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BLIND HORSE KNIVES PRESENT

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Self Reliance Illustrated LLC.
1523 Pershing Avenue
Steubenville, OH 43952
740-317-8220
<http://www.selfrelianceillustrated.com>
info@selfrelianceillustrated.com

Managing Editors

Dave Canterbury
James Canterbury
Dan Coppins
L.T. Wright

Associate Editor

Jason W. Gatliff

Copy Editor

Michael Henninger

Production Manager

Jason W. Gatliff

Production Assistant

Michael Henninger

Advertising Contact

Charles Fedunok

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Contents

Editorial
Letter from the Editors by L.T. Wright4
What's in my Pack?
What's in my Pack? Part 2, The Next 5 by Dave Canterbury 6
Shelter
Why I Went Hammock by Robert Simpson11
Fire
Firewood Basics by James Kane14
Finding Dry Tinder by Zeb Allison19
Water
Frontier Pro Water Filter by L.T. Wright23
First Aid
Trauma Kits for the Woods by Tim Stetzer27
Food
Non-Seasonal Edibles by Dave Mitch' Mitchell31
Special Stove Shootout
Ti-Tri Caldera by Cody Burwell34
The CanteenShop GrillTop Stove Stand by Brian Andrews39
Canteen Cook Systems by Gert Grohmann44
Alcohol Stoves, Cheap and Easy by Joel L. Jessup49
Hunting
The Easy L-7 by Joe Flowers53
Scratch and Win by Rev. Joe Classen57
Gear Reviews
Jungle Boots get a Makeover by Barry Bright61
Inspirational
Discovering Your Outdoor Space by Craig Cole67
Bushcraft on the Go by Marc Hallee70
Do It Yourself
Common Man's Haversack by Ken Seal III 73
The On-Person Survival Kit by Mike Lychock77
The Bowline by Scott Wickham Jr.91
What's in a book? by Charles "Sgt." Speakman 82
Ask Payge by Payge McMahon86
Pathfinder Youth Organization
How much good can we do? by William Sigler88
The Grind: What's New at Blind Horse Knives by Scott Wickham Jr.96
Pathfinder Trip Tip17
Advertiser Index90

Cover Image: Chloe Thibeault and her Father, Steve, blowing a bird's nest to flame, from an ember created by magnification. Photograph taken at a Pathfinder Basics Class by Iris Canterbury.

From the Editors...

Get out there!

Heading out to the woods can be a chore sometimes. With work and family it can be hard to get your "Woods Time" in. It seems like the days go by far too quickly to get in any of the activities that you plan for. We plan for an outing every month and it seems harder and harder to pull it off. My wife and I have been planning to hike the Appalachian Trail for a couple of years now and it always seems like we just can't find the time. She's busy or I'm off at a show or there's a wedding or a number of any other things that may come up. I guess dreaming about and planning your next trip is almost as much fun as doing the trip. We do try to work in trips as often as we can when we head out to a show. A short overnighter is still better than none at all. We travel doing knife and gun shows and I am not a big fan of hotels, so you would find us at the campgrounds more often than a hotel. We camp a lot at state parks or small campgrounds near the gun and knife shows that we attend. Sometimes it's just an overnighter and other times it's for a few days. A few years back we had the chance to go out to Texas and Oklahoma and do a couple of shows. We camped our way there and home. It was one of my favorite times together with my wife. We had a great time. With work and life getting in the way, sometimes just a short trip anywhere can make a big difference in your life. We get so busy that an overnight trip can seem to be too much of a hassle and you won't do it, but it could be just the thing to get you back on track. Any trip anywhere is better than no trip. Any time that I get to spend away from the daily routine and stress of life is worth the effort. Another time, on our way home from the Blade show in Atlanta we took a couple of extra days to get home. We found ourselves camping in a few States we had never been to before. Again it wasn't about the gear or the length of the trip, it was about just being out there. Don't just wait on the perfect weekend with the best weather, get out there no matter what! That is one of the best times to play with your gear, when the weather is less than perfect and OLE Mr. Murphy has stepped in to the picture. Missing out on a chance to enjoy the outdoors just because the weather is not the greatest is something we should never do. Embrace the moment, make a challenge to yourself and enjoy it for what it is. Remember that you'll be back at work on Monday, so get that time in while you can. We try and make the most of the time away from home that we can. We will take a different camp stove with us and try our hand at cooking on the latest and greatest stove discovery I have made. It always seems to be a relaxing time, many evenings we would take walks through the park and enjoy the night. Last summer at a Virginia State park near a gun show, a friend of ours came up from the beach and camped with us. He surprised me with a hammock he had made for me and proceeded to teach me a few new knots. We got our hammocks up and sat around talking until bedtime. That night my wife decided to sleep in the van. It was a beautiful summer night in Virginia. A few hours after we hit the hammocks it started to rain. We didn't have tarps with us so I just rolled up like a burrito and laid there waiting on my friend to head for his truck. Well, he never did. He was waiting on me to head to the van, cause he didn't want to be the first to give in either. The next morning the only dry one was my wife who was making fun of us for sleeping in the rain. The things we do to enjoy the outdoors. We have done our share of tent and van camping and plan to do a lot more. Camping is one of the ways I have found where I am truly relaxed. I almost forgot, I'm going to make the time to take my wife on the Appalachian Trail this year. So the next time you need a break and don't think you have the time, think again and make the time to get out there.



God Bless
L. T. Wright

Mission Statement

Self Reliance Illustrated, a collaboration between two grassroots companies (Blind Horse Knives LLC and The Pathfinder School LLC), will present a new and innovative approach to self-reliance, survival, and preparedness. Within these pages you will find detailed information on subjects that relate directly to your ability to survive. The collaboration of The Pathfinder School LLC and Blind Horse Knives LLC is one that is heavily focused on the development of the best tool options for any wilderness situation, as well as the dissemination of information and cross-cultural learning that will truly help us to maintain and pass on the tribal knowledge. What the Pathfinder System symbolizes is learning from everyone around you and valuing everyone's opinion. To that end you will see many articles by people you may have never seen or heard of that will pass on ideas that we believe are worth learning, so that all have the ability to teach and learn from one another.

