2nd Edition 2015

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## About Wildlife Management News – *Mark Peretore*

As outdoor enthusiasts and hunters, we believe strongly in the way of the land. The mechanism that compels us to the great outdoors and the game that thrives on it is in our hearts and souls. It cannot be described and can never be replaced. We live and breathe to do what we do, to carry on the heritage and traditions of those in the past and pass on our insights to the next generation, to pay homage to what the Lord has given us. Nature has a way of teaching us all. It cannot be tamed and it cannot be controlled, we can only live within it. Wildlife management is a passion of ours and yours, and we hope to continue to bring you to that peaceful place with each edition of *Wildlife Management News.*

Jim Holbert founded *Wildlife Management News* in 2008. As an avid outdoorsman and a regular backwoods Pennsylvanian, Jim has practiced wildlife management since he was a child. Though he humbly says he's not qualified, Jim studied biology in college and retains a wealth of detailed knowledge for everything outdoors. He has made an impressive list of friendships inside the wildlife community including Dr. James Kroll (Dr. Deer) and so many more. *Wildlife Management News* started as a small newsletter for Montrose, Pennsylvania, and has developed into a full scale subscriber-based magazine that brings you the wildlife management news for your region. Articles written by local people as well as expert biologists allow you to see how you should be interacting with your habitat and help you get involved in the process of wildlife management.

I joined Jim in 2014 and have begun to take on the role as chief editor. I've been an outdoor enthusiast my entire life and began hunting at a young age. Over the years I have develpoed a deep love for the outdoors and all things hunting, gaining a depth of field knowledge that is only learned from hands-on experience. After teaming up with Jim and meeting some real experts, I have set out to help bring that expertise to you and improve your game along with mine. With the support of readers like you, *Wildlife Management News* is growing steadily and will now be bringing much more than just a magazine to the people who subscribe. Lately, the introduction of the website www.wildlifemanagementnews.com and electronic publications through e-book readers and cell phones will diversify the way you can interact with the *Wildlife Management News* magazine.

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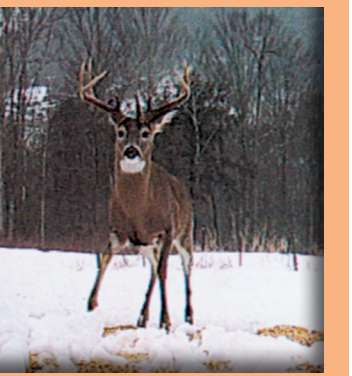
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# A Soldier in Life and Character

## *Hunts for Healing*

This story starts with a guy like me, spending the last 14 years in the Army as an infantryman and an artilleryman, 4 tours to Iraq, multiple explosions and horrific situations and finally the getting wounded and not being able to get well enough to return to duty. Coming home after all that leaves these veterans feeling multiple stresses and like they can't live or function in a normal society any longer. For many it ends in suicide, by the Veterans Administrations count 22 a day, but in my opinion it is more than that. For some it leads to a life of heavy drinking and/or drugs to deal with the demons that visit on almost a nightly basis. It also means living life like a hermit where the fear to have your curtains open or go to a store is so real it is crippling. Then the physical realities, the fact that you are not capable of what you used to do. Some can't walk or see, some can't hear or talk normal, and some have traumatic brain injury that leave them almost helpless to take care of themselves along with a host of other physical and emotional issues these returning veterans deal with.

Having a family member or loved one dealing with this can feel helpless and like there is no one out there who can help. Don't get me wrong, here in Ohio we have a great VA system that has been good to me anyway, but there is only so much healing that can take place in a hospital or doctor's office. This is where an organization like Hunts for Healing stepped in for me. They are an organization that operates out of Laceyville, Pennsylvania and takes wounded veterans from the current conflicts on hunting trips at no cost to the individual. They buy the licenses and tags needed along with supplying food, lodging, weapons and ammunition and your own personal guide. I first contacted the organization in January of 2014 as I was looking for some help. I was almost immediately contacted back by the founders of the organization John and Mindy Piccotti. Right away they had me scheduled to come out on a spring turkey hunt, all expenses paid. Now mind you, although I had hunted before, I was never very good at it with the time restrictions from the military and the demand of a family, I just never had much time. Needless to say I was nervous, not just because of never killing a turkey before and not being a great hunter, but also for going out and being around people.

Over the next few months leading up to the hunt I received regular phone calls from Mindy to just check on me and to try to calm my nerves about going. Although I never told her that it was bothering me, she just knew. The people involved just seem to know how to make you feel comfortable and good about going to see them. So the day finally comes and I travel there and am greeted with open arms by everybody. There were also five other wounded veterans there and it was a pleasure to be with people like them again. It seems all the vets felt like I did, two were in wheelchairs, one had no legs. I wondered how they would accommodate this, how could you get a person who relies on a wheelchair into the woods. Then they surprised me by having track chairs. I had never seen them before. They are like wheelchairs, but instead of wheels they have tracks like a tank. Those things made it through the woods better than some of the people who could walk did!

The next morning we went on our first day turkey hinting with our guide/mentor bright and early, well before daylight. I was put in a ground blind about 15 yards in the woods near a field's edge. Just before daylight, directly behind the blind was a very close and deafening gobble! I nearly jumped out of my seat as it was a shock to me at how loud and powerful these birds were. The gobbling continued till light and we could actually hear the turkey fly down from the roost. First we saw hen after hen for about 15 minutes and then the gobbler came into view. I was very shook up at the sight of him but got a clean shot at about 20 yards and he went right down! My first turkey ever and I think my guide was as excited as I was. It was a wonderful experience.

Then in the next few days we went on a raccoon hunt with hounds a few times and did some great fishing. The entire event was three days and with this all happening I noticed at the end of it that I had not thought about my physical inabilities or any of the demons that haunt me. I just was simply able to enjoy the great outdoors and relax. This sounds simple for most, but it is something like this that some veterans can't do and leads to all sorts of negative behaviors to include suicide. For me, it felt like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders. There is a certain magic, special healing that takes place in the outdoors. For me, I sit and watch God's creation and try to remember he has me here for a purpose. It reminds me that maybe I am not a burden to others and that I can still contribute. It also makes me thankful for what we have rather than think of the negatives. It is great organizations like Hunts for Healing that save soldiers' lives back home. Sure, the doctors play their role but the healing properties of the outdoors and people who care make all the difference. Maybe next time someone in your area comes home from war, injured or not, whether you know them or not, you could take them out trapping, hunting or fishing. You might be the one to save a life and not even know it.

*Written By*
*Bob Simonovich*

# The Tradition of Hunting

## *Youth Mentor Hunt*

It was Friday, after school, Jonathan's Mom & Dad dropped him off at "deer camp"for the early youth hunt in October. They instructed him to do just what Mr. Sienko told him to do. I assured him that he needn't worry, that we were going to have fun. We had about 2 hours before the close of the season for the day and we were off and hunting. We didn't see any deer while we were on stand, but we did see one as we were coming in, unfortunately it was too late to shoot. Then it was a long night waiting for the next morning to arrive. His Mom warned me that he was not easy to get up in the morning, but he proved her wrong. He was up and ready to go well before day break. Jonathan was excited as this was his first hunt, but I think I was even more excited taking a new hunter out and mentoring him; it reminded me of my first hunt.



There were muffins and milk. Then getting geared up, making sure we had everything, we were off and up the mountainside to await the first rays of light. Of course, what do we see right off the bat?, two buck and no doe. Another hour passes and Jonathan asks if he can eat a beef stick as the muffins weren't sticking with him. I looked down the hill and I spied a doe coming our way. I whispered to Jonathan to hurry and finish his beef stick as a doe was coming. He wolfed down his beef stick and got into position. He can see the deer and is patiently waiting. I tell him to wait till the deer turns sideways a little. After what seemed an eternity, she turns and he squeezes the trigger. The doe went down and the scope hit Jonathan in the bridge of the nose so he never saw her go down as his eyes were watering and his nose throbbing. I was impressed with Jonathan's calmness before the shot. We gathered our gear as we made our way down to where the doe lay. We knelt down beside her and Jonathan was surprised at how soft her fur was as he gently touched her. We dragged her a little way to where the ground was level. He did not shy away from the chore at hand. He helped as we gutted and I explained what the different parts were and showed him where his aim had placed the bullet. He wanted a picture of the gut pile to show his older brother. He called his parents to let them know that he had succeeded at putting some meat on the table. I told him that he has to get better at telling his story if he wanted to be a true deer hunter. He didn't elaborate very much. He thanked me over and over for giving him the opportunity to hunt.

If you get the chance to mentor a youth hunting, don't shy away from it. Watching this young man take his first doe brought back many memories and formed wonderful new ones.

*Written By*
*Dave Sienko*

My Experience 1st Time Hunting

By Jonathan Chubirka

It was fun but also seemed dangerous. I had to be very silent so the deer won't hear me and was very patient. I concentrated to look closely for deer through the woods.

When I first saw the doe, I felt the excitement flowing through my veins lol! I took the gun, a 243 pump action rifle, aimed it steady at the deer and took the shot. Bang! She plopped over and rolled.

