al Langston with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department doesn't think this is necessarily true, however. "They share the same habitat, but it's not like one is displacing the other," Langston said. "The elk is simply much larger, stronger, and more adaptable. Deer and antelope are more susceptible to winter. We have had years when we had both elk and deer. Elk have been booming and the deer have been down recently, but it is because elk are not so susceptible to winter conditions."

Langston notes that Wyoming has had some tough years of late. "The hardest hit area in Wyoming was the northern part of the state this past year," he said. "The bottom two-thirds got along pretty well. Conditions now are looking up. We have good production, and there are a lot of young animals out there. Hunting should be really good in the upcoming years."

Fire is another possible factor in fluctuating deer/elk numbers. The West has been particularly hard hit in the past few years with fires. While these are ecologically sound and result in enhanced habitat in the long run, some short-term impacts can be negative on deer. Elk move in almost

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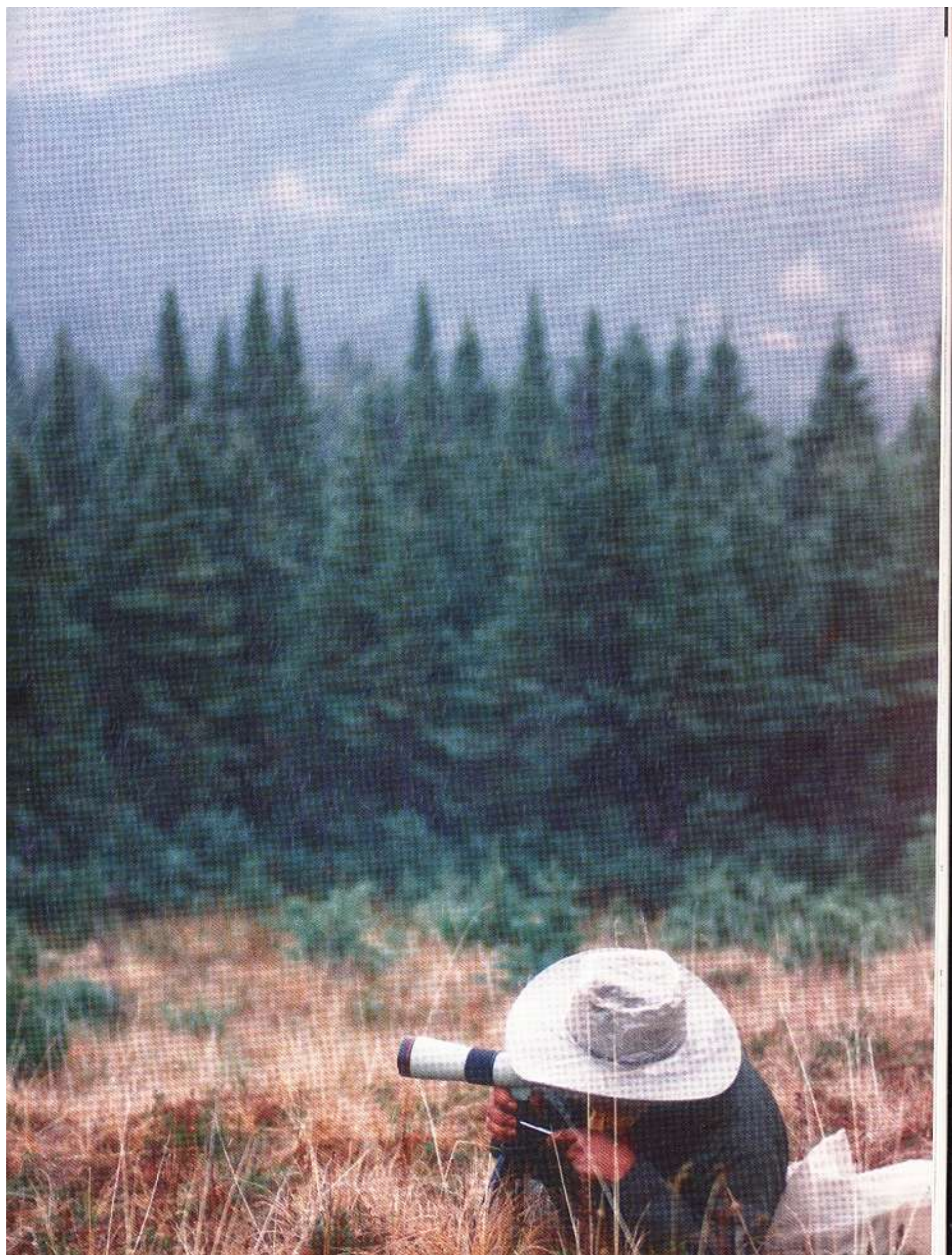
*Right: Looking for deer in the mountains along the  
Graham River in British Columbia.*

*Below: Good country for prairie mules:  
Box Elder Creek in central Montana.*



Photographs by Tony Kinton







immediately after the fires burn and new growth sprouts, but deer seem to wait for the foliage to get some age on it, perhaps several years.

Predation, too, must not be overlooked for its down side. Some areas have stopped or limited the hunting of many predator species, among them cougar. The numbers of these animals have exploded, and their impact is being felt on the deer herd. Trapping also has been curtailed. All in all, this means there are more things out there to eat mule deer than at one time.

Human encroachment is another factor. Some traditional migration routes of mule deer are some of the most beautiful mountain settings of the West, and these are favored for resorts and other developments. There also has been sprawl and growth on important winter ranges of the big-eared deer. All these things influence the mulie, and a reasonable expectation can only be some reduction in numbers.

But, make no mistake, mule deer are still available and are worth hunting. Even with fewer deer today than at one time, mulies still inhabit seventeen western states, portions of Mexico, and the Canadian Provinces of Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan. Some truly big brutes are taken annually from remote hiding spots in the mountains, and it is not unusual to find a full-grown prairie or desert mulie that is a veritable heart stopper. Although elk numbers may be up and deer down, the hunter driving west from more southern or eastern regions reaches good mule deer country far before reaching elk country, and the mulies go all the way into the elk domain. That fact means that the deer in question is a tenant of some immense real estate. There are millions of acres and thousands of miles in which he can be found.

The overriding question is likely, "Where exactly?" As pointed out already, seventeen western states, Mexico, and Canada. To be more specific, there are some really good areas for mule deer.

Colorado remains one of the foremost mule deer states. While hunters can't expect to get off the plane or drive to any spot statewide and immediately begin seeing deer, the deer are there. Finding them just takes some educated guessing and research.

A good place to look is on the western slope in the Rifle/Meeker/Craig area. Check out the mountains around Gunnison and Durango. Some reasonable prairie hunting should exist along I-25 from the New Mexico to Wyoming border. Care should be taken, however, since a great deal of the area is private land.

Wyoming goes overlooked by many mule deer hunters, and that is a shame. It can be really good. Any of the mountainous regions in the Jackson Hole area can be outstanding. So can the Big Horns near Sheridan. For prairie hunting, the regions

*Top Right: Great deer country: The Missouri Breaks of Montana.*

*Bottom Right: Harold Wiggins (left) with Kinton on one of the author's early Colorado mule deer hunts.*

along the Little Powder, Little Missouri, and Belle Fourche rivers near Gillette should get some attention.

Montana is marvelous. Few mountains are more glorious than the Selway/Bitterroot along the Montana/Idaho border. For those up to the challenge, hunting there can be superb. Look for some especially good high prairie hunting in the Missouri Breaks north and west of Fort Peck Reservoir. Tiny creek/river bottoms that wind along the farm country of eastern Montana can be mule deer heaven.

There are other states: Idaho, the Selway/Bitterroot; Utah, the northern end of the state; Nevada, the mountainous regions; New Mexico; the Dakotas in the Badlands bordering Wyoming and Montana; Arizona, home of the famed Kaibab Plateau which Teddy Roosevelt first established as a wilderness area. This one has been coming on strong for several years.


While these are not the only states/areas with good mule deer hunting, they do represent some of the favored locales.

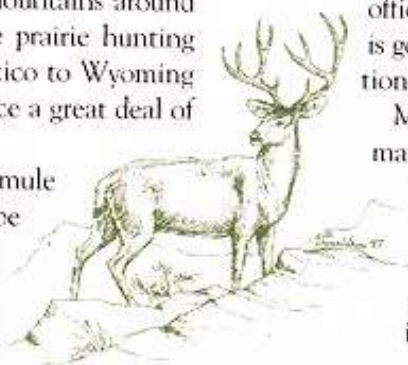
One thing the hunter must do, regardless of area, is to determine the licensing process well in advance and see to that bit of business. Most areas are on a draw system, and some draws may come as early as March or April. There is no way around this legality.

Property boundaries need to be understood. A great deal of the West is public land, under the jurisdiction of such entities as the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), but there are private holdings scattered about, and these must be respected. It is the hunter's responsibility to know the land lines and act accordingly.

The hunter must understand restrictions: The laws governing what activity/game is legal, what constitutes proof of being a legal hunter, and what guidelines must be followed concerning game meat when taken.

A good policy to follow regarding all the above is to contact the state agency and ask for written material. Departments of Game are helpful, and the information obtained is vital to a pleasant hunt. Making contact with an official from the state where the hunt is planned is good. Biologists, game officers, or public relations representatives are good contacts.

Mule deer hunting is splendid. The numbers may be down, but not to the extent that these magnificent animals should be overlooked by bowhunters. I recommend that the bowhunter not cheat himself out of one of hunting's most grandiose experiences; it is magic. 