We will be posting feedback in each issue from our subscribers, both good and bad, so that we may constantly improve on this magazine. In the end, this is not our magazine but your magazine and we want it to be worth your valuable time, energy and money.

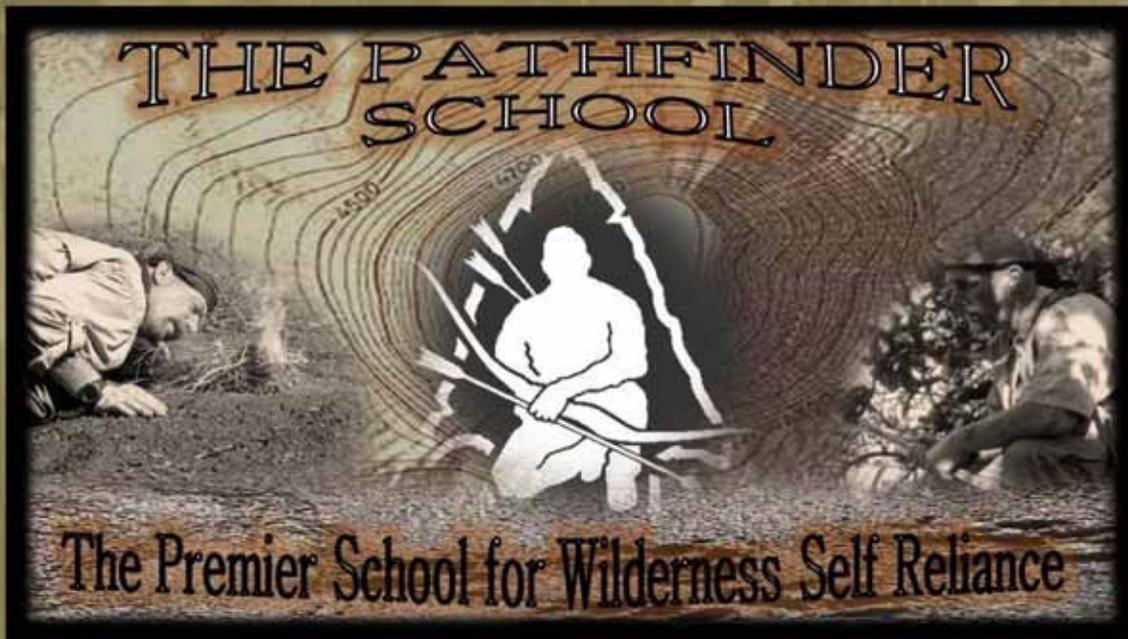
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Lastly, we will not down grade any individual, business, or company within these pages. You will only see reviews for equipment that we trust and that you can trust your survivability to. It is our opinion that all publications are learning tools and that we should support those entities wishing to provide quality information on subjects of interest. It is our goal and mission to become the best source of learning and teaching possible, understanding that other publications dealing with the same subject matter are out there and are worthy of your attention as well.

Thank you,
Dave Canterbury
James Canterbury
Dan Coppins
L.T. Wright.

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Founded by Dave Canterbury, creator of The Pathfinder System, author of *Survivability For The Common Man*, and co-host of *Dual Survival* on the Discovery network, The Pathfinder School is the premier school for wilderness self reliance. The Pathfinder School offers 3 course levels: Pathfinder Basics, Pathfinder Advanced, and Pathfinder Advanced Scout; for information on our current class schedule and to see the latest Pathfinder School merchandise, please visit our website at www.thepathfinderschoolllc.com, email us at pathfinder@thepathfinderschoolllc.com, or contact us by phone at (317) 544-8886.

Dave Canterbury



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What's in my Pack? Part 2: The Next 5

Photos by Iris Canterbury



Charred Cloth can be created using the Metal Container to create a longer lasting heat source to ignite marginal tinder for the next fire.

When building a short term emergency kit, something that you will carry within your pack for a “just in case”, scenario it is important to consider several things. Functionality...will this item perform its intended purpose well? Multi-Use...will this item be useful for anything else in an emergency to help save my life?

Is the weight of this item worth putting in my pack for every day carry or EDC due its merits in the first two questions?

During the vast experimentation that took place to develop the ten-piece emergency kit, I took all of these factors into consideration and also used these items in as many ways as I could think of. By





A Good compass with a sighting mirror and bezel ring will give you many benefits from navigation by visual bearing to signaling for rescue.

process of elimination I was able to whittle down the amount of kit absolutely necessary to truly effect survivability. The first 5 C's in Part one of this article will take care of most people with good knowledge and owned skills in a wilderness environment but there are other factors to consider in an emergency besides the simple CCT (Controlling Core Temperature) factor . What about simple first aid? What about Navigation and Signaling? These are very valid questions and a person who carries only the first 5 items must be very skilled and adept at the use of natural or primitive navigation techniques and the use of plants and local resources for first aid.

It is my goal to address these issues as well as other very important skills I have developed as part of the "Next 5" in the 10 C's of survivability. The most important skill for CCT in my opinion is The Next Fire! You should have sure fire for the first fire



A good waterproof Headlamp with multiple settings for brightness as well as a flash mode are a criticle piece of gear, always be sure to carry spare batteries and rotate them out every 6 months.



Cargo or Duct tape can effectively repair a lot of breakdowns in gear it can also manufacture needed items like cordage and the glues used on these tapes are highly flammable as well.

in your kit whether that is with a chemical accelerant or sure flame; beyond that if something happens or you move then you must think about the next fire? Do you carry an ember and if so how? Do you rely on dry tinder you have had around your fire the night before? Hopefully you will have some dry tinder but you may need a better combustion source than just a ferro rod alone to give long term heat to marginal tinder sources.