I learned that it is hard work, but also very great! I did feel bad for the doe :( even though it tastes really good :) and my family enjoys a good dinner that I brought home.



Thank you to my good friends Dave and June Sienko for taking me out hunting !

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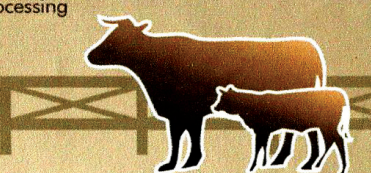
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Fruit trees are an integral part of balancing your herds nutrition, and a great draw for the early bowhunting season.
Dr. James C. Kroll, Mark Peretore, and Jim Holbert planting a few Dunstan Chestnut and Dr. Deer Pear trees.
Photo By Salvatore Peretore

# A Good Walk Spoiled

It is a balmy mid-summer evening; a good time to check out the food plots and tree plantings on your acreage. The clover patch is dark green with bees busily visiting the flowers. Corn is stretching upwards and tassels are in the whorls of the top leaves. Buckwheat is in full blossom. Everything is growing great but as you approach a small orchard (orchard may be a stretch, it is six trees along both sides of the path) you notice one of the apple tree's leaves don't look quite right and the pear tree looks like it has been attacked with a blow torch. As Mark Twain said of golf, "It is a good walk spoiled". What could have happened? One of the most disheartening occurrences in a wildlife manager's experience is the death or injury to a fruit tree. Fruit trees cost good money and take years to bring into production. The loss of a single tree, or worse yet, several trees can set back plans for years. Fruit trees have many ways of dying and to prevent further losses you must decide how the tree was harmed.

Animal damage is probably the easiest to identify. Mice and voles can griddle a tree quite easily in their search for food. In the protected shelter of deep snow they kill many wild and tame apple trees. Some may recover if the bark is not completely removed around the whole tree but it will set a tree back in growth. Short grass around the trees gives some protection but under the snow, voles feel safe to travel some distance. A guard of ½ inch hardware cloth will give years of safety to the young trees until they get big enough that the bark is unappealing. Rabbits attack trees above the snow level and can damage larger trees than voles do. Their trademarks are small limbs clipped off as if knife had done it and bark left with obvious teeth marks. A circle of wire fence like 2"x 4"x 4' high stock fence works to keep out rabbits and deer. Rabbits and voles primarily attack trees during the winter months but deer feed on trees both winter and summer. Their constant browsing on trees eventually wears the tree's reserves down to the edge of death. Fencing of some type is the best protection.

Other damage or death to apples and pears are often tougher to diagnose. We will look at the most common three avenues of tree loss in my experience. Fire Blight is a disease caused by bacteria that can destroy blossoms, shoots, limbs and even whole trees. It seems to hit pears harder than apples in Susquehanna County. Some varieties of apples and pear seem more resistant to fire blight than others; these include the Delicious apple family and Moonglow and Seckel pears. Asian pears are resistant for the most part. The suddenness with which this disease strikes a tree can be quite surprising. One week a pear tree can look fine and the next it is just a dark withered mass of drooping leaves. Pruning back trees well below the parts affected is one of few practical treatments for the wildlife manager. Burn the prunings and disinfect your tools.

Crown or collar rot symptoms include late leaf out, discolored leaves, twig dieback, and in the fall, early leaf coloring and drop. Certain rootstocks seem more susceptible to the fungus that causes this rot. Unfortunately the common rootstocks for semi-dwarf apples such as M.7, MM.106 and even MM.111 are attacked by the fungus. It hits young trees anywhere from 3 to 10 years old. Heavy, wet, cold soils are most favorable for fungus growth; just like the soils most common in Northeast PA. After a dead tree is dug up, it shows a lack of fine roots as they have been destroyed. Avoid replanting apple trees back into the same spot because the fungus spores remain in the soil for years. A possible treatment if the tree has not been completely girdled is to dig around the main trunk looking for soft brown lesions; scape these spots and allow to dry in the open air.

Borers have killed more young trees in my plantings than any other problem. Borers are the larva of beetles, the most common being the flatheaded apple tree borer. A telltale sign is a small pile of sawdust at the base of the tree. Young, weak, and damaged trees are the most vulnerable. Borers kill trees in two ways. A borer can girdle a small tree killing it directly. It can also destroy tissue createing a weak spot making it susceptible to wind snapping off the tree. Luckily borers can be defeated with a few easy steps. Borers love to attack from cover; make sure grass is removed from around the trunk. If you use those curly plastic strips to protect your trees from mice in the winter, remove them in the summer. I found that out the hard way with one batch of apple trees as almost every one was attacked by borers. A mixture of white interior latex paint and joint compound painted on the trunk of the tree will help protect them from borers. If you notice a pile of sawdust at the base of a tree, all is not lost. The borer makes a tunnel into the tree and can usually be reached with a piece of wire and killed it by puncturing its soft body. I have killed them by slicing the bark vertically with a pocket knife. One method I heard of recently is using a can of compressed air for cleaning keyboards. Just stick the plastic nozzle up the tunnel and give the grub a shot of freezing air.

In short, one can avoid many tree deaths by good management practices such as: good planting site selection, good sanitation both in the orchard and tools and probably most of all keeping an eye out for trouble. Hopefully, you will never need these tips, but if you do, remember, as any dairy farmer can tell you, "If you have livestock, you will have dead stock". Overcoming it is all part of being a successful wildlife manager.

*Robert Fearnley*
*Susquehanna County Conservation District*

# Dead Trees?

Many of us who planted trees this spring experienced some disappointment. The best planting technique and top quality tree is still not going to succeed and survive a hard late freeze like we had this past season.

The best solution to the problem of spring planting according to Bob Wallace owner of Chestnut Hill Outdoors and Dunstan Chestnut is to not jump the gun and plant too early in the Spring .We have traditionally planted in our area around Memorial Day, however with the climate and temperature swings we are experiencing, it is suggested zone 5 planting should be done in the second week of June.
Bob also suggests that Fall planting of fruit trees may offer higher success rates. Here are a few of his reasons for Fall plantings over Spring:

*trees root in as long as soil is not frozen (best in South)
*trees go dormant and come out at the right time in the Spring naturally (missing most late frosts)
*trees need less water because they lose leaves with Fall
*trees are better established in the Spring and a fall planting will have established enough growth and adjusted the timing naturally to start growth after winter.
*BUT trees can still be affected by early Fall freezes....last year an early freeze killed many Fall planted trees that had not hardened off yet.

Remember- you can't predict or stop an act of God. A late freeze or early one can't be forecasted. With changing weather patterns the possibility of our planting zones may have to be redefined. Information from several sources suggest that planting zones may be shifting, but more importantly timing of zone plantings is being adjusted.

Stay tuned for a one on one follow up interview with Bob Wallace of Chestnut Hill Outdoors to better understand these zone shift patterns.

If you have specific questions you'd like to know the answers to, please send them to us at wildlifemanagementnews@yahoo.com or on facebook.

Dunstan Chestnut Trees, Dr. Deer Pear and Persimmon Trees will be available at independent stores for 2015 Fall planting through Cooperative Feed Dealers, Inc. They will NOT be available in Walmart stores for fall plantings. If you need assistance in finding your closest stocking dealer call Mark or Jim at 570-432-0912 and we will try to help you.

*Jim Holbert- Co Editor*





# The Alternative Tree Tube - Part 2

Within a month of cutting all the tubes and placing 11' wire cages around each tree, the promising affects of this new method has worked beyond my expectations.



During the growing season, with rising temperatures, ample amounts of rainfall, increased humidity and plenty of sunlight, all have an effect on plant growth. From early May through the end of June, all these factors come together for an optimal growing season. The 2' tubes were the eye opener and for several reasons.

The factors that are relative to plant growth consist of carbon dioxide, photosynthesis, air, and ground moisture. Many land-managers believe that they must always water their plants during drought conditions when they see their plants begin to show the affects of stress or death. Many nurseries consistently water their trees to keep their roots moist, in plastic pots, before they are sold to the public. Little does each person know however, that too much watering can kill a tree just as quickly.

The science behind the tubes alleviates much of this process based on what the tube actually accomplishes. All deciduous trees and plants draw in carbon dioxide through their leaves, as used in photosynthesis. When a plant breathes, they release water vapors into the air through their leaf pores. Humid air doesn't cause the leaves to loose their moisture as compared to dryer air, that ultimately causes the water in leaves to evaporate at a much faster rate. When roots can not absorb water fast enough than the leaves loose it to the air, the tree itself will dry out and perish.

The advent of the shorter tubes provides the right amount of moisture build up, not only in the root system, but in the pores of the leaves and the cells of the tree. The increased amount of humidity makes the tree thrive because their pores are open completely and prevent excessive water loss.

As compared to longer tubes, shorter tubes enable the newly planted tree to recover more quickly and have proper airflow throughout the canopy, as soon as the central leader and branches exit the tube. With the right amount of humidity within the 2' tube and the canopy being cooled off, the tree ultimately stays cool through evaporation and grows more efficiently.