# Hunting the Far North

with Self-Made Equipment • by Mike Phillips

I had just settled into the stand when the big blackie appeared behind me, ambling in from the direction of the river. He was a big-bodied bruin. His belly was close to the ground and his legs looked short and stubby. He was also a long way between the ears, a sure sign that he had a big head. Even after ten years of hunting and photographing bears, it still amazes me how quietly they move. A person can watch a spot for hours without seeing a thing and the next time he looks, a bear will be standing there as if materialized from thin air.

My friends and I had hunted this bait site for several years and had a fair amount of success on some good bears. My goal this time was to take a bear with equipment that I had manufactured myself, right down to the broadheads on my arrows.

This bear drifted through the brush like a ghost, testing the wind from every direction. He kept his distance, patiently watching the bait and the dense Alaskan woods around it for any sign of danger or challengers. A few times he stealthily walked to within twenty-five or thirty yards of the clearing, but something made him uncomfortable and he would melt back into the thick cover of the spring foliage. After ten or fifteen minutes he left, and I didn't see him again for a while.

I was shooting one of my favorite longbows, a fifty-nine pound bamboo beauty measuring sixty-six inches nock to nock. It's one of my early bows but a beautiful little stick and a good shooter, too. My arrows were made of compressed cedar, crested and dipped, then fletched with magnum banana feathers. Alaska game regulations require that broadheads be made of steel so stone heads cannot be used. Since I had been toying with the idea of making trade points to decorate some display arrows anyway, I decided to make some of these for a hunt. Using an old table saw blade that had been lying around in my shop, I cut blanks out and shaped them, ground a bevel on the cutting edges, and lashed them to the shafts with mouse sinew and hide glue. After a few practice sessions to

make sure that they were flying straight, I finished them with a final hunting edge.

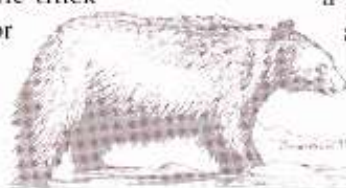
Now, the evening forest was silent except for the rustle of a light wind in the tops of the trees. I spent a few minutes giving my gear a final once-over as I sat in my stand and waited hopefully for the bear to reappear. It was nearly ten o'clock but two hours of shooting light remained. The late night Alaskan sun was filtering through the trees, giving the impression that it was hours earlier. Time passed slowly as I read a book and tried to ignore the swarm of mosquitoes assaulting my headnet.

A bear finally appeared in the clearing to the left of the stand. It stopped once, sat up on its haunches, tested the air and walked to the bait. Once on the bait, this good sized male began to help himself to a healthy dose of bread and doughnuts. I got to my feet, nocked an arrow, and began to look him over for rubbed spots or thin hair. Being the first week in June, a good look is necessary because depending on the temperatures, you will find some rubbed bears now and then. This bear had a good coat and probably squared between five and a half and six feet. After watching him for a few minutes more, I decided that if he gave me another good angle, I would take him.

As I waited, I saw movement in the brush to my right and suddenly realized that this wasn't a male at all. A pair of two-year-old cubs walked out of the brush and joined the sow for a snack.

Fortunately, not being rushed to shoot had saved me from shooting a sow with cubs which is in violation of Alaska law. I had watched this bear for over fifteen minutes when the cubs appeared. This night I was glad to be a patient bear-baiter.

The tree bears fed and milled around for about ten minutes when the sow suddenly woofed and bolted into the brush. The cubs followed closely, groaning their disapproval of her decision to leave. I slowly scanned the perimeter of my little clearing and saw the reason for their hasty retreat. The big bear who had originally shown himself was back. He stood at the edge of the clearing and stared intently at the bait, seeming bolder than during the earlier visits. Finally, he



Photograph courtesy of Mike Phillips






Alaska's midnight sun shone for Mike Phillips just before this photo was taken.

began waddling toward my stand. A good look at his entire body confirmed that he was as big as I had originally guessed and a trophy in anyone's book.

Looking back, it seems strange the details that I remember as he walked directly beneath my stand, the late evening sun reflecting off his thick black coat, the swarm of mosquitoes around his head, the way his belly seemed to drag the ground. I remember feeling the longbow in my hand and testing the tension on the string. My heart jumped into my throat when he stopped and looked directly at me. I froze and tried not to look into his eyes for what seemed like forever. Finally, he walked on over to the bait and started to dig. This big old boar was a great specimen. His hair was thick and shiny as it rippled on his back with every movement. As his front leg went forward, I drew the bow, feeling the limbs flex smoothly as I sent one of my homemade missiles toward his vitals and watched my fletching disappear in the black hair. He grunted, jumped forward, and ran crashing into the

alders. I watched and listened, following his path until the night was once again silent. It took a few minutes for my adrenaline-charged system to settle down, so I drank some water and packed my day pack with shaky hands before climbing down from my perch to begin trailing.

Once at the spot where the bear had been standing, I was greeted by a solid blood trail that led about fifty yards to the fallen black bear. The homemade broadhead had penetrated both lungs for a quick, clean kill. I backtracked the blood trail and found the head and half of the arrow shaft where it had broken off in the alders.

The hide squared out at six feet, two inches and the skull greenscored eighteen and two-eighths inches. My goal was realized: my handcrafted equipment had taken a trophy black bear as efficiently as anything I could have bought. 

*L&R: Equipment Editor Sam Fadala recommends carrying a firearm as back-up when hunting in Alaska.*



# A DREAM HUNT

on Alaska's Prince of Wales Island

by Gil Blue



The author's seven-foot, ten-inch bear.



**I**t was early May and my hunting partner and I were long past the planning stages of our dream hunt. We were on our way. Our final destination from Anchorage, Alaska, where we both live, was the fabled Prince of Wales Island in beautiful southeast Alaska to pursue the legendary black bears known to reach eight feet in height.

We arrived in Ketchikan and with rented vehicle loaded on board the ferry which would take us on a short seventy mile ride to Hollis, the point of entry onto the Island. We hoped for a camp that would eventually have at least a bear for each of us.

The first four days of our two week hunt were spent searching for the most desirable places to set up our baits. During this time we truly enjoyed nature at its best—Sitka blacktail deer, eagles, and even a wolf crossing one of the many logging roads. We looked for old growth timber, water, and bear sign, including scat, skunk cabbage with the tops eaten off, tracks, and, of course, the bears themselves. On the fifth day we set up and had bear activity the next morning. On the sixth day we also set up approximately seven or eight miles away and had multiple bears in three days.

Quite unexpectedly one day, we spotted a beautiful bear in a clear cut preoccupied with eating. My partner, Bob Johnson, decided to stalk. Going up a small creek with good cover in the center of a small valley that leads to the clear cut, Bob crept ever closer and closer to get a good, ethical shot. The big bruin seem totally unaware of the bowhunter. At one point the bear and Bob nearly ran into each other and I just knew Bob would surely be discovered. But, not this time. The wind held and so did Bob—held his eighty-five pound recurve, that is, and released a perfectly placed shot through both lungs of the seven foot, four inch bear.

Two days later found me sitting in my stand at around nine o'clock in the evening, admiring a nice smaller bear as a hunter often finds himself doing. Suddenly, the bear jumped up, took a quick smell and decided to "head south." Moments later a truly magnificent bear entered the small clearing, came to within thirty yards of me, stood up, decided something wasn't quite right, and left. While he returned two more times to the same place, he would always stop cold and leave.




Hunting partner Bob Johnson and his seven-foot, four-inch black bear from Prince of Wales Island.

My second night was beginning to look like a slow night with bears not staying around, I thought, when from out of nowhere came the tremendous sound of a bear exchanging air. I turned very slowly to see a huge bear standing about four feet below my feet and three feet to my left. I could hear my heart beating; how he didn't I will never know. When he went to the bait some fifteen yards away, he simply licked it once and walked straight on by it. The biggest black bear I had ever seen in the twenty-three years I have lived in Alaska so close, and yet no chance for me to shoot.

Day three found me smeared in grease and dressed in full camo. I thought that if I remained motionless I could be, to the small bears anyway, totally invisible. Watching one at one point suddenly, he stood up, sniffed the air, and left. It wasn't me he was sniffing.

The silence of the woods was broken as I heard a large animal walking towards me. It was a bear—a very large bear. He was not following the edge of the meadow which would place him about fifteen yards from me, but instead he stayed in the middle, as if he owned the place. When his head went behind a small shrub, I drew my bow. As he emerged from behind the small shrub and his left leg went forward, I released from about eight yards. What followed was a blur of motion. He ran for roughly fifteen seconds and then all was quiet until I heard the death moan.