For this, the sixth item should be a 100% Cotton bandanna or piece of cloth at least 3'x3' that can be used in conjunction with a metal water bottle to create charred cloth. With charred cloth and a ferro rod you can now effectively have a longer term heat source to ignite the next fire and subsequent fires along your journey if needed. The beauty of this object is its multi-use abilities. We now have another good component for first-aid as a bandage, wrap, or sling. This can also be used as a wash rag, head garment, coolant device around the neck, filtration media, or impromptu cordage to bundle and carry things. There are a lot more uses for this type of item I could mention, but your imagination is the limit here.

The Next item I recommend is Cargo Tape or Duct Tape. The uses for this item are again too numerous to mention all of them here but what is very important is that it is also an item for use in first-aid as well as fire starting. Obviously you can patch and repair gear with this and almost anything



Proper Signaling Technique with the Split Sighting Mirror on a Silva Compass .

including cordage can be created with it. I recommend carrying an entire roll of 2" Gorilla Brand with you. This item is worth its weight in gold in a survival situation.

For the eighth item in the emergency kit I recommend a compass. Not just any cheesy button compass but a good compass with movable bezel ring and a sighting mirror is essential. These are two very important features. The bezel ring will aid in travel for visual bearings and circumventing obstacles and the mirror becomes very versatile in that there is now a signal mirror device as well as another first aid item to see our face or other parts of our body that would be hard to see without it. I can see a thorn or small cut around my eye, I can check my body for ticks in areas I can't see myself. These are very important reasons to have a mirror and the

compass will give us true directionality without primitive navigation techniques.

Number nine and next on the list would be a candling device or headlamp. I prefer a headlamp for this and not a flashlight so that my hands are free to accomplish other tasks. The key elements of this tool are that it has multiple beam settings to include flashing, as this now also becomes a piece of signaling gear for SAR (Search and Rescue). Another good thing to think about with this gear is to make sure it is waterproof so that heavy rain or submersion by accident does not render it useless. It is important to always have spare batteries your pouch. Remember when using a signal mirror or light to signal for rescue that patterns of three are universal and also that most pilots as well as sailors are familiar with Morse code so flashing in an SOS



A Large Canvas repair needle creates an awl type effect in heavy fabric making repairs easier in the field without pliers to push it through.

pattern will be even more effective.

The last item in the “Next 5” list that completes the 10 piece emergency kit is a cloth sail needle. This is different than a regular needle in that it is wedge shaped at the front to provide cutting



Magnetizing your needle electrically or by contact will enable it to be used as an emergency directional device as well.



A Magnetized canvas needle being used as an impromptu compass.

surface for thick material like sail and tent cloth. Because of this it is great to use as an awl for repairing thicker fabric and gear, along with bank line and Duct Tape it makes a great repair kit for you. It also has the advantage of being used to dig out a splinter or stinger as a first aid item and could provide an emergency suture needle if absolutely necessary. By increasing the magnetism of the needle by electrical or magnetic contact charge you can effectively use it for an impromptu compass in an emergency as well.

This completes what I call the “10 C’s” of Survivability. With this minimal kit and a bit of ingenuity you can overcome most seventy-two hour ordeals or longer if needed. This is intended to be just as it states an emergency kit that is kept in a pack along with the other necessities you take on daily adventures. I have five more items I add to this kit when being used for a long-term kit for a week scout or planned outing that we will discuss in a future article. What needs to be remembered here is that no single item can replace simple common sense and the knowledge you store in the brain. Owning certain skills like making fires and building shelters are the true keys to survivability.



Dave Canterbury is the owner of The Pathfinder School, LLC. and Co-Host of the television show Dual Survival, which airs on the Discovery Channel, he is an avid woodsman and Hunter, Military Veteran, and Survivalist working with hundreds of people each year to pass on the tribal knowledge. Dave is also one of the Co-Founders of Self Reliance Illustrated.

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Why I Went Hammock

By Robert Simpson



Hammock set up without the bugnet.

It has become an integral piece of gear in my kit. I'm talking about *hammocks*. I was a tent and tarp shelter guy for a long time; that is until about four years ago. I'd spent so many cold nights lying on cold lumpy ground with that damn root system that always seemed to find its way to the exact spot I had planned on sleeping. It never failed. No matter how nice the campsite, tent, or sleeping bag, nothing I tried seemed to remedy the fact that sleeping on the ground is not always fun. I can't tell you how many times I woke up with a tension headache from my neck muscles pulsing pain straight to my eyes. That can ruin a bushcraft weekend really quickly. With my back getting worse as I got older I needed a change. Giving up the woods was not an option. I thought – why not a hammock? In the pictures it always looks so relaxing. Folks kicking back without a care in the world, no lumps in their backs while they're hanging there. Now I won't go name brand crazy, I'm not trying to plug any one in particular. What works for me may not work for everyone so take what I have to say and apply it to suit your own needs.

I started my research wondering what I was

looking for. I wanted something strong, but lightweight. Something that was easy to carry, but wouldn't take up too much space in my pack. There are so many options out there for this kind of thing, I was surprised. Hammocks with tarps attached, hammocks with bug nets attached, rope systems, strap systems, tarp set-ups, whoopee slings, carabiners, under-quilts – there was so much to consider! It was already getting too complicated, but I enjoy sorting through that kind of chaos, it brings me joy. My mind was made up at this point, no more sleeping on the ground, there was no turning back; I was buying a hammock!

After hours spent on website forums, YouTube, and any other resource I could utilize, I felt like I had a pretty good grasp on what I was

Robert Simpson is a Published Author, Musician, Inventor, Outdoorsman, and is the owner of CanteenShop.com. He's responsible for the ideas behind products such as the Grill Top Stove Stand, the adjustable Para-cord Chest strap, the Flint Striker Blanket Pin and the soon to be released Paracover for his customizable canteen kits. Check out Rob's YouTube page, where he handpicks all the gear and tests it for the shop.





Steve Davis demonstrating comfort.

looking for. I decided to go with a setup that used multiple pieces so I could leave parts of the hammock kit out if I didn't need them. Also, if I broke something I could replace just that particular part of the setup instead of the whole kit. I suggest this to anyone that is hard on gear. I have a habit of destroying the normally so called indestructible though it ended up costing me a bit more in the beginning, it will hopefully save me money down the road.