*Written by*
*John Buck*

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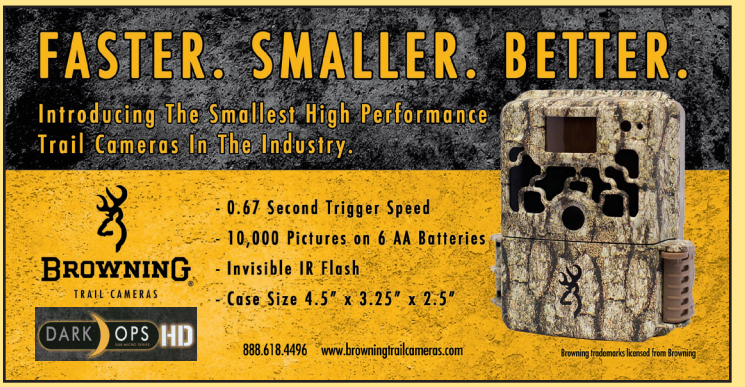
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*I found the Browning Dark Ops camera easy to set up. There were very few photos without having some animal in the frame. The photos were clear at night and during the day. I am still using the same batteries after hundreds of photos. I am very happy with the camera's many features and small compact size. The green tree strap and camo color blends well into the surroundings. I have recommended this camera to a friend, several clients and would purchase more of these for myself in the future.*

Matthew Sellers, Enhanced Habitat




**CFD Featured Product**

*We have five different brands of trail cameras in use. The new Browning Dark Ops camera is one of the easiest to set up, the instructions are clear and easy to follow. Photo quality is excellent, both day and night and we do not even have it set up with the highest resolution. The nighttime photos are great – on some of our other cameras the pictures are so grainy you can't tell if you are looking at a buck or a doe. The photos are clear out to a greater distance as well. There doesn't seem to be any sound with this camera, so that means that it is probably going to last as far as bear contact. Browning has a winner in my book!*

Dave Sienko

*I really like the Browning cam!! Battery life is still over 80% and I put it out a few days after you dropped it off. The camera takes some really nice pix. This Browning Dark Ops is the best camera we run right now. We have a bunch of different Moultries, which have been my favorite. We use one Cuddieback and absolutely hate it. Nothing but problems – I'll never buy another. We have one WildGame Innovations and it's OK at best. Good daytime pix but very grainy IR pix. We had one Stealth Cam and got rid of it. Batteries would last three days at best and when it took pix they were not very clear.*

Michael Koneski



*I have recently transitioned my focus on trail cameras towards the product line that Browning offers. With being an avid bow hunter, I rely on my trail cameras to help with my overall success from season to season. Whether I am hanging them on a food plots, travel routes or other food sources, my Browning trail cameras provide me with the highest quality trigger speed, recovery time, detection width and overall range. With the combination of quick trigger speed (.7 seconds) and 2.3 second recovery time, Browning trail cameras ensure that your game will be detected. The thing that impressed me most with the Browning cameras was the detection range. Compared to other brands I have used in the past, the Browning trail cameras trigger pictures of animals as soon as they cross the detection zone, which helps prevent blank pictures. The overall quality of photos is outstanding, both daytime and especially the night pictures taking into consideration the no-glow infrared technology. The overall clarity, focus and brightness of the photos are top notch. In my opinion, Browning has surpassed many of its competitors with the Dark Ops model!*

Chris Jeffers, Woodsfield, Ohio

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# Why I Plant Norway Spruce

Are you thinking about planting a field to trees? Many folks want to plant hardwoods such as oak, walnut, and black cherry. They believe these will grow into valuable hardwoods; they are partly correct. The problem is getting them to grow.

For over ten years, I have been planting trees on my Clearfield County Tree Farm to reforest a hilltop strip mined and reclaimed in the 1980s. I have also worked on a DCNR program to plant trees on strip mine sites in Clarion and Jefferson counties. These experiences have taught me that planting a tree is easy; getting it to survive is a challenge. There are many factors that will frustrate your attempts to grow trees on a strip mine site (as well as in fields). These may include a thick cover of grass that smothers tree seedlings. The soil may be so thin that it quickly dries out, killing the seedling. Every seedling you plant is potentially food for the voles, moles, mice, rabbits, and deer. The soil is usually so compacted it is difficult for a tree to put down roots. I've planted oaks, maples, pine, larch, chestnut, locust, and spruce. The only tree among these that is doing well is Norway spruce. This is now my tree of choice for reforesting a field. Let me tell you a little more about why I like it.

Norway spruce is native to northern Europe but for the past 100 years it has been extensively planted across Pennsylvania. It is fast growing and can put on two feet of height growth each year. At maturity they can be 100 feet tall and have a life span of centuries. It is not invasive and rarely starts new seedlings near established plantings.



Norway spruce requires no site preparation. It is a shade tolerant conifer that can survive dense grass cover. In other words, this tree can compete with grass and eventually win. If the grass is controlled by mowing or herbiciding, Norway spruce will just grow faster. It may take several years for it to become established and get above the grass, but given time, it will.

Norway spruce is not readily eaten. Deer mostly leave it alone. Every white pine I ever planted was nipped; not the spruce. Voles and mice love thick grass and eat the bark off hardwoods at ground level, but for the most part, leave the spruce alone.

Norway spruce is tolerant of drought. Conifers, better than the large leaf hardwoods, have the ability to shut down during a dry period. This gives Norway spruce the ability to survive a summer drought that kills recently planted hardwoods. On the other hand, Norway spruce is tolerant of wet conditions. Plant it in wet spots and it does well.

Norway spruce has few insect pests. My red pine were defoliated by an infestation of pine saw fly this year. Hardwood leaves are munched on by slugs, a variety of caterpillars, and deer. The only pest on Norway spruce is a gall and white pine weevil. Damage from these pests is relatively minor. When white pine weevil does attack Norway spruce the damage is not as severe because spruce has lateral buds along the leader and on its branches, not just on the end of the branch as is the case with white pine. This means another branch will quickly take over. Where nearly every open grown white pine will be attacked by the weevil, many Norway spruce will not.

Norway spruce can tolerate and grow in a variety of soil conditions. It does well on fertile soil and survives on poor soils. Soil pH can vary from acidic to alkaline. It can grow on compacted soil and over time the roots will penetrate and loosen soil structure.

Norway spruce makes for a good cover crop to prepare the soil and make it easier to grow hardwood trees in the future. Norway spruce will shade out grass and invasive plants such as bush honeysuckle, autumn olive, and multiflora rose. The needles will create a duff layer and allow beneficial fungi to become established.

Norway spruce can pack on the carbon. As an evergreen, it is able to photosynthesize any time the sun is shining and the temperature is above freezing. This causes it to grow tall and large in diameter in a relatively short time. This may mean you could harvest wood products from the trees you planted. The wood is not as dense as hardwoods; however, it makes good construction lumber. Most of the studs you buy are made from one of the spruce species.

Norway spruce has some wildlife value. Red squirrels love

to feast on its seeds and you often find mounds of cone scales where they feed. The merlin falcon and green heron prefer to nest in Norway spruce. The dense evergreen foliage provides a wind break in winter and a dense shade in the summer.

Norway spruce is easy to control. If you no longer want it growing on your land, just cut it down. It does not root sucker, stump sprout or store seed to pop up later. No need to apply herbicides. The only thing left is the stump and an extensive root system that slowly rots away while providing organic matter to the soil.

Norway spruce is so fast growing that within ten years it is large enough to bring in the house for a Christmas tree. This makes it a rather quick return on the planting investment. While not the most ideal Christmas tree because of the sharp pointed needles, neither is it a bad choice. The stiff branches hold all the ornaments and the tree will retain its needles as long as it is well watered.

Planting trees takes time and money. Weather, animals, or competing plants can easily frustrate your dreams. Norway spruce is the one tree I've found that is adaptable enough to endure most of these challenges and thrive with minimal site preparation and maintenance. By using Norway spruce to turn a field into an evergreen forest, I have found I can shade out the grass, displace or exclude invasive plants, and prepare the soil for the planting hardwoods as the spruce are cut and used.



According to Bob Wagner Soil Conservation Tech with the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service "In Susquehanna County Norway spruce are well adapted to our climate and soils. They have been growing in our county for over 100 years. You find many stately Norway Spruce around houses that were or are currently the original farm houses on many farms. Some of these trees are over 90' tall." Wagner is also part of the Susquehanna County Forest Landowners Association as Board of Director member noted that "Currently the largest/tallest Norway spruce, in Susquehanna County, is located on the farm of Stu and Carol Slocum in Jackson Twp. It is 94' tall." He further stated



that, "Another good use for Norway spruce is as a Christmas tree. I have grown them for Christmas trees since 1976. They make very nice well shaped Christmas trees. They are my favorite as they keep their shape well and they are easy to shear and for all of the reasons Mr. Gilmore has stated."

Mr. Gilmore concluded with this statement, "While not everyone may share my fondness for Norway spruce, it is worth serious consideration for those of you who want to turn a field into a forest and get it done quickly."

Original article by written by Gary Gilmore PA DCNR Service Forester permission to use the article granted by the author on 3/5/15.