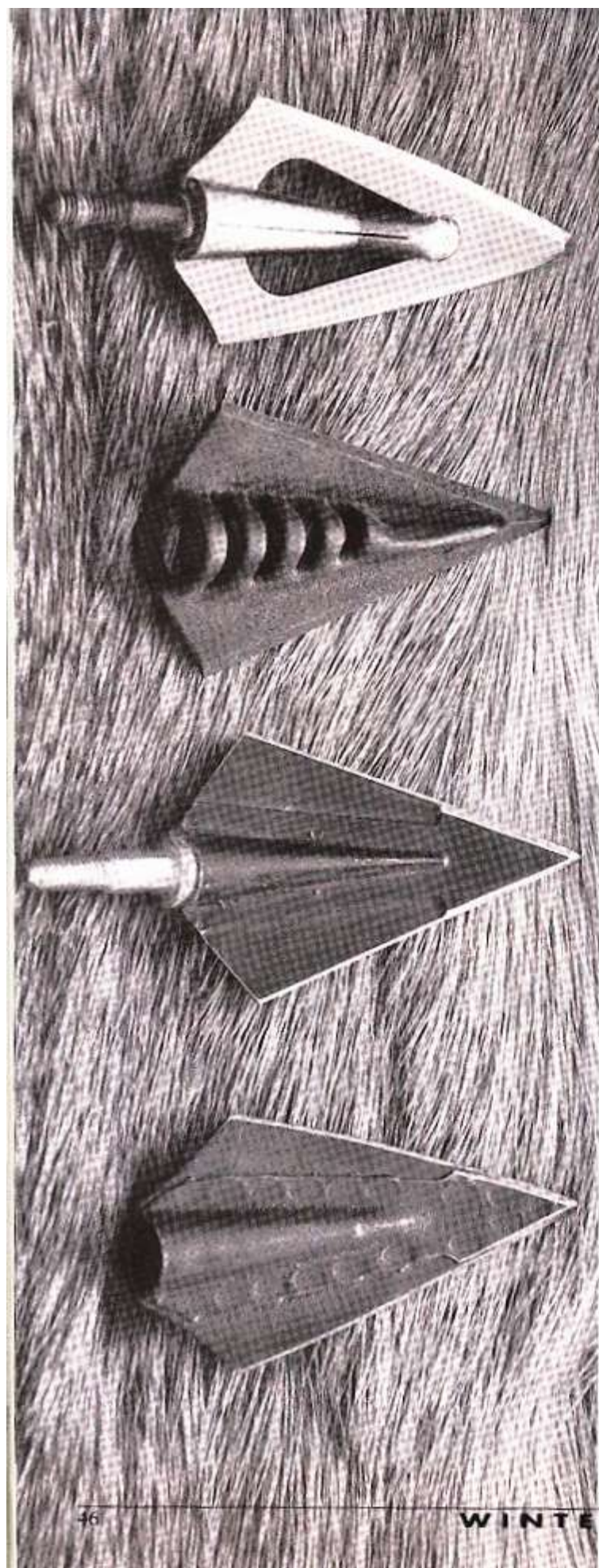
In the remaining days of the hunt we would both tag another bear while never tiring of the endless beauty of the Island and its animals. It was exciting; for example, one day a bear came up and started shaking the tree stand I was in. I'm sure he was trying to prove the point that he was there first and it was time for me to go.

While it was a successful hunt in terms of tagging bear, a hunt like this is much more. It's the Alaskan wildlife with wolves, deer, otter, and eagle, the beautiful wilderness, the pleasure of watching the bears both big and impressive and small with lots of antics, and the camaraderie with a partner. It's definitely a dream hunt. 



*L&R: Equipment Editor Sam Fadala recommends carrying a firearm as back-up when hunting in Alaska.*





# Getting To The POINT With Broadheads

text and photography by Don Francois

An animal can be downed without causing distress or pain when bow shot by an ethical hunter using the right equipment and knowing the principles of how arrows kill.

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Popular examples of two-bladed broadheads include (top to bottom); Bear, Ribtek, Magnus, and Zwickey.



As the October sun began to slip below the horizon, a six-point buck arose from his bed in a downed tree top and stretched. After carefully surveying his surroundings, he began easing toward the big white oak that had recently started dropping its crop of acorns. Although it was still light, the buck instinctively knew that if he didn't get to the tree early, the does and yearlings would get every sweet, tasty nut that had fallen from the tree. There were a lot of deer this year and as the days cooled with the approach of winter, the competition for food would only increase.

He kept to the thickets and shadows and moved carefully, constantly nosing the air for danger. In a few minutes he was within sight of the tree. He paused a moment, sensed no other deer with whom he would have to compete for the acorns, and moved in. Putting his head down, he began to feed.

He was aware of the sound of air being ripped by feathers and then there was a sudden sting behind his right shoulder. Something suddenly landed on the ground just to his left. Startled, he ran into a nearby thicket to hide. Once in the cover, he looked back to see if he was being pursued, but neither saw nor heard what it was that stung him. It appeared that the danger, whatever it was, was past. He was growing very tired.

About forty minutes later as darkness was closing in, a hunter lowered his longbow to the ground and then climbed down from the stand in the hackberry tree that grew just twenty yards from the big white oak. He walked to where the deer had been standing and picked up his cedar arrow. He was pleased, but not surprised, to see bright red blood covering its entire length. His broadhead had done its job. He headed for the thicket to retrieve his game.

Had the hunter chosen a different broadhead or not waited to find his game, would the story have ended the same way? Perhaps not. This animal was downed without causing distress or pain because it was bowshot by an ethical hunter using the right equipment and knowing the principles of how arrows kill.

"What you are trying to do is cause damage without pain," said Robert Holmes, D.V.M., a professor of radiology at Louisiana State University School of Veterinary Medicine. "If an animal feels pain or distress, physiological processes take place within its body to deal with the damage: adrenaline begins to pump; breathing and heart rates increase; major blood vessels constrict to reduce hemorrhage. Ideally, after a shot you want the animal to remain

relaxed so these activities do not occur, and death comes quickly and as painlessly as possible."

Dr. Holmes is uniquely qualified to comment on the effectiveness of broadheads because in addition to his academic background, he is a traditional bowhunter with years of experience. Dr. Holmes received his first bow, a lemonwood self-bow, at age seven. He has since hunted in several states, taking everything from jack rabbits to deer and even ducks with his bow. He belongs to the National Wildlife Federation, Bayou State Bowhunters Association, and Louisiana Traditional Bowmen. He is also a National Bowhunter Education Foundation certified instructor, teaching bowhunter education classes when he isn't teaching veterinary medicine.

Dr. Holmes contrasted an arrow with a bullet. "An arrow works very differently from a bullet. A bullet works by shock. There is a massive release of energy when a bullet strikes an animal; this energy release destroys tissue and disrupts organ function. Although a bullet will cause bleeding, it does not rely on hemorrhage to kill as a broadhead does."

He went on to explain that a bullet may deliver two thousand foot pounds of energy while an arrow may deliver



Dr. Holmes holds a flint point from his collection alongside a modern metal broadhead. He says traditional bowhunters have been using two-bladed heads for a long time.



only one hundred foot pounds. Consequently, the arrow must utilize this energy for penetration and delivers very little shocking power. "A broadhead must rely on cutting a blood vessel or cutting through the heart, lungs, or some other vital organ," said Holmes. "Death will be the result from hemorrhage and loss of function."

An important factor in achieving good penetration is to have a sharp broadhead. Holmes said that in addition to being better able to penetrate, a sharp broadhead will cause less pain and, therefore, less distress to the animal. He said that hunters have probably heard stories of or have even seen a deer that was shot with a bow and arrow and then just stood until it dropped dead. These cases are good examples of an arrow causing minimal distress to the animal.

Holmes explained that there is good reason for the hunter to wait before trying to trail an animal that has just been shot. If the animal hears or sees the hunter in pursuit, it will feel fear and distress and the physiological processes will be activated. If the animal remains relaxed and the shot was good, the tracking job should not take the hunter very far. The broadhead will do its work painlessly.

If the hunter knows he made a marginal shot, that is, the arrow placement was less than optimum, Dr. Holmes stresses that the animal should be given more time before being trailed. The hunter may need to wait several hours or even come back the next day if conditions allow.

"And don't assume that you made a non-lethal shot because you find little or no blood," cautioned Holmes. "Sometimes the blood collects in the chest cavity or elsewhere in the body and no blood trail is found, but the deer may still die from the wound in a short period of time."

When asked about a deer or other animal's chances of recovery after receiving a non-lethal arrow wound, Dr. Holmes said this is one of the advantages of bowhunting that many people don't realize. A non-lethal shot is usually a clean cut, the amount of tissue damage will be less than with a gunshot wound, and the shock that would be associated with a bullet wound is of no concern. "Consequently, the animal will probably heal faster and be left more functional than if it were to receive a non-lethal gunshot wound," he said.

However, Dr. Holmes was quick to expand on this last statement. "This does not mean that hunters should feel free to take marginal shots because they are using a bow. A gut-shot which causes little bleeding but does severe intestinal damage will also result in death, but it will be from infection, not from hemorrhaging, and may take several days. If conditions are such that you cannot put a sharp broadhead into a vital area at a reasonable range, don't take the shot."

Much has been written about how broadheads should be sharpened and about whether the edge should be smooth, rough, or serrated. Dr. Holmes said a broadhead should be as

sharp as possible and have a smooth edge. "If the edge has burrs or serrations, the cut will not be as clean and will cause more pain and distress to the animal, and the physiological damage control processes that I mentioned will begin," he noted.

Concerning types of broadheads and whether one type was more effective than others, Dr. Holmes said that traditional archers probably shoot two-bladed, cut-on-contact broadheads more than anything else. He personally likes the Zwickie Eskimo but feels that a three-bladed head such as a Snuffer would also penetrate well and may cause more bleeding by virtue of its extra blade. He said that in his opinion chisel points and mechanical "gadget heads" do not offer anything to the traditional bowhunter.

When asked about choosing broadheads for particular game, Holmes said that the archer should match his equipment to the quarry. Hunters should realize that whitetails are comparatively fragile game animals, he said. "The whitetail has thin skin and is not particularly large-boned or heavy-muscled. The effectiveness of your broadhead becomes even more important when hunting hogs, for example, which have thicker muscles through the chest area and tough skin. Large animals like elk and moose are heavy-muscled and large-boned. Other animals such as bears and cats have a lot of connective tissue under the skin which makes it more difficult to cut through." His suggestion is that when going after such game, the bowhunter may want to use a heavier arrow or a heavier bow than would be used on whitetails.

When asked about shot placement on deer, Dr. Holmes was quick to say that a shot in the chest area, preferably a double lung shot, is the most effective. "A shot to this area of the deer's body will stand a good chance of causing major hemorrhaging because of the large blood vessels going to each lung," he said.