Here's my checklist:

The Hammock: Nylon parachute material is the way to go. It's lightweight, durable, and packs down small. My recommendation is to get the double size if it is offered, it's simply more comfortable, giving you the room to stretch out at an angle. Never forget to check weight limits on the hammock and attachments. Don't let them fool you either; you won't be sleeping cozy with the wife, no matter what the picture suggests. This is a solo venture from the get-go, my friends. After that first weekend of cozy outdoor sleeping you will be sold on hammocks forever, trust me.

The Hanging System: I have used them all at this point: para-cord, rope, and webbing straps. They all work. My preference is the webbing, it's a

bit more versatile than knotted para-cord or rope systems. Webbing systems are also more tree friendly for trees with brittle bark, which is great for those of you who like to follow the *Leave No Trace* philosophy. Whether you use para-cord, rope or webbing, they all will stretch once they receive your body weight, so adjustments the first night are common.

The Tarp: Here is the part where you can save some money if money is tight. Any tarp will do. You don't have to spend a ton of money to get something that will keep you dry. A tarp is a tarp. As long as it doesn't have holes in it, it's a working tarp. If you have the money go for a nice tarp, it will last a lot longer than a cheaper one, and will hold up better in rough weather. However, both will keep you dry, so do what you can afford. In terms of size, you'll want to go with a tarp that is at least 8'x 8'. When used in a diamond pattern it will cover everything you need to stay dry. If you prefer an A-frame type of tarp set up, then go with a 9'x 9' or a 10'x10'. Something else to look for when buying a tarp, is the grommet and tie-out placement. Get a tarp that has grommets or tie-outs placed on the corner edges and in the center edges. This will help you with securing your tarp once you are ready to stake it down under or over your ridgeline. What is a ridgeline? It is the



Webbing straps to hammock.



Webbing straps to tree.

spine of your tarp. It's just a line of cordage that runs above your hammock and is tied to both the trees to which your hammock is strapped. Some people prefer it over their tarp, tied on with tie-outs, and some prefer it running under the tarp. I am an under the tarp person myself, but both ways work equally well.

Bug Nets and Under-quilts: When using a hammock year-round, these are items to consider. Depending on the season and the environment that you are sleeping in, these two items can be essential to your comfort. Where I live in Ohio, you would be a fool to sleep in a hammock without a bug net of some type in the late spring and summer months. Otherwise, you would be eaten alive in your sleep. It also adds a bit of that feeling of privacy that you get with a tent, and they help retain some of your body heat when used in the winter months. You can even DIY your own out of some cheap cot bug nets that you can find for under five dollars if you want to save some cash.

The under-quilt is a different story all together. Finding something like it, that is cheap is pretty impossible. Making one yourself is not impossible, but is definitely a serious project. This may not be a necessary piece of the kit; that is unless you live in a place where it can go from 85 degrees to 30 degrees in a few hours. It can get pretty cold on your back when it gets chilly out and you're in a hammock, especially if there is nothing acting as a barrier to help insulate your underside and the wind picks up. Lining your hammock with blankets is an option, but they will definitely take up more space and weight than a down filled under-quilt. I have even used it alone in the summer instead of a sleeping bag. Toss in a wool blanket, and you're

good for late spring through mid-fall camping, no extra blankets or sleeping bags required. They just attach under and around the outside of your hammock to help cocoon you in a little more. It's definitely worth checking out if you are into winter trips like I am.

Tying Everything Down: This is a simple one, para-cord or shock-cord. Both are fairly inexpensive, and both work great. Shock cord is nice because it moves with the tarp a bit so you are less likely to have a stake come up from heavy winds or tripping over the line. Some helpful knots to know for setting up your hammock lines are the Bow Line, Half Hitch, and Prussic. There are a ton of videos on YouTube showing all kinds of ways to set up your hammock and tarp lines. You may like a version I haven't even mentioned, or seen, and this is another thing that falls under preference, so do what works best for you, and with what you have available to you.

Is a Hammock for everyone? The answer is more than likely yes. These aren't the backyard hammocks that you have seen folks fly out of during a Sunday afternoon nap. Hammocks made for camping and bushcraft are a different breed. They have evolved from more primitive types through the years. Just like tents, the hammock has endured for a reason; it works. My back feels better after sleeping in my hammock for a few days than it does at home in my own bed. I have had many more memorable trips with my hammock than I ever did with a tent, and since I switched I haven't looked back. That is, unless I am with the wife, then I am unfortunately still stuck in a tent!



Firewood Basics

By James Kane

I can remember as a young boy watching my first camp fire my dad had built on my very first campout. As I sat watching the flames dance about, arms reaching up to the heavens, I was mesmerized and enthralled. Stories of bravery, tales of laughter, jokes both good & bad, and friendships have been made strong by its glowing light. Fire was the center of many ancient ceremonies. Fire is life itself. It is the one thing we must master. Fire makes the damp, dreary, inhospitable woods a warm and comfortable home. Without fire we can't boil our pond water, cook our beetle larvae or heat our lean-to's. Not to mention it helps your body with the all-important task of maintaining core body temperature.

As a boy scout I learned about all the different ways to build a cooking fire and camp fire. There are as many different types of cooking fires as there are knives for different tasks. Many times I have built a cooking fire with the sticks that I gathered from around camp and gotten it to a good roaring blaze only to have it burn out

James Kane grew up in the woods behind his parents' house. This nurtured his love of nature and adventure which led him into the Boy Scouts, U.S. Army, and around the country. He hikes and camps all four seasons, enjoys making his own gear, loves the film *Last of the Mohicans*, and has an acute hatred for snakes. He currently resides in beautiful New England.

suddenly or become so uncooperative I couldn't cook with it. Next thing you know dinner is late and you have a hungry mob hovering around you. Not good a scenario since they almost all have six inch hunting knives on their belts. My naïve assumption that any dry, solid stick is good for cooking fires had failed me.