Local information added to article by Bob Wagner – Susquehanna County Forest Landowners Association Board of Director member. Mr. Wagner is also a Soil Conservation Technician with The United States Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Article submitted on 3/6/15 Bob Wagner 570-278-1011, ext. 108 work

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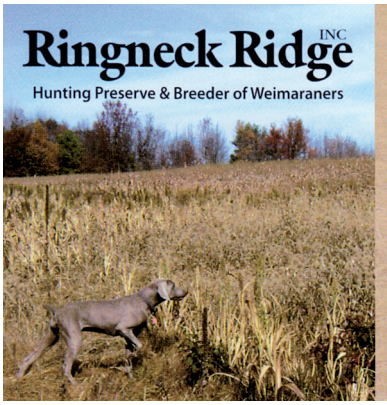


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# Great Products Enter the Northeast

It was July of 2014 when we made the decision to partner with Nutra Deer to be their exclusive Distributor in the Northeast. Nutra Deer is a brand of feed and attractants that is nutritionally balanced and has a very powerful aroma for attracting deer from long distances. Nutra Deer Pro Antler was University tested by Dr. James C. Kroll then endorsed by him in August 2011. Dr. Kroll also endorses Nutra Deer's trace mineral premix, aroma enhancer and feed flavoring which are used when manufacturing feeds to the finest standards.

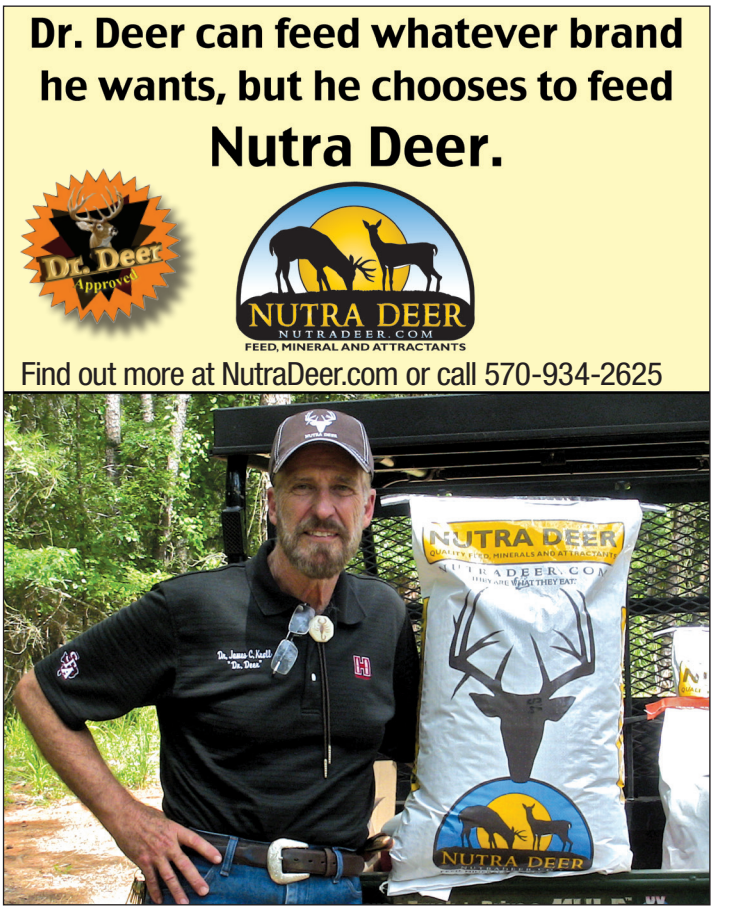
During the investigation and testing phase it was decided that we wanted to have the entire product line offering, but we would only start with the items that would be cost effective at the dealer and at the retail level. Unfortunately at first there were several logistical issues that were prohibiting us from bringing these great products to our Northeastern Market. It was at that time that we knew if we wanted to offer those products and be successful in the Northeast we needed to manufacture those products in the Northeast and made the decision to source a CFD Member mill to toll mill these products for us. The first item we began manufacturing in the Northeast late last fall is Nutra Deer Power Corn. Power Corn is a flavor enhanced whole corn in a 50lbs bag. The Nutra Deer Power Corn companion item is Power Spray. Power Spray is a 28oz RTU liquid spray attractant with the same smell and attracting ability without the food. The deer will eat any plant you spray this on..... With the help and dedication of Dr. Eric Reid (CFD Nutritionist) the Nutritionist at Nutra Deer and Dr. James Kroll (Dr. Deer) we began the process of formulating the 20% Pro Antler Nutra Deer Pellet. This product took a bit longer 6 months of formulation, testing, and changes and finally we got everything right and met the approval of both the deer and Dr. Kroll and the Northeast 20% Pro Antler Nutra Deer Pellet was introduced early this spring. We have received several testimonials from dealers that the deer prefer the Nutra Deer to the competitive products their customers WERE feeding. The long and the short of it is the best nutritional package in the world is useless if you can't get the deer to eat it. Our field testing came back time and time again that deer preferred Nutra Deer to competitive products.

Now that we had the perfect deer feed, the next challenge was to determine a way to feed it to wild deer without compromising the pellets integrity. How do we do that? Most wildlife feeders are designed to dispense the feed in a radius around the feeder on the ground. Because of weather conditions and climate differences, we needed something different. We sought out to find a commercial grade feeder that was tried and true. We needed something that had been tested and developed specifically with whitetail deer in mind. With the recommendation of Dr. James C. Kroll and with much research and homework we partnered with Boss Buck feeders. They were the perfect solution to our challenge. The gravity feeder has a 200 or 350lbs hopper with 3 feed ports where the feed flows into the feed ports and the deer eat the feed out of these ports (depending on the feeder size they also offer a 4 way spout). The feed never touches the ground so the pellet never loses its integrity. The hopper's lid is designed to keep the elements out, but also allows the feed to breath, preventing overheating and molding. Boss Buck Feeders went the extra mile to in the design work too. They determined the perfect height from the ground, the most preferred sized spout, and the proper spacing of the spouts. Dr James C. Kroll's article on page 21 will go into further detail regarding his scientific research.

CFD now offers Boss Buck Feeders in 2 sizes - 200lbs and 350lbs and in 3 styles - gravity (protein) feeder, a 12 volt spinner feeder or a combo unit with both the 12 volt and gravity feed heads included. CFD also has nearly the full product line of Nutra Deer Products. Contact Mark or Jim at 570-432-0912 to find your local stocking dealer.

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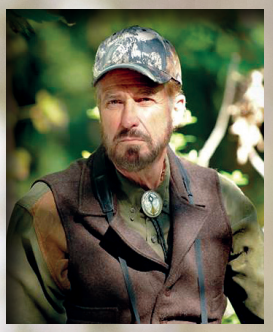
*Glenn Wolf e, CFD (Co-operative Feed Dealers*
*Mark Peretore, Wildlife Management News LLC*




Where it's legal, feeding deer is a great way to make sure there are no gaps in your herds nutrional needs. It's also beneficial to provide supplemental feeding all year long not just during the hardest months.

*Photo By Mark Peretore*



DR. DEER'S

# Management Calendar




*by Dr. James Kroll*

## Products and Services that Actually Work




I now am starting the fifth decade of my career, and looking back on it there have been many exciting developments and benchmarks we have accomplished. Yet, over this long time I also have been frequently disappointed, and even dismayed by the quality of products and services provided to the deer hunters and landowners. Here at the Institute for White-tailed Deer Management and Research (not to be confused with the Whitetail Institute of North America), we consider ourselves to be the "Underwriters Laboratory" of the deer world. My name and reputation mean a great deal to me. I have devoted my life to scientific integrity, so when someone comes out with a product or service that is nothing more than hype, it hurts not only me but also the folks who love whitetails as much as we do. You might have known that I am not reticent in speaking my mind about product effectiveness, or even the performance of state and federal agencies!

I retired from University service in 2014, allowing me to speak even more freely about what is truth, what works and what does not. So, my fifth decade of work is focusing on development of Dr. Deer's Whitetail World™, a program and service which seeks out, evaluates and promotes products and services that really work. The purpose of this issue's Wildlife Management News column is to explain how we have gone about and continue to evaluate products and services.

First, we have developed two levels of recognition—Dr. Deer Approved and Dr. Deer Certified products and services. In order to receive the Dr. Deer Seal of Approval, a product must undergo intensive scientific testing and evaluation to determine if the product truly does what the manufacturer claims! To achieve "Preferred" status, a product or service must be one that we have used for some time, and there is no need to conduct tests. An example would be hunting operations around the country, and various web applications. To be awarded either seal does not mean you have it forever! We continually monitor the quality of products and services, and part of our agreement includes the right to withdraw the seal at a moment's notice; meaning, a manufacturer must immediately remove the seal from their products. So, how are products tested and what does it take to achieve this high honor?

It's not easy to test products.

Since we are scientists and we only rely on sound data to make decisions and recommendations, it is important we design a scientifically valid experiment to assess the usefulness of a product. Here are some examples. First, a number of years ago, we were asked by Dennis Fink of the Ozonics Company to evaluate their odor reducing equipment. At that time, Dennis' machine was rather bulky and in the early stage of development. Dennis wanted us to determine if his product really did reduce human scent, because he did not want to go to market with a product that did not work. We set out to design an experiment to test effectiveness without bias.