He further explained that when the chest cavity is punctured by an arrow, the vacuum that is normally present for lung operation is lost. However, there is a membrane that separates the two lungs and if only one lung is punctured, the other side can still function fairly well. A double lung shot which penetrates both lungs will make the animal's ability to breathe more difficult and will hasten its death.

Holmes said that this is where the ability of an arrow to penetrate becomes important. "Bowhunters get into a controversy over which is better: a light, fast arrow or a slower, heavy arrow. Remember your high school physics? Force is a factor of mass multiplied by acceleration, or if you prefer, weight times velocity. With the development of aluminum and especially carbon arrows, some archers are overly concerned with speed."

Holmes again compared arrows and bullets. "Rifle hunters have already figured this out," he said. "A slow heavy





Dr. Robert Holmes has been a bowhunter since his boyhood days in New Mexico and California.

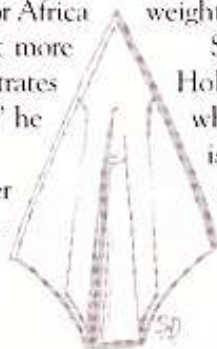
bullet penetrates farther than a light, fast bullet. A light bullet or a light arrow will release its energy more quickly and will not penetrate as far.

According to Holmes, if an archer were headed for Africa to hunt dangerous game, he should be a lot more concerned with how well his arrow penetrates rather than how fast it flies. "Arrow speed is good," he said, "but don't sacrifice weight to achieve it."

In addition to arrow weight, Holmes cites other factors that will help an arrow achieve maximum penetration: "Arrow tuning is important. An

arrow that is out of tune will strike the target at an angle and will not penetrate as it should. This is obvious on the target range when we shoot an ill-tuned arrow that strikes at an angle and does not penetrate far enough to support its own weight and becomes a 'hanger.'

So what is the bottom line on broadheads? Dr. Holmes closed with this admonition: "Regardless of what game you are after or how powerful your bow is, anything less than a sharp broadhead and good shot placement may lead to poor performance and a wounded animal rather than a quick, humane kill." ■





# Huntin' 101

by Matt Schuster

Recently I was driving in a major U.S. city, listening to a popular local radio host launch into an attack on my favorite pastime of hunting. What followed the attack was even worse. Caller after caller expressed various degrees of outrage in less-than-eloquent terms in response to the host's opinions. I was the next caller on deck when the host declared that he would accept no more calls from hunters because obviously hunters as a group were not intelligent enough to speak on a radio show as successful as his. Based on the phone calls he broadcast, I had to agree.

His response to the poorly expressed ideas presented by the hunters/callers led me to think about the importance of effectively communicating the realities of hunting without being some kind of intellectual giant. So, with a little tongue in cheek, I offer the Bad Answer as opposed to an effective response in what I term, "Better Answer."



*Hunters say that they need to kill deer so they don't overpopulate, but can't we just let the population adjust naturally or use some sort of birth control?*

**Bad Answer:** Heck, if we don't kill 'em they will be everywhere, wrecking our cars, eating our shrubs, and then finally starving to death in our front yards. If we don't kill 'em first, they'll take over the world.

**Better Answer:** All studies have shown that birth control does not work on a population of any wild animals that have the freedom to roam, and you certainly would not want to limit wild animals in their ability to move about their available habitat would you?

As for letting nature take its course, since when have I, as man, not been an integral part of nature? I have always been and always will be a living element of nature, and, in fact, that is why I hunt, to participate in a very natural process that as a side effect happens to effectively control overpopulation.

While I may not hunt out of some altruistic desire to control overpopulating animal herds, I am very happy that hunting helps animals so much. I hunt because I get immense satisfaction out of the entire process, from just being in the woods to preparing and eating a game dinner. I would compare my satisfaction to that which individuals get from eating a fish that they caught themselves or from preparing vegetables from a homegrown garden.

*Well, if that is it, then how come hunters will always choose to shoot the big healthy buck instead of the weakest individual available. Wouldn't taking the weakest be more natural?*

**Bad Answer:** Hey, I only get one deer tag a year and if I get a monster I might get an endorsement from the Smell-Me Urine Company and get to be on the I-Got-Big-Bucks-Over-Feeders TV show on cable TV Saturday morning. Besides, nobody ever won a big truck by taking an eighty pound doe.

**Better Answer:** Lots of hunters would take a weak deer if one was presented, but due to excellent management by our state wildlife departments and the utilization of controlled hunting seasons there are very few areas in which there are any overpopulated, starving game populations with the exception of a few suburban areas in which hunting is not allowed.

*The world is such a cruel place, I just don't see how you can add to the pain in the world by adding to the pain of innocent animals?*

**Bad Answer:** Hey, I put a big old Snuffer through both lungs and he don't feel a thing.

**Better Answer:** Any ethical hunter's goal is not to cause an animal pain, it is to kill it as cleanly as possible. An animal hit by a bullet or a razor sharp broadhead dies a quick and relatively painless death. There certainly are unfortunate instances where animals may not die as quickly as a perfect world would dictate, but I ask you one important question in return: How do animals die in the wild? They certainly do not wander into the local wild animal clinic for a shot of morphine as they decline due to old age. They die violently, either accidentally such as in an auto collision, or often slowly in the jaws of a predator, or even more slowly due to illness or starvation.

*Well, I just don't like the idea of adding to the pain of animals. In fact, I believe we should all become vegetarians in the interest of causing fewer deaths to animals, saving the earth, and being more healthy. Don't you?*

**Bad Answer:** Well, you are mindless twit, and I certainly did not fight my way to the top of the food chain to eat nothing but salad.

**Better Answer:** You certainly have the right to be a vegetarian, but you are kidding yourself if you think that you are causing fewer deaths or saving the earth. Countless numbers of wildlife lose their lives under the wheels and blades of modern farm equipment, not to mention the wildlife killed by trucks carrying produce or in the development and production of oil to fuel all the machinery, etc. In sheer numbers, over any given amount of time, more wildlife is killed in the production of agriculture than by all hunters put together in a similar amount of time. This is not an attack on farming, however. Quite the contrary, it is simply a recognition of the fact that in order for man to live, he must cause death, and he always will. As for saving the earth, Dr. David Pimental of Cornell did a study included in the book *Bloodies* by Ted Kerasote, which shows the fossil fuel cost of different foods, including wild meat. He found that even with the



cost of gas, auto production, etc., factored into a hunt producing 150 pounds of elk meat, there was less cost in fossil fuel kilocalories (75,000 kilocalories) than in the equivalent caloric intake of Idaho potatoes (151,000 kilocalories) and way less than a dinner of canned pinto beans and rice (477,000 kilocalories). So unless you are eating a diet of 100 percent organically grown veggies delivered to your door by a horse-drawn wagon, you are kidding yourself if you think you are saving the earth. As for eating a healthy diet, wild meat is high in protein and much less fatty than domestic meat.

*I guess what bothers me the most is that I don't understand why YOU hunt. Do you enjoy killing things?*

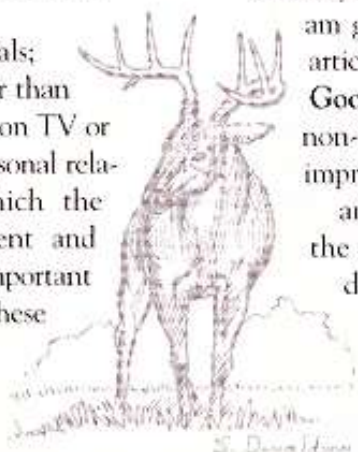
**Bad Answer:** Actually, I just like hunting game because it's a whole lot cheaper than chasing women and after you bag an animal you don't have to waste time talking to it.

**Better Answer:** Do you think that fishermen fish because they like to kill fish? No, they like getting out, enjoying the outdoors, and being in the natural cycle of life as a participant, not as just an observer. Most hunters go afield for the same reasons. Hunting connects them with their roots as a human and occasionally allows them to bring some game home for the dinner table. Most people in our modern society have jobs in which they produce nothing that they use themselves in their daily lives. I believe that this is one reason why we are the most stressed out creatures on the planet and why hobbies such as hunting, fishing, and gardening are so popular. They allow people, even if for a short while, to return to a time when life was more simple and we all took care of our own basic needs by utilizing what the earth gave us.

*I hear you say that you love animals, but if that is so, then how can you kill them?*

**Bad Answer:** I love 'em pan-fried and if I don't kill 'em, they won't lay in the pan long enough to absorb the marinade. So, there you go.

**Better Answer:** I love nature and I love animals; in fact, my love for animals is much deeper than that of those people who see animals only on TV or in magazines because I actually have a personal relationship with the environment in which the animals live. Preserving this environment and healthy wild animal populations is very important to me and, thankfully, I support both of these indirectly through my hunting efforts.



First, millions of dollars of taxes on hunting equipment and licenses are used to manage our public land and, second, my actual hunting helps keep game populations manageable, and therefore healthy.

*Don't a lot of men hunt just for ego, just to prove they are macho?*

**Bad Answer:** Babe, there are a lot of other ways, some of which are even more fun than hunting, to prove how macho I am. (Said while thumping chest.)

**Better Answer:** I am sure there must be some who hunt for that reason because of emotional insecurity and immaturity. However, I am humbled by my own experience involving taking the life of game animals with a simple bow and arrow. It is very hard for me to explain to someone who has never hunted, but I would be willing to bet that most of the guys that I hunt with say a very heartfelt thank you to God every time they take an animal although most probably wouldn't admit it. Another interesting fact is that both hunting and fishing are growing more quickly with the female population than with us "macho" types.