On my quest to learn more about fire-craft I came across the writings of Bernard Mason*, which this article is based on. I learned that knowing how to build different camp and cooking fire designs is only part of the full fire-craft equation. The other half is learning about different woods, their burning qualities, and how to use them more effectively.

We all know about hard woods and soft woods. The general formula is *Softwoods for a quick blast that is soon over and hardwoods for a steady, even fire with plenty of coals*. But another good rule for cooking is this: *Softwoods for quick boiling and baking, hardwoods for broiling, frying, and stewing*. The way different woods burn varies tremendously affecting the heat they produce, and the coals they make. For our use, we can classify fire woods into three types;

Class I

Soft Woods, the short lived woods that burns quickly and are consumed quickly.

Class II

Hard Woods, the coal



Red Pine

producing woods that burn slowly, evenly, and produce heat radiating coals.

Class III

“Un-inflammable” woods. Green woods that burn extremely slow.

Class I, Soft Woods

If you're like me, you thought of soft woods as just evergreen trees (conifers) and the hard woods (deciduous) was everything else. But trees are much more diverse than that. The pines are easy to recognize. The mature trees will have straight trunks that are free of branches half way up. Most evergreens are Christmas tree shaped. Dry soft woods make the best kindling and will light easily, but burn quickly down to dead coals. They are great for baking slowly and boiling quickly. The great North





Red Spruce

American Indians used soft woods for their council and ceremonial fires, when they needed a fire that produced the most light and less heat. There's nothing worse than performing a ceremonial dance in full dress around a blazing furnace in summer time heat. Here is a list of good burning soft woods.

- Red Spruce, four sided needles
- Sitka Spruce, tallest American spruce
- White Pine, five needles to a cluster
- Pitch Pine, three needles to a cluster
- Alder, broad leaves, stalked buds, and small cone like fruits
- Balsam Fir, flat needles, dark green top and two white lines on underside
- Basswood
- White Cedar
- Red Pine, two needles
- Jack Pine, two needles to a cluster
- Buckeye
- Chestnut (well-seasoned)
- Large Tooth Aspen
- Cottonwood
- Quaking Aspen
- Red Cedar
- Soft Maple

A good fire-craft tip is to hang a pot of water to be boiled over the built fire before you light it. The initial flame and heat produced won't be wasted and will get your pot of moot water to a boil that much quicker, saving you from gathering more wood and burning more calories.

Class II, Hard Woods

Of course when you're out in the woods Mother Nature doesn't provide a grocery isle of different types of woods for you to pick and choose from. We have to use what the wilderness has to offer where ever we happen to make our camp. For cooking, use hard woods for making stews in "Hole in Ground" fires, broiling and frying, and cooking in outdoor stoves and ovens. Use hard woods for building long lasting fires such as a cabin style on a cold night, for melting the lead for making your musket balls, and drying out your wet socks. When its scary story time switch to the low light emitting hard woods to create the perfect atmosphere. Hickories are the best firewood to have. Sugar Maple and Beech are a close second. Black and Yellow Birch are great because they ignite easily, and the bark makes one of nature's best tinder, even when wet. White Ash is the best all-around wood because it will burn almost as well when it is green as it does when it is dry.

The best of hardwoods:

- Hickories
- White Oak, rounded lobe leaves
- White Ash
- Black & Yellow Birch
- Sugar Maple

- Beech, has smooth, pale gray bark.
- Tamarack
- White Birch

These good long lasting hard woods are great if you can find them:

- Apple
- Dogwood
- Hickories
- Holly
- Hornbeam or Ironwood
- Locust
- Mulberry
- Oak; bur, chestnut, live, swamp chestnut, swamp white
- Yellow Pine

Next time you find yourself in a survival situation without your tree field guide and you need to know if that piece of wood you're planning on making a bow out of is a hard or soft wood, use the "finger nail test". If you can stick your thumbnail into the wood and it leaves a dent, it's a soft wood.

Green Woods for Fuel

Sometimes we will need to burn freshly cut "green"



Tamarack





White Ash

wood. Like at the end of a weeklong campout with your buddies and you've already burned all the dead wood within a ¼ mile radius with your nightly bonfires. How well a green wood will burn depends on the moisture content. The moisture content in a tree is separated into two layers, the outer layers, or sapwood, and the inner layers, or heartwood. Green Evergreens vergreens have far too much moisture in both layers to burn efficiently. Hard woods by nature have less moisture in them, but some hard woods have more moisture in the heart wood than others. The best time of year to cut a green hard wood is winter, and on high ground. Trees close to bodies of water and water ways will have more moisture in them. Green White Ash has very low moisture content in both its sap and heartwood.

- White Ash
- Sugar Maple
- Beech
- Yellow Birch
- White Oak
- Soft Maple
- Hickory

Class III, Un-inflammable Green Woods

Many times we need wood for uses other than burning. Some examples are a reflective wall, the side logs of a hunter-trapper fire, pot hooks and hangers, cranes, and Indian waugans, broilers and grills. Here is the list of "Un-inflammable" wood or extremely slow burning green wood:

- Black Ash
- Balsam
- Basswood
- Buckeye
- Butternut
- Chestnut
- Cypress
- Elder, Box
- Hemlock
- Red Maple
- Red & Water Oak
- Pitch & White Pine
- Sassafras
- Serviceberry
- Sycamore
- Tamarack
- Tulip

Spitting & Crackling Woods

How many times have you slept next to a warm, crackling fire to wake up the next morning to discover holes in your ground cloth, or worse, your \$400 dollar sleeping bag? Knowing which woods will launch more flaming balls of fire than other woods is just one more reason to learn how to ID different woods. Here is a list of spitting & crackling softwoods that sleeping bags detest:

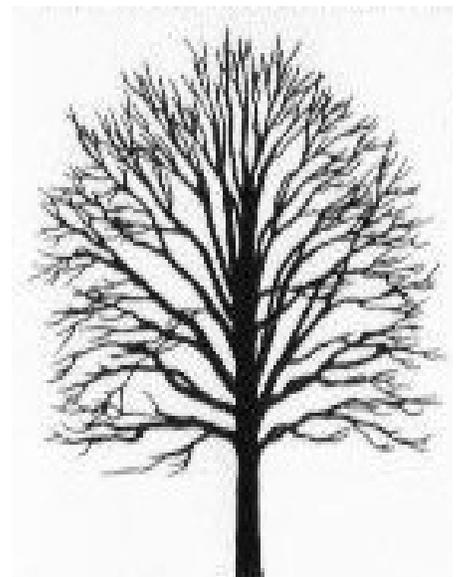
- White & Red Cedar
- Alder
- Hemlock
- Balsam
- Spruces
- Soft Pines
- Basswood

- Box Elder
- Chestnut
- Tulip- Tree
- Sassafras
- Willow

"I have never been fortunate enough to go into the field with someone who would name the plants, birds, insects, mammals, or other wild things for me. It is all in text books someplace, just waiting for you to read it and take that knowledge into the field. To become proficient at anything, it takes a lot of study in the field, the library and the lab."

- Boyd Shaffer
The Botany News
Kenai Peninsula
Botanical Society

With over 600 native trees in the United States it would take a long time to learn every tree out there. If you start out with just the basic, most abundant and useful trees in your area, you'll be off to a great start. Studying trees is a lot like walking down a busy main street. You are surrounded by people you don't know and barely notice them, until you



White Oak



pack and add one tree to your mental arsenal every time you venture out to your personal space. Pretty soon you'll be able to leave the book at home. In the words of Cody Lundin "the more you know, the less your need", and one less

emergency tinder, build a strong bow, or even build a replacement pack-basket out of brown ash you'll need to have a better assortment of trees in your mental tool kit to make the right choices and save time & calories.

**Bernard S. Mason, Woodcraft, A.S. Barnes & Company, 1939*



bump into a friend. You may have even noticed him from far off. You know all about him, his likes, dislikes and where he lives. It is the same with trees, as you get to know your wooden friends you'll notice more and more friends on your scouts. Keep a good tree book in your

field guide book that I have to carry in my pack the better.

Let's be honest, when you're freezing your butt off in the winter or just cooking up Mr. Squirrel caught in your snare, you're not going to care if your using sassafras or tulip wood. But if you need to find



Pathfinder Trip Tip

When using a Magnifying lens as an ignition source with the sun, it is much easier to have the mindset that this is like a primitive fire with a modern device. Creating flame in this manner requires very dry and easily combustible materials. Instead concentrate on processing some dry material to a fine dust or powder then place this material into a bird nest as with primitive fires and use the UV rays to burn the dust and create an ember. Once the ember is smoking by itself you can put away the magnifying glass and gently blow your bundle to life!



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Finding Dry Tinder

By Zeb Allison



Photo 1: Cedar bark taken off tree in the background.

Finding dry tinder material for a bird nest can be very difficult. It might not be as hard to do on a sunny day when you are in good health and you aren't hungry but imagine a situation where you were in a plane crash or fell and broke your leg or wrist. If you have a lighter you are already at an advantage. A lighter gives you something that almost nothing else can, a flame. Now with a bow drill, hand drill or ferro rod you have the potential to get a fire. This can be done and successful most times but never bet your life on it. With a lighter you have a flame without primitive friction fire. If you get a coal with the ferro rod you get sparks. True the coal or sparks are hot but you've got to remember water wont burn. There are many ways to find dry tinder, or just tinder itself. That is what I will be discussing in this article, finding the right materials. When you think of tinder you probably think of wood chips or cotton. While these items will work, more often than not you won't have cotton or wood chips available. Preferably tinder is a dry fluffy substance used to make a flame, spark or coal into a flame; with that said its time to discuss the tinder.

Cedar & Cottonwood

I think my first resources when finding tinder in my neck of the woods is cedar bark. (See photo 1) What you want from the cedar is the inner bark. This layer is almost always bone dry. One thing you can

do with it is to tear it into thin strips and rub it against each other in your hands. Got an injured hand? Rub the bark on a rough rock, no rough rock? Rub it on your boot, no boot? Well you better hope you don't need tinder if you don't have boots. If I couldn't find a cedar tree I would look for a cottonwood. The inner layer of cottonwood bark is good for many things such as rope, tinder and twine just to name a few. But in this article it is just the tinder we are concerned about. What you do is simply take a knife, hatchet, machete, or whatever else you have and cut off a large chunk of it. (See photo 2) Now the next step is to strip off the cordlike strands of the inner bark. These should be dry unless it has just rained. If it has just rained shove them in your shirt your body heat should dry them off shortly. I think that sums up cedar and cottonwood for tinder. Now, on to the next tinder resource...

Cattail & Leaves

Cattails themselves are not tinder. It is the head you want. (See photo 3) Cattails grow throughout America and in some other countries as well. Cattails tend to grow near still or slow moving water. Once you find the cattail grab it below the head and give it a quick snap. Depending on the time of year and weather, the cattail head may be busted open. If it is just take the fuzz off of the head. This is the tinder you want. (See photo 4) It doesn't really matter if it is wet or not but if it is just put it in your coat for about five minutes. This type of tinder ignites better than cotton and is easier to find than cotton.

The next type of tinder I will discuss are leaves... Leaves are not the best tinder ever but if you know what you're looking for they can work. Most people would look for leaves under a tree, or on the forest floor. This can work but what if it has just rained? You could put them in your coat but they dry off slowly. They need time to dry. So your only option is to find them where they are dry. But where

Zeb Allison is a 13 year old living in middle Tennessee. His hobbies are: bushcraft and practicing survival skills. Zeb also enjoys practicing his skills with the bow drill, and the hand drill. Zeb plans to get a job at the tracker, or pathfinder school someday.