The first step was to eliminate human bias or error from the experimental design. Our concerns were that, if we used real humans, all sorts of confounding factors could be introduced. One person's odor may be more or less than another, or even more detectable to deer. Further, human behavior is unpredictable. A person scratching his nose at the wrong time could completely ruin the experiment. So, we decided on using human cutouts that were exactly the same size. The basic design was to place mannequins in brush blinds, each constructed from the exact same materials, size and shape. The blinds would be constructed up wind from a bait source (corn), which was deposited in the exact same amount and pattern. This was only the first hurdle to overcome. Next, it was the manufacturer's directions to place the Ozonics unit above the head of the person, using their mounts or a tripod. We used randomly selected, but identical tripods to hold the unit just above and behind the mannequin.

The next issue dealt with the possible reaction of deer to the unit itself. At that time, they were black and contained in a box with vents and intakes. We used the housing for one of the machines, without its contents for our control. In all appearances, each setup was exactly the same. We also asked ourselves about the low sound the machine makes, but decided we would address that variable if deer appeared to be repelled by the units.

Now, how do we manage human scent? We selected one individual to wear two identical shirts for several days prior to the tests. We then randomly assigned a shirt to each setup, handling the shirts with rubber gloves. They were used right away to avoid loss of human odor. The way we measured the response involved another product we were fortunate to

develop in the late 1970s, the trail camera. Using the video function, we placed a camera at each station with the video time set at several minutes and no delays between recordings.

From this work, we determined that the Ozonics units did indeed work, as long as the wind was reasonably manageable; meaning, a high wind could create issues. We monitored the behavior of deer and the numbers and sexes of deer coming to bait stations directly downwind from the blinds; finding that more deer came to the setups with Ozonics units than controls. We were pleased to inform Dennis his product was effective.

Another instance involved a new deer feed, produced by Nutra Deer, Inc. The owner is Jeff Williams, who has gained considerable fame in the catfish tackle and scent industry. He came to us with a new pelleted deer feed, that included his proprietary mineral packet and scent/flavoring products. Again, our agreement with Jeff was that we would conduct the study to determine attractiveness of his feed, compared to the two most popular brands. And, as usual our agreement included that what we found out was what we found out, and we could not be influenced in any way. Jeff agreed eagerly.

This study required the use of another product, Boss Buck feeders, which we helped develop. We obtained feeders of the exact same models for the work and positioned them where deer might encounter them in their day to day movements. However, we placed three feeders at each station, each randomly assigned a feed brand. Again, we used trail camera videos to monitor the amount of use and behavior of deer encountering the feeder, plus weights of feed used throughout the studies. The result clearly showed that Jeff's feed was significantly preferred over the other two brands, by a rather large margin. Jeff went to market with the feed and it has universal acceptance to date.

Our work with Boss Buck feeders is a very long story, but in essence, owner Tom Boyer allowed us full reign in developing the "perfect" deer feeder. A well-designed experiment testing delivery devices, again clearly showed that his 3-4 inch diameter tube feeder and delivery angle were perfect for deer acceptance. We also discovered the proper spacing between support legs and height of feeder tubes to eliminate non-target animal use, especially raccoons.

One of our recent studies involved attractiveness of chestnuts. Robert Wallace is a third generation chestnut breeder whose family has developed a blight resistant strain of chestnut, first discovered by his grandfather. You should know that, prior to the latter part of the 19th Century chestnuts made up a significant part of the eastern forests, supplying food to a host of animals, as well as Native Americans. Importation of oriental varieties brought a blight that effectively eliminated the most important mast producing species! It often is taught that market hunting caused the demise of the passenger pigeon, but loss of chestnuts as a food source had as much to do with their passing as any factor.

We designed an experiment to compare attractiveness of chestnuts compared to white oak acorns, once again employing trail cameras to provide an unbiased observation of the feeding sites. Deer that had never even seen a chestnut, much less their ancestors, preferred chestnuts 100 to one over white oak acorns in this study. This work led Robert to develop Chestnut Magic which now is on the market. It contains dehydrated chestnuts, chestnut flour and other lesser ingredients. As usual, however, there already are similar products being offered which our studies show are inferior to Robert's product! "It's just the same," more often than not does not mean that a product really is; just another thing that drives us "batty" about this industry.

There are too many products to discuss in this space, suffice it to say that most of the products we have tested failed miserably, but we do not discuss these as part of our agreements. I hope this discussion has helped you understand what is behind the rare endorsements by Dr. Deer. We take your trust seriously, and we cannot be bought! Our endorsements are based on independent testing, not the size of the check.



# Orphaned Fawn




When you look at the photo it may seem just ordinary without having a story to go along with it. I am a wildlife conservation officer. In June of this year I was dispatched to a residence that was reported to have an illegal captive Whitetail fawn in a fenced area behind the house. Upon my investigation the individuals in possession of the fawn told me they had rescued it when the mother doe had been killed by a vehicle. Though many of us, including myself, think their intentions were from the heart, possessing a fawn is a violation of the game and wildlife code. Their intent was not criminal, I merely seized the fawn and did not issue a citation. The woman who had been caring for the fawn for three weeks was distraught, crying and completely heart broken when she learned that the fawn had to be removed from her care. I can see how it would be emotionally difficult to have bonded after caring and bottle feeding a Bambi Whitetail. Prior to this incident I would observe on a nightly basis a Doe and two young fawns grazing in the corner of my hayfield. I promised the lady that the fawn would be relocated to the vicinity in which I kept seeing the grazing trio in hopes that the mother doe would adopt the orphan. I placed a trial camera in the area in attempt to see if I could get a photo of the potential adoption. I checked the camera every morning for three weeks hoping to catch a photo of the doe with the fawn, so that I could prove to the distraught lady that all was well with her Bambi. Three weeks of nightly photos did not produce the result I was so anxiously hoping for. One day I was out shopping and came across the Chestnut Hill, Chestnut Magic product. I figured why not give it a try. BINGO!! The second evening after placing only two cups of Chestnut Magic in view of the camera I got the photo that I had been waiting for what seemed like forever to catch. The doe with her two fawns and the adoptive third! The seized fawn was placed in the vicinity while she and her new siblings were still in spots. As can be seen from the photo all the fawns are beyond their spot phase and appear to be very healthy. The adopted fawn is the one on the right. The best was yet to come when I delivered the photo to the lady who had cared for the orphan fawn. She was in tears after viewing the photo knowing her fawn was successfully returned to the wild. Thanks to Chestnut Magic for getting me that photograph.

Mike Lubich
Pennsylvania Game Commission

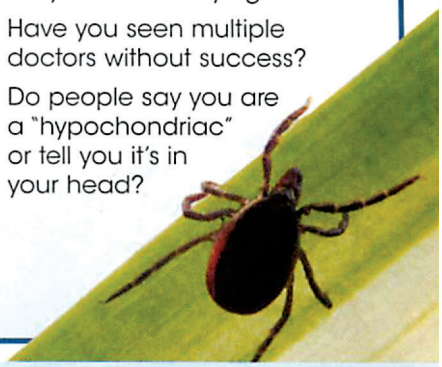


# Lyme Disease Symptoms



## *Please check if you have the symptoms listed below:*

- Unexplained fever, chills, or sweats?
- Unexplained weight changes, gain or loss?
- Fatigue, tiredness, especially around 3 P.M.?
- Unexplained swollen glands?
- Chronic sore throat or sinus infections
- Testicular/pelvic pain?
- Unexplained menstrual irregularity?
- Irritable bladder or bladder dysfunction?
- Sexual dysfunction or loss of libido?
- Stomach problems?
- Change in bowel function, constipation, diarrhea?
- Chest pains?
- Shortness of breath/cough?
- Heart palpitations, heart block, racking heart, slow beat?
- Muscle pain/cramps?
- Joint pain/swelling that come & go - knees, hips, ankles, wrists?
- Twitches of facial or other muscles?
- Headaches, sometimes days at a time?
- Neck creaks/cracks - stiffness?
- Stiffness of the joints or back?
- Tingling, numbness, burning or stabbing sensations?
- Facial paralysis - Bell's Palsy?
- Double or blurry vision, floaters, pain, light sensitivity?
- Buzzing or ringing in ears, ear pain, sensitivity to sound?
- Dizziness, poor balance, increased motion sickness?
- Light-headed?
- Confusion, difficulty thinking?
- Difficulty with concentration, reading, or following plots?
- Decreased short term memory loss?
- Disorientation, getting lost, going to wrong places?
- Difficulty with speech, think one thing and another word comes out?
- Mood swings, irritability, depression, crying for no reason?
- Disturbed sleep - increased, decreased or nightmares, night sweats?
- Exaggerated symptoms from alcohol?
- Diagnosis of *Carpal* Tunnel, Chronic Fatigue, Epstein Barr or M.S.?
- Do you feel like dying?
- Have you seen multiple doctors without success?
- Do people say you are a "hypochondriac" or tell you it's in your head?