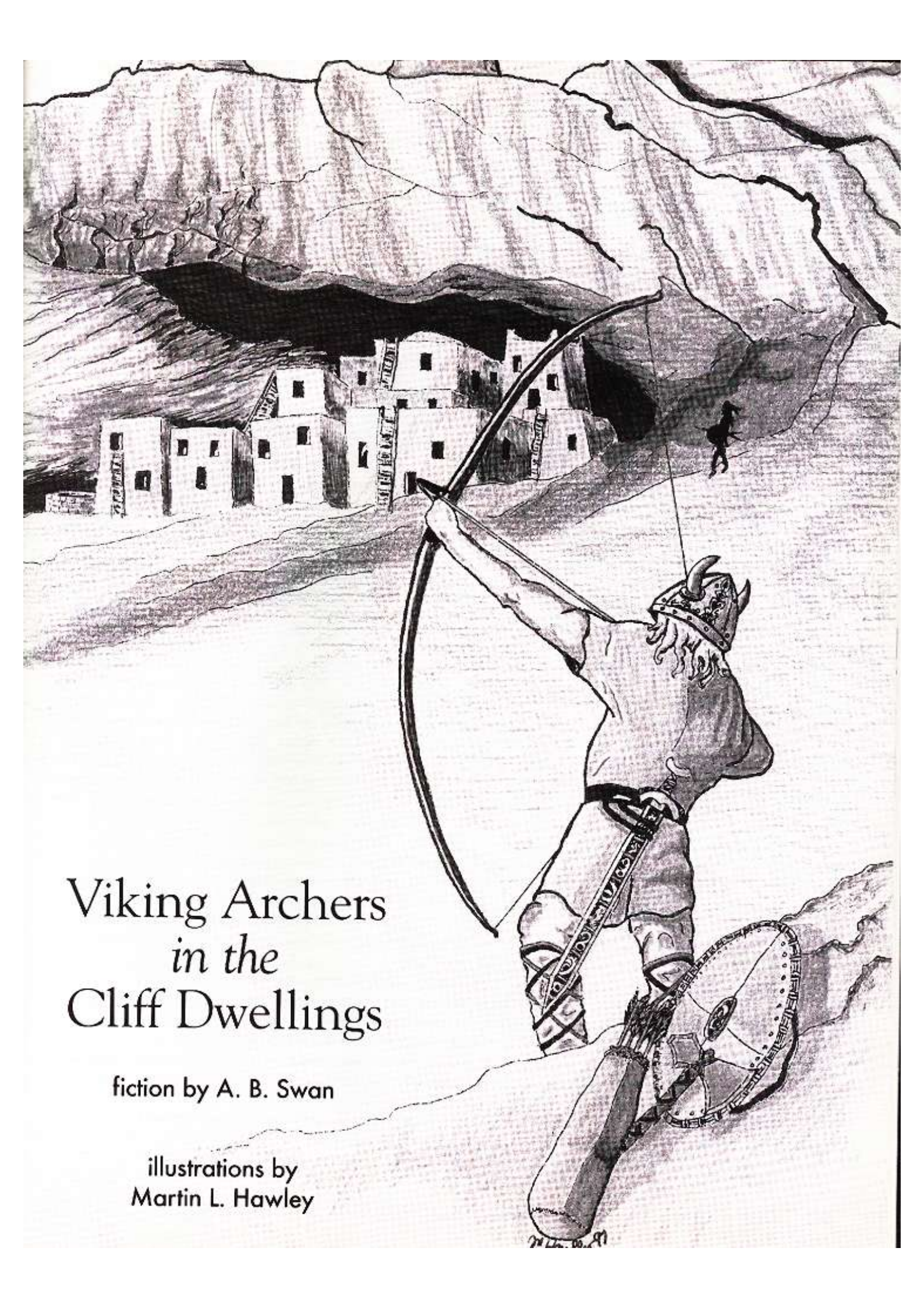
I hope that some of these ideas presented in this rather flippant approach will help you the next time you need to express your pro-hunting position. For serious debates, you can find excellent material in Ted Kerasote's book, *Bloodies*, mentioned earlier in the discussion of Dr. David Pimental's study, and in *In Defense of Hunting* by James Swan.

One point to consider when discussing hunting is that the most effective answer to an emotional question from a non-hunter is an emotional answer based in fact. If facts alone were enough, then we would have no significant anti-hunting movement.

**Bad Conclusion:** Heck, I don't actually care what other people think about all this stuff. After all, hunting certainly won't be outlawed in my lifetime, and after I am gone—who cares! So, if you don't like this article—so what?

**Good Conclusion:** When any of us speaks to a non-hunter, we represent all hunters and a good impression can go a very long way. Never forget, anyone you speak with may someday have the option to vote away your right to take your dinner with a stick and string. Thanks for letting me share my views with you. ■



A detailed illustration of a Viking archer in the foreground, aiming a longbow. The archer wears a horned helmet, a tunic, and arm guards, with a sword at his waist. In the background, a cluster of ancient cliff dwellings is nestled within a cave opening. A small figure is visible on a ledge to the right. The scene is set against a backdrop of rugged, layered rock formations.

# Viking Archers *in the* Cliff Dwellings

fiction by A. B. Swan

illustrations by  
Martin L. Hawley



**F**ires lighted the Great Hall, casting giant shadows of giant men on the walls. Thorvald, one of the leaders, leaned against his great bow as he spoke. "Are we brave? Does dying frighten us? Will we not fight on the sides of the gods against the Giants in Valhalla if we die bravely?" His questions brought affirming nods from every man. "Then who will go?" Every hand thrust upward, some holding swords, some knives, others powerful bows. It was decided. The plan of which they had spoken for two years was underway. Boats would be launched into the summer sea, destination unknown, perhaps a one-way trip to the edge of the world, then over the side into the abyss. That would be a brave death, with all its Viking rewards. They would go. They wanted to go. Every one of them.

The culture had thrived well in a hostile land filled with ice and snow much of the year. Now their population was high, their resources dwindling. The long ships were ready to carry as many as possible either to a new land, or destruction. "Many women should go along, all of child-bearing years," some said. Others disagreed. This was a risk for men to take. That plan prevailed. Only men climbed into the wooden ships, their horned helmets gleaming in the morning sun, their unstrung bows waving to the crowd standing on the shore. Some raised swords in a victory pose. In spite of the peril, not a man on board the dragon-like crafts failed to feel the thrill of adventure and the ultimate challenge—sailing into the great unknown.

And so it was that long before Columbus and his men climbed into their three Spanish vessels, the brave Norsemen set their own sails into the wind. How many were they? One dim record from the past shows ten thousand. Perhaps it was only ten hundred. We will never know. They sailed on and on. If there was a miscalculation, it was timing. They should have left in springtime, for winter caught them in a dismal place that one day would be called Greenland. Iceland would have been much better, being so much more habitable. But they were Vikings and they made light of the bitter wind and familiar snow. Shelters were soon erected and patience set in to carry them through this season of intense cold. They had learned that survival meant cooperation. The leaders insisted upon it, and so they cooperated in everything from gathering fuel to securing meat.

In those days, shaggy wild animals roamed Greenland and every man turned to hunting. There was too much meat. They could not eat it all, and each silently wished he could send the precious food back home to their Scandinavian villages. But they did manage to hang great quantities to dry, for they had built a meeting place from blocks of snow. The Hall of Ice they called it. Wrapped in furs, with only small fires burning, they met several times a week as the winter dragged on and the strips of meat turned into fine jerky. They

spoke of home and of where they might end up. Was the rest of the world flat and cold like this?

Lars, historian for the group, recited the early days in Norway when survival was granted only to the strongest. He told of their forefathers taming the land, defeating enemies that came along the coastline. As with all things, the winter passed; the ice began to crack and break with loud complaint. Finally, sails were once more set into the wind. With cheers the men waved goodbye to their Hall of Ice, which now slumped here and there like a defeated athlete with shrugging shoulders. "Turn into the wind! Turn into the wind!" the leader shouted, and all boats followed Gubrand, the man who could read magnetism from the earth. He watched closely as the needle spun sometimes wildly, waiting for it to settle down. Then he cried out another command, "Turn this way, this way, turn, turn!" and all ships did.

Land! Land! Land! Shouts went up all around, for the men had been on rations for several days now. They had reached North America, landing at what was later named St. Lawrence River. There they passed a winter that to them was like summer, and when it was time to travel inland, it is said five hundred begged to remain in the land that one day would be called New England. But the rest wanted to go on, and go on they did, westward where more decided to stay behind. These became the Wisconsin Mound Builders.

But a restless pack of Vikings could not quench the fire that burned inside them. What lay farther west? What would they find if they kept going? And so they kept on, onward into a greater unknown yet, the Far West. After months of travel, they arrived in Mancos Canyon, the first home of the Norsemen in the region. There they learned to construct wonderful homes. They also began worshipping the sun in elaborate ceremonies with the people of the land. Left for later people were their many tools designed to work the fields, for they had introduced beans to the people of the region. Many were still not satisfied, however. They had not gone far enough. "West, west, west," Jens said to his men, for he was the leader of the restless. "What lies south?" the men shouted in unison. "Let's find out."

When they reached the land of the Cliff Dwellers, the group stopped. Here they would stay, learning from their new friends and teaching them as well. The Norsemen followed local hunting practices and were soon as clever as their teachers in getting close to wild animals. Their strong bows were much more than a match for game, and their hosts were happy to have such allies and helpers. Thorsten, a sort of engineer, began perfecting a water system with irrigation for bean fields. New vessels were made by adding adhesive clay to the outside. Following the invention of small watertight vessels came larger tanks holding water against times of drought. Soon they constructed looms to turn the yucca plant into strong fabric for clothing.