Photo 2: Cottonwood bark makes more tinder than you might think when shredded.

should you look? If it is raining where is there a dry place? Caves and large crevasses under rocks are a great place to find dry leaves. (See photo 5) Often animals will make these spaces their homes. They have picked that spot because it is warm and dry. That is the perfect place to look for leaves. Often time animals will bring in fluffy things such as cotton or animal fur. All you need to do is look under the rock or cave and pull out a couple of handfuls and there you go, warm dry tinder ready to ignite. Now with that being said don't use this technique unless you really need to, a handful of tinder to an animal is a day of work and a night of coldness.

Char Cloth & Bamboo

Char cloth is probably the ultimate tinder; char cloth is made by putting cotton cloth in a sealed airtight container. A metal water bottle works great. You cut the cloth into pieces about 1" by 1" and put it into the container. Make sure no air can get in. Put the container on a bed of hot coals for about five

minutes then take it off of the coals, but don't take off the lid until the container has cooled off. Once it has cooled off take off the lid then remove the cloth squares which at this point should be black. If they are not, repeat the first step until they are. This type of tinder should be pre-made and packed in your survival kit. The reason they turn black is because the heat takes out the impurities of the cloth leaving nothing but dry cotton behind. (See photo 6) This type of tinder will take the tiniest spark you can imagine if you have a good carbon steel knife and a piece of flint.

Bamboo

Bamboo is not a very common resource of tinder but it can be used if it is available. The bamboo itself is not what you want, it is the shavings. Hold your knife at a ninety degree angle over the bamboo and rub it back and forth over it. This should create something that looks like sawdust except fluffier. This is more of a lighter or ferro rod



Photo 3: Cattail fuzz makes great tinder when put on top of another tinder material.



Photo 4: The busted head of a cattail. Ignites suddenly so watch your hands.



Photo 5: Great place to look for tinder, it has rained for two days and I still found dry leaves.

type tinder although it can be used with bow drill, hand drill, and other friction fire methods. There is also a tinder specifically for bow drills or hand drills called the one leaf tinder bundle, but it is very difficult to explain and very hard to use. It is best to just stick to the tinder materials that I have discussed. That sums up this article but never forget to be creative. Survival and bush craft is all about thinking outside the box, and always keeping a positive mental attitude.



Photo 6: Notice the black part of the cloth this will take and hold a spark easily.

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Frontier Pro Water Filter

By L.T. Wright



Heading out to the woods for any trip, we all try and take clean water with us if weight and space will allow. We most likely have a preferred way to filter or purify our water on our outings. By far the best way is to boil. If boiling is not an option due to being on the move or the inability to have a fire, there are a few filters and pumps on the market that make getting drinkable water easy. Last year I purchased a Frontier Pro water filter at a gun show that I had attend. I am always on the look out for new gear that either works better than what I have or lets me do less work to get good results. After a quick read of the package, I knew I had to get this filter. After I had gotten home and tore into the package, I found that the simplicity of the filter is what I really liked. The package stated that it filters up to 50 gallons of water. I have a pump system that claims much more than just 50 gallons. However, at the asking price of \$22.00 how could I go wrong? The Frontier Pro claims to be tested and certified to remove 99.9% of

Cryptosporidium and Giardia. It also states that the activated coconut shell carbon reduces waterborne chemicals and improves taste while eliminating odors. It has Miraguard antimicrobial technology that suppresses the growth of bacteria, algae, fungus, mold and mildew within the filter media. What does that mean to me? Well I now have a small water filter that is good for up to 50 gallons that I don't have to disassemble and clean, fits in my pack, and has a dry weight of about 2 oz. With the screw on design it will attach to soda or water bottles and works great in conjunction with my preferred dirty water carrier, my platypus 1-liter bag. It also has the ability to be used as a straw and drink directly from a stream. There is a UQC adapter that allows it to connect to camelbak hydrolink connectors or to your

L.T. Wright is co-owner of Blind Horse Knives and comes from a very diverse background and has a strong passion for knife making. L.T., along with Dan Coppins formed Blind Horse Knives five years ago. L.T. is also one of the Co-Founders of Self Reliance Illustrated.



nalgene or source connectors. There is a bite valve included that will allow you to drink on the go. With all the attachment options there should be one that appeals to you. It has a pre filter that they suggest you replace with a new one after each trip. The package actually comes with 3 extra pre filters. This is the only part that needs changing and is very easy to do. The whole system appealed to me from the size and simplicity standpoint.

I am pretty set in my ways and when I find something that works for me, it is hard to change. Although it can be used in conjunction with a Camelbak, I would not want to contaminate my water bladder. I have gotten used to carrying a platypus bladder with me on every trip and that is what I have designated as my dirty water bag. When empty I can simply roll it up and stick it in a pocket. I took a sharpie and marked "dirty water" on the bag so I would not get confused if it were clean or not. What I like to do is carry the platypus rolled up in a pocket or attach it to my backpack with a carabiner or S-biner and anytime we find a water source on the trail I can gather up a liter of water and continue on my way. If the water source is less than perfect I will filter the water through my bandana as it goes into

the container, this will keep some of the goop out of the bag. Remember that the Frontier Pro still has a pre filter that will then get even more of the dirt. Upon arriving at our destination, I now have the option to set it up on a gravity feed and simply squeeze the water through the Frontier Pro into my clean container. I have, many times, been in a hurry to get clean water and simply squeezed what I needed out. The way I like to use the Frontier Pro is based on the gravity method, although I have attached the straw directly to it and sucked the water through. If time allows the gravity method is the way to go for me. We were on a trip last year up North where the majority of our group filtered off of one Frontier Pro. We would fill the platypus bladder and then squeeze the water through the filter into all





of our bottles. This worked quite well and in no time we had clean water to drink or cook with. To do a gravity setup, simply take some paracord and tie it around the dirty water container. Hang it up side down in a tree allowing the the straw end of the Frontier Pro to go into your clean container and in just a little while you will have filtered drinkable water. I have used the Frontier Pro on all of my recent trips, when boiling was not an option or just inconvenient. As far as clean up goes, simply take the straw or bite valve off, unscrew the pre filter and let everything air dry for 48 hours. I do run clean water on all my parts when I get home and then let it air dry. I now own a few of these filters and carry them, not only in my pack, but my wife's too. I like it so much that I have also bought it as gifts for some of my friends. I figure it is good for 50 gallons, that would at least last me a whole season. At \$22.00, I will just get a new one every year. Is it worth the investment? The Frontier Pro gives me an added peace of mind on my camping trips. Never knowing where your next water source is or what it may look like, having the Frontier Pro with me is like having a security blanket. The price, weight, and simplicity of

use make this a no brainer for me. Although, according to their literature, it is not certified to remove bacteria or viruses. They suggest using in conjunction with Aquamira water treatment or Aquamira water purifier tablets for maximum protection. You will need to be the judge of that yourself. Other than boiling, few other water treatments are 100% effective in removing all pathogens. We know that boiling is the best option but, while boiling will not remove chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides, when used in conjunction with the Frontier Pro, seems like a great combination.