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# Lymes Disease 101 - Part 2

*by Dr. Gregory Bach, D.O., F.A.A.I.M., P.C.*

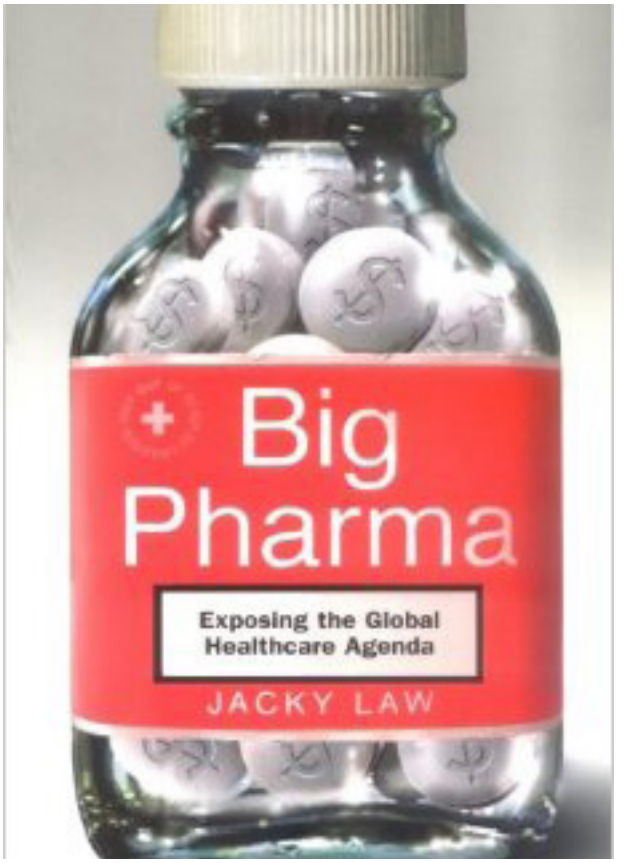
I just returned from Australia and was able to personally lecture to one of the chief of staff to their senate parliament, and I left them a copy of the Lyme disease article published recently by this periodical. Along with other supporting patient cases and materials. He was taken back, we spent two and half hours together and he said he was going to take the information to his minister of health. You see, in Australia only I D (infectious disease) doctors, I am told, only can diagnose and treat Lyme disease. There is a very rigid control over this disease in that country which shuts out the other doctors.

As I return to our story about why can't doctors treat past two weeks or a month for Lyme disease OR suffer the possible investigation from insurance companies and medical boards. It's all about the $$ MONEY, PATENTS AND CONTROL.

Time and Investigations seems to have caught up with THE "CDC". I came across this July 29, 2015 article/video, please see: Senator Posey Calls for Investigation of CDC Fraud/ video/C-SPAN.org. It's only a ten minute actual video on this investigation from the floor of the senate – it speaks for itself – someone changing the research data about autism and vaccines with one of the original research scientists spilling the beans. WHY is this important? Because they are part of the Lyme disease problem. It appears they are falsifying and changing research data on this subject of autism and vaccines, why not Lyme disease also, which has already undergone investigation by Senator Blumenthal back in May of 2008?

Did you know that Lyme disease & (TBD) tick borne diseases or coinfections studies published in 2008 and 2015 by the N.I.H. chronic Lyme studies showed functional disability of infected patients was comparable to what you would see with Congestive Heart Failure. Pain is comparable to what you might expect in patients coming out of Surgery. Fatigue is comparable to patients with MS. (1)

Did you know that "The Iceman" who is one of the oldest anthropological remains of the human race had Lyme disease? YES. Published by National Geographic in 2012. They took the DNA of The Iceman who had been suffering Chrohn's Disease by his autopsy. He was first tested for Syphilis which was negative then tested for Lyme disease, which tested positive by DNA. So it shows that this disease has been around since the beginning of early man and in this case linked to Chrohn's Disease. Fascinating. But did you also know that Lyme disease "Bb" Borrelia Burgdorferi was also found in Amber crystals and ancient American Indian remains?




I have found in my research that patients who I have treated in the past with any Native American Ancestry have a more difficult time with these (TBD) tick borne diseases when they go through the treatment. One of my board certification is in Addiction Medicine and I always wondered if there was a corralation between higher rates of ETOH abuse and the Native American population in general. Could this be one of the connecting reasons, because Lyme disease patients have a higher incidence of drug and alcohol overuse due to pain.

Back to who's in control of this disease. Many policy makers controlling Lyme disease have been microbiologists, rheumatologists, "bench" scientists and bureaucrats. They lack clinical medicine (accept for the rheumatologists) have prevented them from understanding the association between Lyme disease and T.B.D. infection and fatigue and the cognitive, psychiatric, subtle neurological and other multisystemic symptoms.

Doctors and patients must be told and taught that Lyme disease is a clinical disease, signs and symptoms (which means what the doctor sees when he's examining the patient) is how the diagnosis is made and not relying on the Lyme

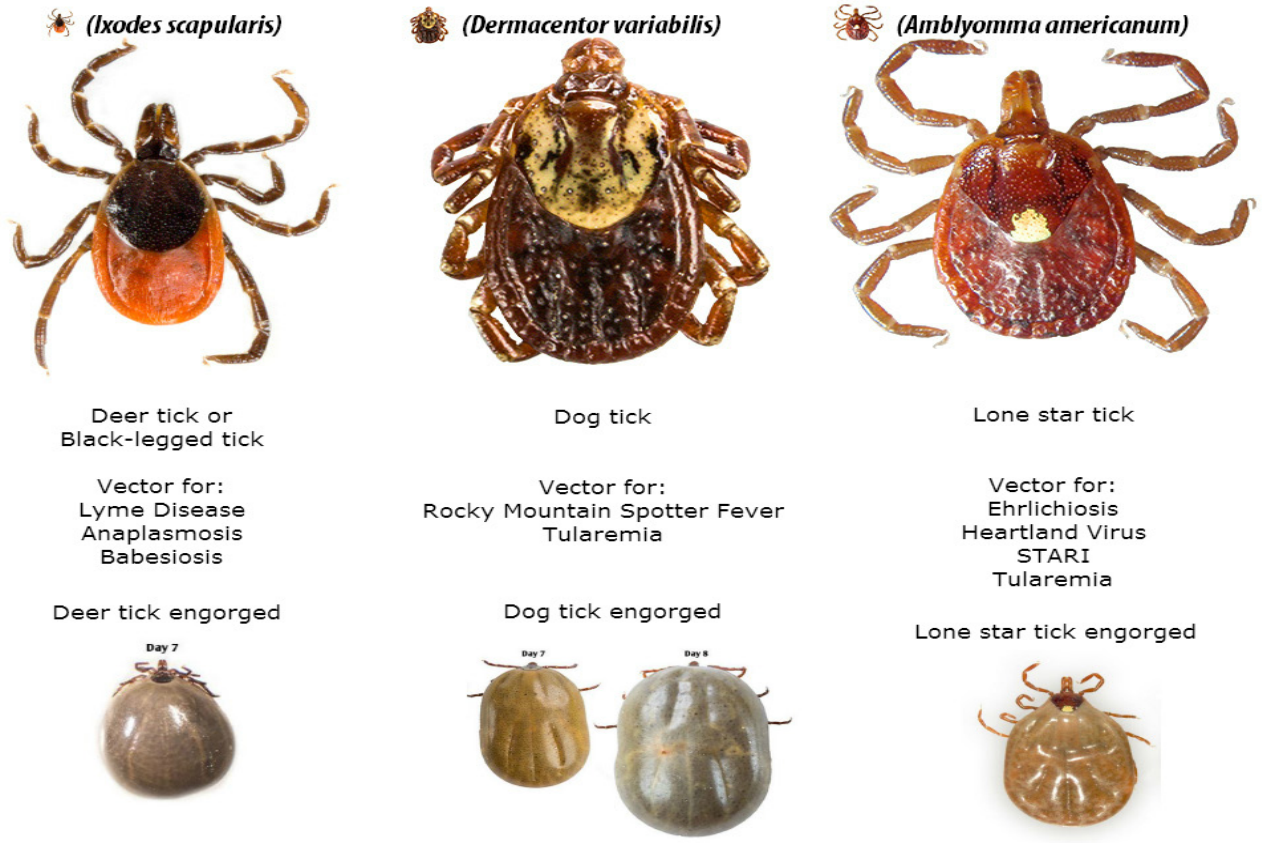
disease test which is only 46% sensitive (meaning how the test locates the disease). "Even the CDC states that testing should not be used as the sole criteria for Lyme disease diagnosis."

Did you know that Dr. Osler, the Father of American Medicine emphasized history, examination, and judgement, is what is most important in diagnosing a patient "medicine is learned by the bed side and not in the class room". So we return to why the restrictive definition of Lyme disease occurred. First started in the 1970 – cured in two weeks in medicine – if you're not better it's post Lyme treatment syndrome, meaning it's all in your head. Why can't it just be that the patient needs to be treated longer until symptoms resolve. Or is there another coinfection (another disease

patients sick? Law suites are still in place for as long as the patients are alive. This changing of the lab test markers cut out a lot of the positive test results. Did you know that a study reviewing Lyme sensitivity was reviewed from 1993 through 2008 and showed you only have a 46% chance of the test even finding it. (3) (If this was an AIDS test this would never have been allowed.)