Existing laws were good, but the Vikings installed new rules, where everyone worked, but also shared in the overall prosperity. An annual celebration called the Sun Feast was installed. New marriage customs were agreed upon. The once warlike Norsemen mellowed along with their new climate, but retained their resolve to stay free. Two raiding parties from the south were repelled early in their stay, and the word flowed like the floods of monsoon season over the land. "Do not bother the Cliff Dwellers. They have with them white gods who are very powerful, able to send their heavy arrows against you from afar."

Many decades passed. The influence of the Norsemen continued, but their race was now intermingled with the native people. Their names began to vanish with each succeeding generation until they were no more. They were kept alive only in story and song told and sang by the fires as the elders passed on the record of the people for many more years. Finally, the shining stories grew dim with time, and one day were told no more. Although Viking blood still flowed in the people of the land, who could tell that the great Norsemen had ever come at all? They melted like spring snows, becoming one with the Cliff Dwellers. In turn, the ways of the Cliff Dwellers mingled with theirs. Now they were one people, indivisible.

Not until a modern day student of American Indian culture went to Norway hundreds and hundreds of years later was the remaining link found to show the world what happened so very long ago. The young man ate a simple dinner with a Norse family who served a special bean he had seen before—only once—and in



only one place. It was the bean from the Cliff Dwellers, and here it was again so far away. He puzzled over it, then, back home in New Mexico, dug the earth for the truth, finding artifacts that convinced him to study further, until he uncovered ancient records that satisfied his beliefs. It was true. The Vikings had come to America before Columbus. Some merged with the people of the east, other with the people of the west, including the Cliff Dwellers.

*Note: Although Viking Archers in the Cliff Dwellings is fiction, there are proponents of such a theory today.*





# Outdoor Trivia

by Gene Wensel

Here's a fun little test of your knowledge about the out-of-doors and archery history. We will have more questions in the next issue, so bone up now. Answers to quiz are on page 69.

1. Who was the first bowhunter of this century to kill a polar bear with the bow and arrow?

2. Who was Howard Hill's famous guide when he hunted in Wyoming?

3. What is another name for Bois d'arc?

4. Who pioneered the use of fiberglass in bow building?

5. What competitive sport was Art Young undefeated in?

6. Who is known as the master of flight shooting?

7. What is the proper term for a turtle's shell?

8. What is the proper name for the bell on a moose?

9. What is another name for gugame? (a type of bow wood)

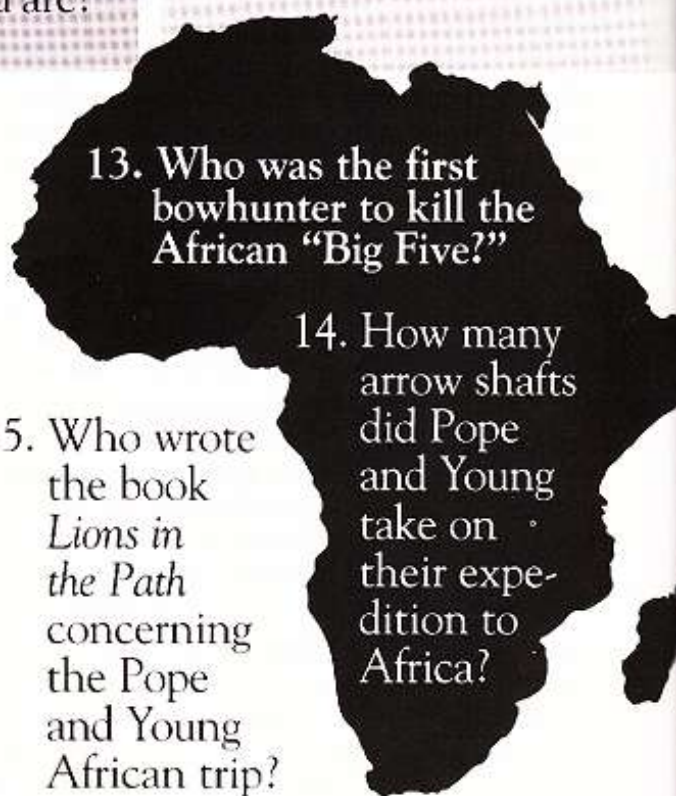
10. What is a custom cabinet used to store longbows called?

11. What broadhead was the Snuffer originally designed from?

13. Who was the first bowhunter to kill the African "Big Five?"

14. How many arrow shafts did Pope and Young take on their expedition to Africa?

15. Who wrote the book *Lions in the Path* concerning the Pope and Young African trip?





# Quiz



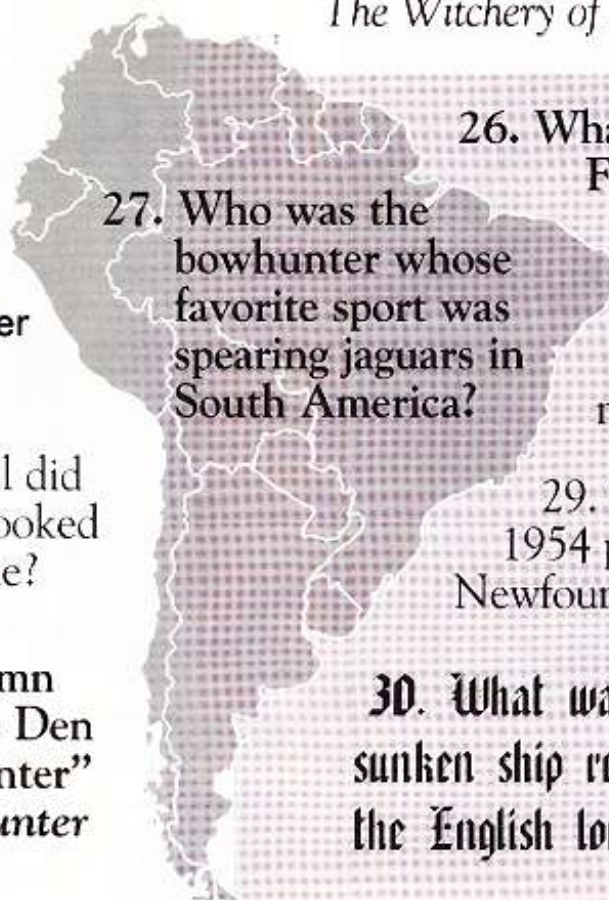
19. What was Saxton Pope's middle name?
20. What century was Howard Hill born in?
21. In the movie *Dances with Wolves*, what American Indian tribe was considered the bad guys?
22. Is the liver on a bear in front of or behind the diaphragm?
23. How many webbed feet does a beaver have?
24. What grade aluminum arrow did Easton previously make in which the alloy fell halfway between Gamegetter and XX75?
25. What type of bird was Will and Maurice Thompson's favorite winged target in their book *The Witchery of Archery*?

12. Other than parabolic, the most popular style of feather cut is called what?

16. What was the name of Fred Bear's Michigan deer camp?

17. What shaft material did Apaches use that looked like bamboo or cane?

18. Who wrote a column entitled "From the Den of the Old Bowhunter" in *National Bowhunter* magazine?



27. Who was the bowhunter whose favorite sport was spearing jaguars in South America?

26. What was the name of Fred Bear's late wife?

28. What was L.L. Bean's original name?

29. Who starred in a 1954 promotional film on Newfoundland bowhunting?

30. What was the name of the sunken ship recovered with all the English longbows aboard?



# I CARRY by Kevin Willis

PRIMITIVE BOWCRAFTING:

## Accepting the Challenge

A positive attitude is one thing that is absolutely necessary, yet under emphasized, when you attempt to build your own hunting bow. With a slow hand and a lot of persistence, I finished my first selfbow. I think that my positive attitude paid off in giving me the assistance to carry on. My bow is made from hickory and is sixty-four inches from nock to nock. It has a handle made of elk hide and pulls about fifty pounds at twenty-eight inches.

When it comes to building functional and aesthetically pleasing homemade bows, there are many excellent sources such as books and magazine articles to guide you. This type of literature offers information on everything from choosing and felling a tree to design tips and finishes. Today, a prospective primitive bowyer can easily attain all of the tips and techniques to help him complete his first homemade bow.

Everything that I needed to know about bow design and function was found in the first two volumes of *The Traditional Bowyer's Bible*. The only things you need to successfully build your first bow are a book on bow building and a few simple hand tools. However, the positive attitude is most likely the most important, yet least discussed, ingredient to successful bow building.

Hearing experienced bowyers talk and reading all of the books and magazine articles about bow crafting is sometimes a bit discouraging when the old pros divulge information about how their first ten or twelve bows broke prematurely. They are saying, "This is what I have learned over the years—now let's see what you can do with it." Being a bowhunter means that you are willing to accept that challenge. With a positive mind-set, you can tackle the challenge of making your own primitive bow.

If I had nothing else to guide me through the process of bow building, I did have a positive outlook. I knew that if I paid attention to what the expert bowyers had written, I could build my own bow without having to break a handful of them before getting one to work. No one likes the idea of pouring hours of sweat and meticulous work into a piece of firewood—so choose not to. Read the information carefully, work slowly, pay attention to details, and keep your head up. Do not be discouraged. It is possible to build a viable hunting bow if you just think positively.