Even spinal taps, "they count as the gold standard shown only 1/27 could show by this painful method and was published by Tuffs University School of Medicine." (4)

Third Parties - Let's not confuse who has what responsibilities in what areas. The CDC and FDA have no license to practice medicine, have no clinical experience, do not see patients and do not correct their errors by feedback and




traveling with Lyme disease at the time of the infection).

At last count there are 23 plus other tick borne pathogens (infections) in the U.S. Did you know only one in a hundred lab tests are CDC positive. Yearly Statistics: 3,400,000 Lyme lab tests ordered yearly - 300,000 to 1,000,000 estimated yearly cases – 30,000 meet CDC surveillance definition – negative lab tests don't rule out Lyme disease – there is a serious national and international health crisis in all 50 states and more than 80 countries. (2)

Did you know that the deer borne criteria eliminated the bands (biomarkers) most relevant to Neurological Symptoms, so they could put out the Lyme disease vaccines, in the 1990's which had to be pulled off the market for making

clinical experience does. The CDC and FDA are not laboratories that perform quality assurance and are not acceptable to references for how to CLINICALLY interpret serological (blood) tests or any tests in the office.

The Role of Government Agencies – The CDC has responsibility for surveillance of infectious disease. The FDA approves drugs and the labelling of drugs. CLIA (Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendment) approves medical laboratories, not the FDA. A CLIA approved lab has been proven to be proficient by federal standards.

And the answer is? It is apparent there is an attempt to use a narrow definition of Lyme disease to facilitate approval of a Lyme disease vaccines, test kits and NIH grants. Recog-

nizing as a chronic relapsing disease that can be seronegative (negative test result), defined by a complex clinical (physical) assessment rather than a simple blood test, would prevent cost effective approval of Lyme vaccines and mass produced test kits by the FDA. Post Lyme treatment disease syndrome is simply a contrived medical condition disguising treatment failure. Authors of the IDSA (Infectious Disease Society of America) Lyme guidelines were principle investigators of vaccine trials, test kits and NIH grants, is a matter of public record.

The Plot Thickens. Dr. Willie Burgdorfer, who discovered Borrelia Burgdorferi, the spirochete causing Lyme, stated –"The controversy in Lyme disease research is a shameful affair and I say this because the whole thing is politically tainted. Money goes to the same people who have for the last 30 years produced the same thing – nothing."(5)

Again who "OWNS THE ELISA PATENTS"? Just look it up. The IDSA Lyme disease guideline authors had: $92,000,000 in NIH &CDC Lyme grants - $113,000,000 in NIH & CDC Lyme grants to their institutions and more to other collaborators – 200 Lyme related patents (including Lyme ELISA).

And what put kerosene on this fire? "The Bayh-Dole Act further increased the financial gain form NIH grant money." The legislation offered universities the opportunity to patent the results of federally funded research on license campus-based inventions and earning royalties in return, After the act was passed in 1980, many of the doctors in academic research shifted their research away from the clinical aspects of Lyme disease towards research focused upon acquiring patents on different parts of the disease.{6}

Money is made for NIH grants, patents and royalties only if it's a laboratory rather than clinical (doctor examining patient) based definition.

Missed Opportunities – The failures of NIH and CDC to effectively deal with Lyme disease results in missed opportunity to prevent impairment, disability and sometimes death. Other countries follow the lead of American healthcare policies which magnifies the consequences of our actions.

Freedom in Medicine – Dr. Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence and personal physician to George Washington stated – "Unless we put medical freedom into the Constitution, the time will come when medicine will organize into an undercover dictatorship to restrict the art of healing to one class of men and deny equal privileges to others."

Signing off with this history lesson remember (there are two standards of care concerning Lyme Disease) the treatment decision regarding which approach to use rests within the Physician-Patient Relationship, in a medical system that respects freedom. Until next time……

Special thanks to Dr. R.C. Bransfield, M.D. for your added research in this article.

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***by Dr. Gregory Bach, D.O., F.A.A.I.M., P.C.***



# Trail Cameras Vs. GPS collars

*by Jim Stickles Associate Wildlife Biologist*

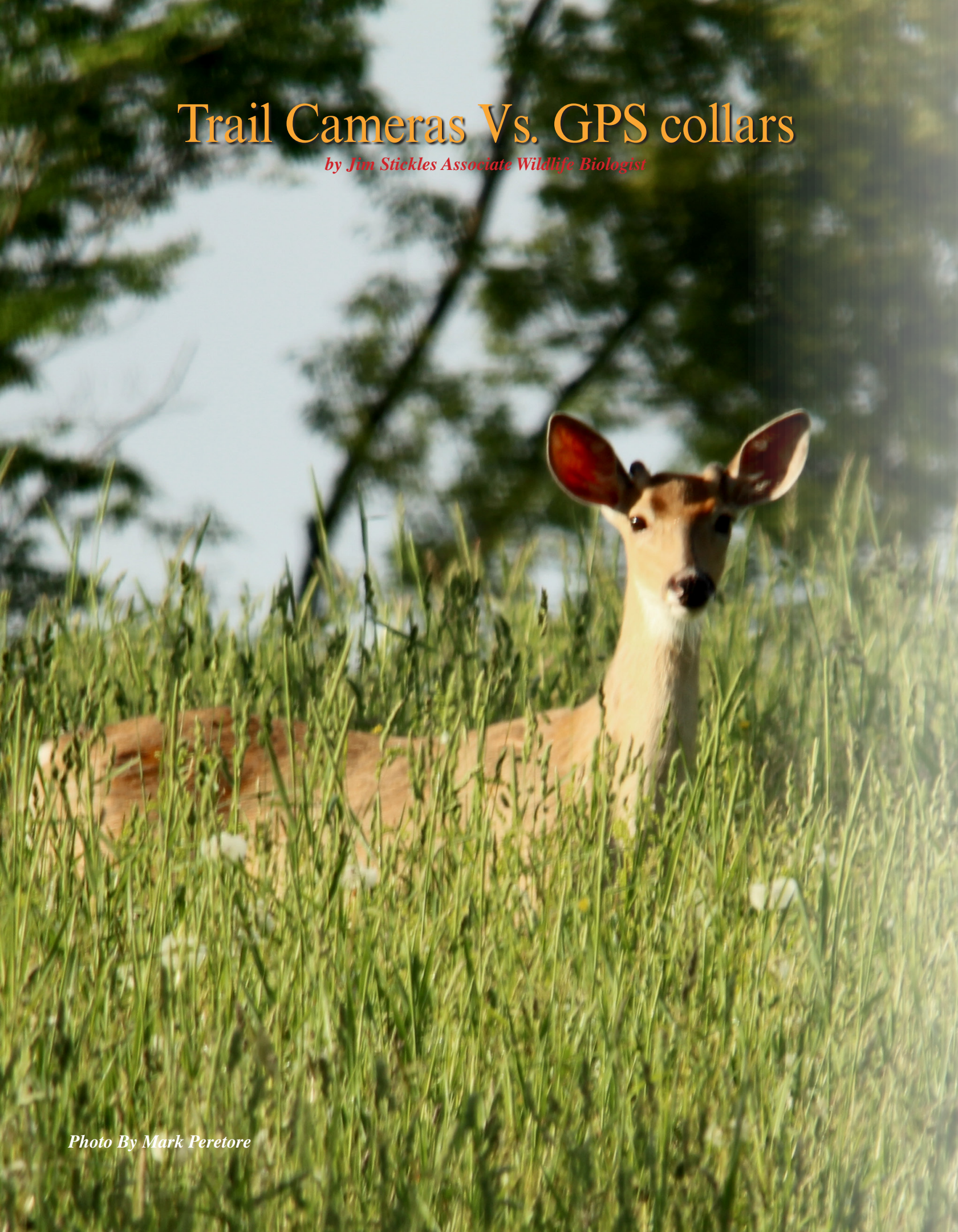


*Photo By Mark Peretore*

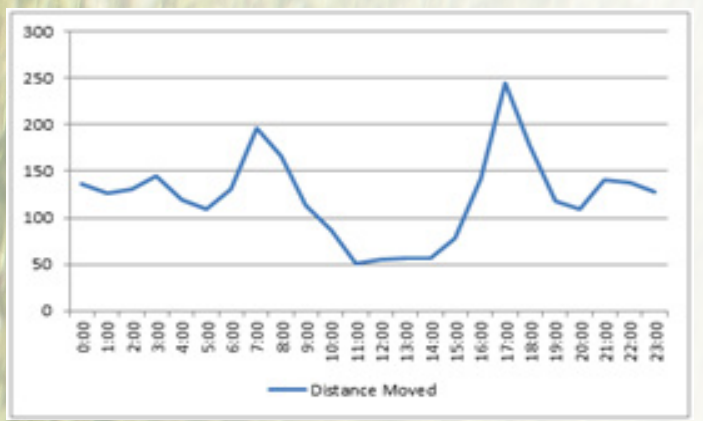
It goes without saying that trail cameras have revolutionized the way we hunt! I have often used trail cameras to monitor activity patterns and home ranges, but I have also used global positioning system (GPS) collars. In using these technologies, I have often wondered how trail camera data and GPS data compare.