When finally done, I thought back on my experiences with this bow and discovered the main ingredient to my success was persistence. My dictionary defines persistence as "to continue despite opposition." I decided that "Persistence" was a fitting name for my bow, and so it is. ■



*I couldn't wait for the finish to dry, so I shot it for a while before staining and sealing it.*

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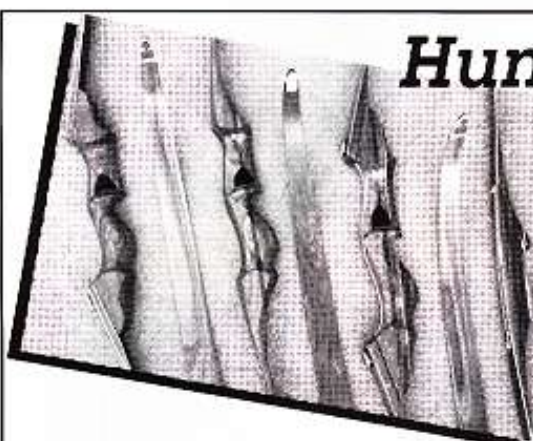
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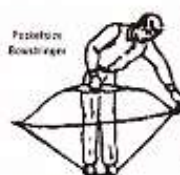
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## Huntin' and Lookin'

Bowhunters know that when out in the field, the actual shooting time is minimal and much time can be spent in observation. Zebulen Lamp from Northome, Minnesota wrote *Longbows & Recurves* about this subject recently.

"Your intended prey may be a deer or elk," Lamp wrote, "but archery hunting demands long hours in the field, so you cannot help but notice all the nuances of nature around you." Every hunt, he pointed out, brings with it a chance to absorb knowledge not available at any college or university. "Only firsthand can a person learn these subtle workings of the earth," he added.

## Fellow PBSers



From left to right, Biggie Hoffman, Gene Wensel, Mike Lembke, Barry Wensel.



The woods of Potter County, Pennsylvania, drew archers from all over the country.



Bernie Swank of Mystic Longbow Company at the Eastern Traditional Archery Rendezvous in Coudersport, Pennsylvania.

## Target a Date

It's a busy time for bowhunters, but don't forget to mark your calendar for the Traditional Bowhunter's Exposition January 30 through February 1, 1998 in Hastings, Michigan at the Barry Expo Center.

According to Expo information, "a combination of dealers and seminar experts from across the country promises to provide traditional bowhunters with a wealth of information and equipment that will help them better enjoy the sport of kings—traditional bowhunting." For information, contact Great Northern Bowhunting Company at P.O. Box 777, Nashville, Michigan 49073, phone 517-852-0820.

Like it's said, be there or be square.





Mattie Kirschenheuter and the famous skunk at the Howard Hill World Longbow and Recurve Championship in Alabama.

## Perspective

As a newcomer to archery, Mattie Kirschenheuter, of Poplarville, Mississippi, found her first trip to an archery tournament more than pleasant.

"I enjoyed everything about it (except maybe the humidity)," Mattie wrote of the Howard Hill World

Longbow and Recurve Championship held in Alabama in June. "The atmosphere was friendly, warm, and inviting. One couldn't help but feel welcomed. And it seemed to me that Jerry Hill and all of his assistants poured their hearts into making this event not only an opportunity for skilled archers to perform their best, but to also thoroughly enjoy themselves."

Mattie took the opportunity during a short rainfall to meet people and talk about archery, a tournament must. There was among others Bob Wesley, Walley Renner, Mike and Claire Stanley, Dan McMahon even travelled way down South from Massachusetts.

"Being in the woods; watching archers enjoy their sport, and perhaps most of all, the feeling of kinship and mutual respect which I observed throughout the four days I was there" was like a "breath of fresh air," Mattie said.

For those of you who haven't travelled to the event, it's held annually. Besides the actual competitive events, Mattie reported she enjoyed this year's challenging novelty shoots, raffling of prizes, "seminars" on turkey calling as well as deer hunting, a "real live" gunfighter's show, and an Indian Pow Wow. Mattie also mentioned various "shopping spree" opportunities offered through vendors providing assorted goods ranging from arrows to pouches made of tortoise shells.

"All in all, I'd say from a newcomer's perspective," Mattie said, "that if you gave it your best shot and had fun in the process, you hit the target dead center and went home a winner!"

## Worth Quoting

".... I don't kill  
much, but  
really enjoy the  
solitude of  
bowhunting."

Rocky Rockwell  
Columbus, Mississippi

## Hong Kong Archery

*Longbows & Recurves* received an interesting E-mail not long ago from Brad Kehler of Winkler, Manitoba, Canada about some wood arrows he made for a new customer in Hong Kong. It seems the customer picked up a copy of *Longbows & Recurves* on a visit to the States, saw Brad's advertisement, and placed his order.

Brad passed on the information to us that his customer, Dennis A. Leventhal, has been shooting at an archery range in Hong Kong with graphite arrows during the past ten + years, but wanted to try something different. "It took some doing to arrange shipment of an item considered to be a weapon by their local customs people, but we finally did it," Brad said of his first shipment of wood arrows to Leventhal.

And how did archery mates of Leventhal in Hong Kong feel about the woods? They were fascinated, Leventhal told Brad. "They all shoot graphite arrows with plastic vanes—plus all the sights, weights and other paraphernalia of the 'modern' archer," Leventhal said. "It was sort of a 'Wow! Wood shafts and real feathers!' reaction. Already one of our club members, an Italian electronics marketer, has asked me how to get started in 'traditional' archery."



# MORE FROM THE FIELD

## Forty Years

"It was one of those mornings, you know, the kind when it is just cold enough, not too warm and a deer is going to show up at anytime. I was sitting in my ground blind and the warmth of the sun felt good. The color change of the leaves were in their glory. It was just a beautiful morning to be in the woods. It was truly a day that God hath made. I thank him for not only creating this time of the year but also creating within me the instinct to hunt."

So wrote Dean Ward of Franklin, Indiana recently of his fortieth year of bowhunting. That's right. Fortieth.

"The acorns were falling and the deer were moving and feeding on them. Everything was right... Twenty yards away I had a tarsal gland in a small tree. There were scrapes around the area and I was just waiting." Ward then wrote of does coming and going and then four one and one-half year old bucks entering the picture.

"They were all sporting small six and seven point racks. I watched them as they did their thing, hooking some small shrubs and standing on their hind legs and hooking upper limbs on a tree. This was really getting

good. Two of them even came up and smelled the tarsal gland. I knew it wouldn't be long and I would get a shot. Two of the bucks came across the trail and turned broadside to me at about eighteen yards, then the first one came down the hill a little closer. As he came by I pulled my Martin Hunter to full draw, but [the buck] didn't stop until he was past me. The other buck following him stopped broadside at fourteen steps. I concentrated on the area behind his shoulder and released. The 2219 tipped with a very sharp magnum 2 broadhead went in one side and came out the other. The deer took off at a run and in about ten seconds I heard him go down. What a feeling..."

Ward then recounted one of those unusual things which can happen in the woods. After field dressing he went to get his truck (and his son-in-law) to load up the deer. "To my surprise, from the short time I left the woods and got back to the hunt area, a buck had come in, hooked the tarsal gland, and broke the limb in which it was fastened, then he made a scrape. You just never know do you?"

## Goin' once, goin' twice...



*Jerry Hill hosts a unique event in the Howard Hill World Longbow and Recurve Championships in Wilsonville, Alabama.*



## Papa Bear *by Russell Lantier*

Thoughts of "Papa" Bear were a-plenty at the '97 Michigan Traditional Bowhunters Jamboree last summer. The tournament was held at Hanson Hills Recreation Area in Grayling, the site of the original Fred Bear Museum opened in 1967. For traditionalists it was impossible to walk the hallowed grounds and participate in such an event without feeling the electricity in the air. History and tradition were everywhere.

Adding even more interest to the event, the American Broadhead Collectors Club (ABCC) held their annual gathering concurrent with the tournament. Many of the largest and rarest broadhead collections were on display in the old museum. The broadheads were not the only order of the day, however. Many of the collectors also brought some of their museum quality archery memorabilia; for example, such artifacts as rare arrows from Saxton Pope and Art Young were exhibited. Because of the location of this event, there were numerous Bear collectibles on display as well.



Michigan hunters Al Foor (front) and Rich Peacock (rear) practice their shooting skills.



Canadian, Allan Bowers plays the bagpipes for the archers at the Michigan Traditional Bowhunters Jamboree.

A special ceremony was held on Saturday to dedicate the building to the memory of Fred Bear. The "Fred Bear Memorial Center," as it is now called, was dedicated by a cadre of distinguished speakers including Neal Michal, chairman of the Grayling Recreational Authority, and Jack Alef and Floyd Eccleston, friends of Fred Bear who shared personal stories of Fred with the crowd.

Courses were provided by the Michigan Traditional Bowhunters. In addition to a 3-D and a twenty-eight target silhouette course, the Michigan Traditional Bowhunters also offered a separate canoe float shoot for participants wishing to try their luck while gliding across the still lake waters. On Sunday morning, the wail of bagpipes echoed over the lakes and temporarily transported many of the archers back in time when pipers inspired earlier generations of longbowmen to victories on ancient battlefields.



American Broadhead Collectors Club members pose in front of the newly dedicated Fred Bear Memorial Museum during their 23rd annual meeting in Grayling, Michigan.



Broadhead collector (John Zawaski) looks over a group of "traders" to hopefully add new heads to his collection.