Trail cameras give us the same basic information (date, time, location, and animal identity) as GPS collars, the only difference being that trail cameras are stationary, whereas GPS collars are worn on the animals. The number of times an animal is photographed at specific camera stations is a clue as to which areas of a property an animal prefers, and the time of the photos can give you an idea of where the animal's bedding area is located. For example, if we know that deer spend a majority of daylight hours bedded, then consistent daytime pictures should indicate that the camera station is close to the animal's bedding area. We can also determine deer activity patterns at camera locations based on the frequency of photos throughout the day. For example, some stand locations have very little activity in the morning, but lots of activity in the evening. Knowing the deer activity pattern at your stand locations can mean the difference in getting into your stand completely undetected or getting busted and ruining your hunt.

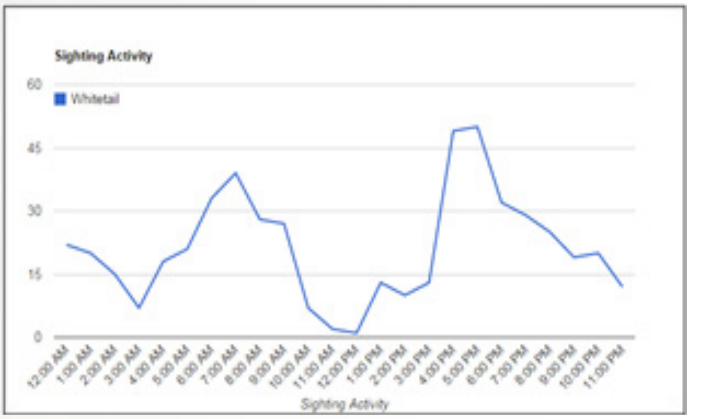
Using trail cameras to their full potential requires processing the photos. As someone who has sorted through hundreds of thousands of trail camera photos over the years, I can attest that it can be a cumbersome task, but it is well worth the effort.

So back to my original question – how does trail camera data stack up against GPS collar data? See for yourself! Below I compared GPS collar data against trail camera data. As you can see, trail camera photos can serve as an accurate index of deer movement, and they can accurately represent a deer's home range and core area. If you don't have a trail camera yet, you're missing out on using an extremely valuable tool for hunting! See the resulted of this expriement charted on below. Good luck and be safe this hunting season!

GPS Collar Data




Trail Camera Data

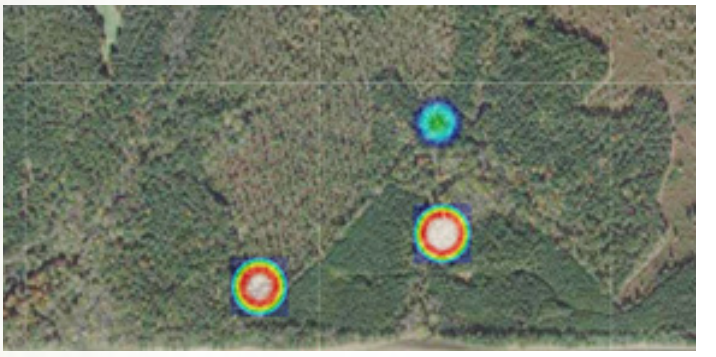



Average hourly distance (meters) moved by GPS collared deer (left) versus the number of deer photographs captured at a trail camera location (above). Trail camera photos can serve as a good index of deer movement.

GPS Collar Data



Trail Camera Data



95% home range (yellow) and 50% core area (red) of a GPS collared deer (top) versus Big Game Logic (www.biggamelogic.com) heat maps (bottom) which represent the number of times the same GPS collared deer was photographed at bait stations. The deer was photographed more frequently within its core area (as indicated by the "white hot" hot spots), and less frequently at the fringe of its core area (as indicated by the blue/green hot spot).

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# Starting From The Ground Up

*by Mark Peretore - Editor*

As with nearly everything in life, the first step to making leaping bounds is to go back to the basics, the fundamentals. Starting from the ground up can be taken literally in the case of building the perfect whitetail deer property. The very deer that walk the property have been built and programed from the ground up. The antler growth and behaviors have been determined by the minerals and nutrients in the ground and their day to day living has been patterned by the structures that surround them.

This theory is the exact process that I will be following over the next 10 years on my own property. To create the perfect hunters' habitat, time is something that is very important and combined with nature, just what you need. Lay the ground work now, manage the property and time will work wonders. Your efforts will pay dividends if you stick to the plan.

Before jumping head first into a big undertaking you must be realistic with yourself and create a long term plan. This plan should be in writing, mapped out, and specific. Assess the property, the geographical features, the herd that is present, and your ability to make changes. Build your dream property just like an architect takes to the graph paper. Every square foot of land should be accounted for in your plan and specifically designed from the ground up. Whether the design is to leave a section of land untouched or to knock it down and plant it up again, every planning design should have its reason. Determine the flow with the natural lay of the land, and think about the surrounding parcels and what they offer to understand what you need. Again, understand you can only control so much on any parcel of land, but a plan is paramount in making progress

Dr. James C Kroll has done extensive research on several properties over the years, and has determined that the smallest amount of acreage that you can reduce a whitetail's home range to is 80 acres. Provided that you can supply them with everything they need, a deer can not only survive, but thrive and feel confortable within its home range. Bedding cover, travel corridors, sanctuaries, summer thermals, winter thermals, water, hard mast-producing trees, soft mast-producing trees, food plots, and plenty of browse are the most crucial factors to create this honey hole of a property. This theory regarding such a small acreage is a wonderful thing, but all the features must be understood when developing your plan. There is no guarantee that bucks wont wonder, but if you can give the herd everything it needs, your likelihood of recruitment and holding will exponentially increase.

It is easy enough to gather all this information and read the many articles about what each person is doing, but what to do first and when to do it isn't so clear. Unfortunately each property needs a customized plan and nothing you read will diagnose your property specifically. A property only a mile down the road may have an entirely different road map to success and specifically a different starting point. Upon assessing your property you need to understand the priority of each management procedure that you will be performing and list them in that order. Though any changes made in the right directions will improve the property, its always most preferred to work in the most effective and efficient way possible.

If your reading this article then I assume you are like me and not the best forester, therefore I will always advocate paying a professional to help you draw up a complete management plan. Some state environmental conservation agencies will do this for free. When hiring please make sure it is a reputable forester and not one of these companies that offers a management plan in 24 hrs solely from satellite images. Be aware there are several outfits out there these days that do exactly that and have only been certified by attending an online course.

With all this said, its time to put your pen to the paper, your feet to the ground, and your money where your mouth is. The following paragraphs will detail how I am going about this on my own property.

The first thing that we did when we bought our property was walked the woods, every nook and cranny. We looked for deer sign and geographical features like saddles, draws, and ridges. We payed close attention to the trees and types of forest that were in the habitat, and any change in landscape. An example of this is an edge like effect created by mature open hardwoods meeting young saplings or



*Photo By Mark Peretore*

evergreens. This was vital information for the next step of strategically placing our trail cameras to inventory our herd. If your cameras don't see deer, you can't collect data. When using trail cameras to create any type of database, it's a good idea to use one of the numerous apps to better manage your data. An online application that I really like is Big Game Logic, but there are several out on the internet. In the first year this is all we did, scouted and hunted, gathering all the data and information we could. We wanted to get a baseline on our herd and land to determine how things happened on our property, to understand the natural flow of the land. By doing things this way it allowed us to find our hotspots, travel corridors, bedding areas, food sources, and just get an overall feel for the land. We were able to do this without pressuring or intruding on the deer's normal day to day activities, which is important for an accurate baseline. From our data we discovered that our deer were typically bedding in over grown goldenrod fields as well as a thick briar area deep in the woods. We also noticed that our deer would travel expansively for food. Though we inventoried some great 2 1/2 year old bucks, we noticed our herd quantity was not very plentiful. There seems to be a problem with our properties ability to hold deer, specifically doe. This may be attributable to the food being far away, where the doe like to be, but providing a safe low pressure area for the mature bucks to hang.

Taking the time to get a real understanding of your property, and creating that baseline will help you tenfold when you begin to start making habitat changes. Using what you've learned from the data you collected will allow you to make the changes in the most efficient manor. Don't fight an uphill battle. Getting deer to travel through different areas or from different directions may prove to be impossible, so if you can work with what you already have, life becomes easier.

Since we understood that a major food source was lacking, and with deer needing to become familiar with the new food source we did this first. Next I brought in a forester Dave Sienko to walk my land with me and help develop a plan to address the problem of holding does. We determined that there were several hard mast and soft mast producing trees that we could clean up and increaser productions from. We also felt there was a need to thin some canopy and get some more light to the ground. There are a few areas that we now plan on clear cutting to plant white pine and Norway spruce trees. We have begun making some of the above changes, but have a long way to go.

With every edition of Wildlife Management News, I will take you through this journey with me nd hopefully show you the results of a good plan, hard work ,and dedication.






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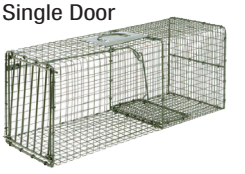


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