Photographs this issue by Russell Lantier



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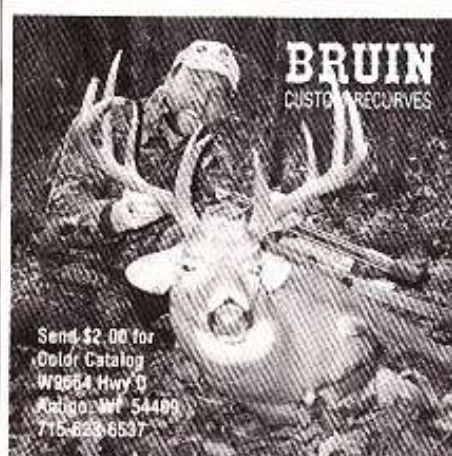
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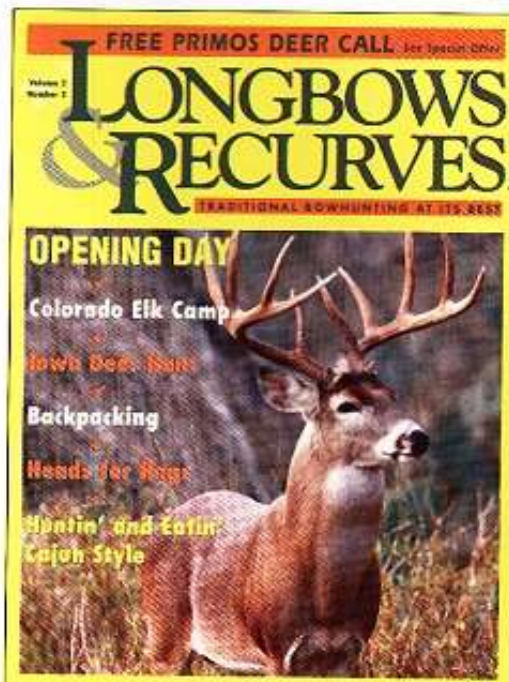
## Answers to Trivia Quiz pages 56-57

1. Art Young, Greenland, 1926
2. Ned Frost
3. Osage or hedge apple
4. Frank Eicholz
5. Swimming
6. Harry Drake
7. Carapace
8. Dewlap
9. Lemonwood
10. Ascham
11. It was a three-bladed version of the Pearson Deadhead
12. Shield cut
13. Bob Swinehart
14. Two thousand shafts, eighteen osage and yew longbows and thirty-six bowstrings
15. Stewart Edward White
16. Grouse Haven
17. Phragmites communis reed
18. Chester Stevenson
19. Temple
20. Nineteenth century (11/13/99)
21. Pawnees
22. Behind
23. Two—they tuck back their front feet while swimming
24. 24SRTX
25. Woodpeckers
26. Henrietta
27. Sasha Semiel
28. L.L. McBane
29. Lee Wulff
30. Mary Rose

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*Howard Hill in 1972.*

Photograph courtesy of Ned W. Wells



# Knowing Howard Hill

as told by Ted W. Wells

"I knew of Howard Hill as a small boy, but I had no idea that I would ever get to meet him. My folks used to be in the theatre business way back yonder and we used to run Mr. Hill's movies and films, but I had no idea that I would ever get to meet the man. But as luck would have it, when I was about twelve years old, the Boy Scouts from my hometown and the Boy Scouts from Wilsonville, Alabama (the birthplace of Howard Hill) all got together for a scout meeting.

While we were there one summer night, all the Boy Scouts mentioned that Howard Hill was home visiting his sister, Ms. Mamie. So we broke up the meeting real quick and everybody headed over to Ms. Mamie's house. Well, when we got there, Mr. Hill came out on the front porch and started to talking to everybody. At the time a school mate of mine had accidentally shot me in the leg with a .22 rifle and I was on crutches. Well, I couldn't get up to the front porch to see Mr. Hill, so I was standing way back in the background in the yard, and Mr. Hill happened to see me standing out there on those crutches. Well, he came down off the porch and came out and picked me up and carried me back on the front porch with him. And that just set me afire as far as archery, and I've had the bug ever since.

When I became a grown man, Mr. Hill came back from California [to Alabama] and retired. In 1967, he helped us form the Creek Archery Club, which is still in existence today. I was fortunate enough to get to go hunt with Mr. Hill on several hunting trips, but I learned a lot of things about the man himself that normally most people don't even think about.... The first hunting trip that I ever went with him on was a wild hog hunt down in Vidalia, Georgia. I noticed a lot of things about the man that we had in common. We were both left or right handed. We liked the same brand of cigarettes, same brand of coffee, even the same food. Mr. Hill loved fried ham. He would sit down and eat a whole ham by himself, and that is my favorite food myself.

I [asked him], 'Mr. Hill, why is it that me and you have so many things in common with the exception of my ability to learn to shoot bows?' Mr. Hill told me, 'Well son, it takes practice on top of practice and then some more practice.' And

then Mr. Hill said that his ability of shooting a bow and arrow came as a gift from God....

I know Howard Hill influenced my life over the years and I'm proud of that fact. I don't think none of us will ever become a Howard Hill, but it sure don't stop you from trying, and if there is one, I think it's a long time in coming. Mr. Hill used to say that archery may not be the sport of kings, but it sure was the king of sports. And by golly, he was right. If I recall, he makes that statement in one of his films that he made.... I don't think that the memory of people like Howard Hill, Ben Pearson, Fred Bear, and a host of other

men that has made our sport what it is today should be forgotten. If we make that mistake, the sport of archery will die along with them and that would be a great tragedy to our sport....

I'm getting pretty close to being an old man now, but I still love the sport of archery. If Mr. Hill was alive today and could see

how big our sport has become since his passing, I'm sure that he would be proud to see how large archery has grown.... To make a great sport greater, the key is to get out and promote archery. Mr. Hill knew that even way back yonder. In the short few years that I knew Mr. Hill, I never knew the man to be too busy, too tired, too sick to talk to any kid growing up that was interested in archery. He always found the time to help any kid coming along that wanted to get involved in the sport of archery. Even Mr. Hill knew that that was the key factor in building a great sport.

In the short few years that I knew Howard Hill, I do know this, he was a great influence on my life. I'm sorry for those who never got to meet Mr. Hill, because he was indeed a gentleman and a great man. I'm honored with the fact that I knew him. I wished that he could've stayed on a little bit longer, although that's not the case.

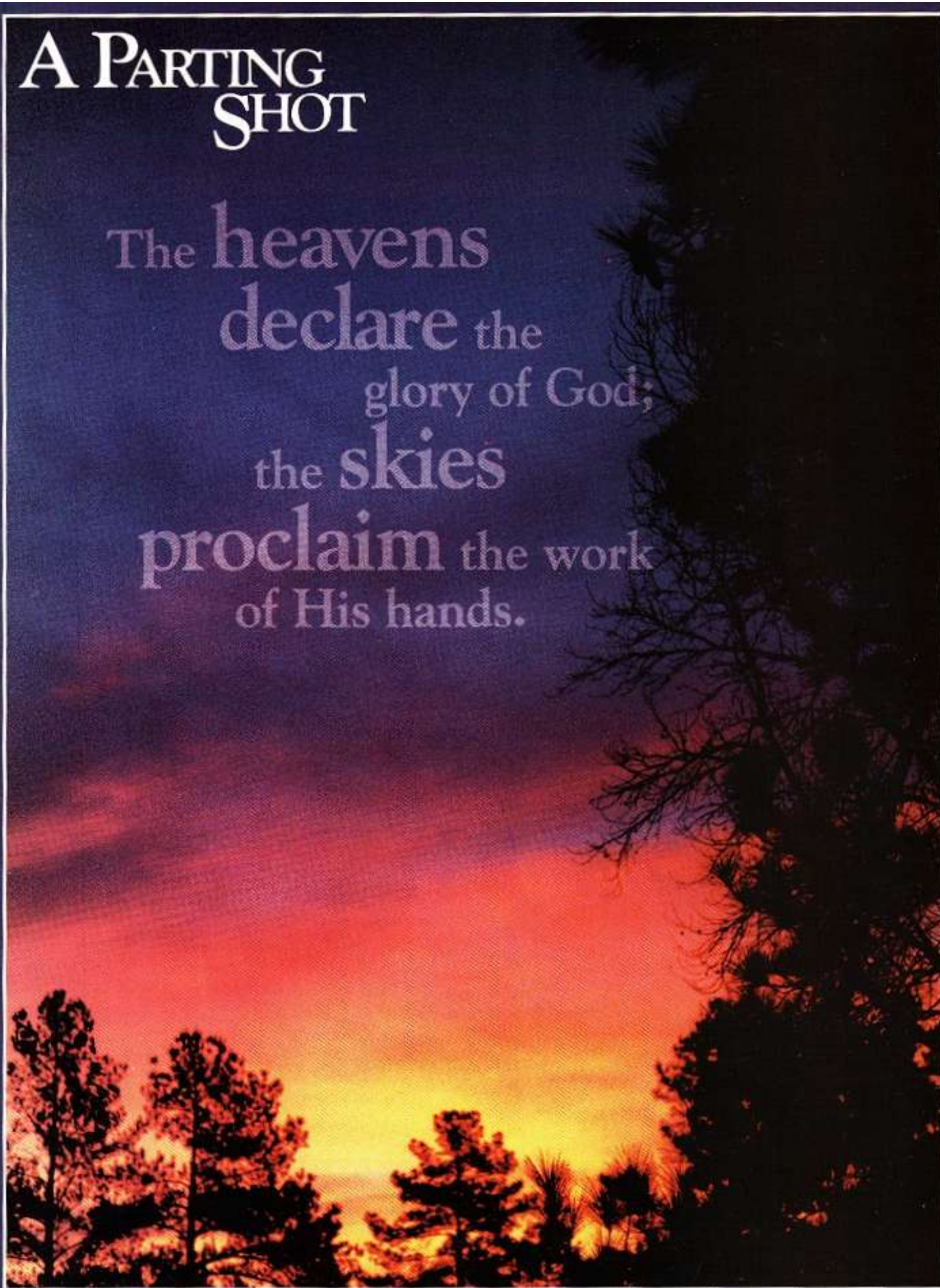
I think Howard Hill was one of those rare people that shooting a bow was as natural as feeding yourself. I think Howard Hill was a great pioneer and leader in the sport of archery and I truly believe he was a rare person that you read about in life that was truly a legend in his own time. And for those of us who knew him, we'll have something to treasure for the rest of our lives." ■

*Shooting a bow  
was as natural as  
feeding himself.*



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