I am sold on this system and would not be caught without it. When it gets right down to it and I had no way to filter water, left with the option to drink the water or die of dehydration I would drink it. Having the Frontier Pro with me gives me that extra measure of protection. Check them out for yourself at www.aquamira.com. If you have an opportunity to use one, try it out for yourself and you may find that you too cannot live with out one.

God Bless
L.T. Wright





Trauma Kits for the Woods

Commercial off the shelf trauma kits make for a fast and easy way to be prepared for when disaster strikes in the field!

By Tim Stetzer



Commercial trauma kits are now available from a variety of sources. Adventure Medical Kit, Tactical Medical Packs, and ResQ-Pak all make excellent, compact kits at affordable prices. Whichever one you choose can end up being very cheap insurance for when things go awry while out in the bush.

While we all hope that our trips to the woods are safe and uneventful ones, Murphy's Law often comes out of nowhere and strikes when we least expect it. Whether it's a day hike, a week long excursion, or a hunting trip in the backwoods, serious injury can often catch us unawares. It isn't like you can just call 911 either and wait on a quick response from the medics in most cases either. Generally we're going to be responsible for stabilizing ourselves or our buddies until we can get help on the scene or make it out to where help can get to us. Luckily there are a number of companies now that are making some prepackaged trauma kits that take away some of the anxiety of being prepared. I had a chance to check out kits from Adventure Medical Kits, ResQ-Pak, and Tactical Medical Packs so let's take a look and

Tim Stetzer was born and raised in Western Pennsylvania, an avid camper since the age of 12. Tim has served in the US Army, the Air Force Reserves and is now a Police Detective and enjoys shooting, knife collecting and hiking. Tim has been writing professionally since 2006 and helped found the online outdoor magazine, Woodsmoney.com in 2008. Tim is currently Associate Editor of Woodsmoney.com

ResQ-Pak offers a variety of kits including one geared specifically for hunters and outdoorsmen and one that offers the blood coagulant Celox as an alternative to QuickClot.

see what they have to offer.

Before we start, let's define what a trauma kit is and what it's for. We aren't talking about snivel kits here. These aren't packed full of band aids and bug bite ointment, or ibuprofen for your headache. There's nothing wrong with a snivel kit, but those things are generally just comfort items and they don't provide you with serious medical capability. We're talking about kits to deal with major lacerations, puncture wounds or even gunshot wounds. Let's face it, we may not be in combat, but many of us have a plethora of very sharp knives and axes in our gear, and firearms in our kits. All it takes is one wrong move, or a piece of bad luck, to end up with a serious and potentially life threatening injury. So these kits are designed to deal with controlling major bleeding first and more minor issues second.

Adventure Medical Kits Trauma Kit

The first kit I looked at is from a company familiar to many outdoorsmen, Adventure Medical Kits. They're well known for their excellent survival kits and first aid kits and they bring that knowledge and level of quality to their trauma kit as well. The Trauma Pak weighs less than 5 ounces on my scale and is approximately 5.5x4.5x1 inches folded. AMK claims 10 ounces and 6x6x.25 inches but my





ResQ-Pak Hunting/Outdoor Sport Kit

ResQ-Pak does a whole line of trauma kits mostly geared towards military and police use. They even have a Pak that uses Celox (an alternative to QuickClot to stop bleeding). The Hunting/Outdoors Sport pack is geared for civilian outdoors use but is similar in nature to the other kits. It's in a vacuum sealed package and weighs in at 7 ounces and is about 6x3x1 inches in size.

Contents:

- 25g QuikClot
- Tegaderm 2 3/8" x 2 3/4" dressing
- 5" x 9" ABD pad
- 4" x 75" roll bandage
- 40" x 40" x 56" triangular bandage
- Two sets 4" x 3" cover sponges
- Aspirin, two 325 mg tablets
- Benadryl (R), two 25 mg tablets
- Combat medic tape
- Non-latex gloves
- Rescue whistle
- Mylar survival blanket

The ResQ-Pak Hunting/Outdoor Sport pack is vacuum sealed and air and water tight. It folds down small and easily stuffs into a pocket or day pack.

measurements differ. Either way, it easily fits into a pants cargo pocket or a jacket pocket. The contents are as follows:

Contents:

- 1 Bandage, Conforming Gauze, 3"
- 1 Dressing, Gauze, Sterile, 2" x 2", Pkg./2
- 1 Dressing, Gauze, Sterile, 4" x 4", Pkg./2
- 1 Gloves, Nitrile (Pair), Hand Wipe
- 1 QuikClot Sport 25g
- 1 Trauma Pad, 5" x 9"
- 1 Duct Tape, 2" x 26"
- 1 Bandage, Triangular
- 4 After Cuts & Scrapes Antiseptic Wipe

In addition to the contents of the pouch, the plastic pouch itself is handy in and of itself. It has a resealable top and can be used to store any biohazard waste after treating an injury, or can be used to help stop a sucking chest wound. I like the inclusion of duct tape too. You can never have enough duct tape. The AMK Trauma Pak has a retail price of only \$25 and is a good deal for an off the shelf, easy to grab and stow kit capable of treating serious wounds.

- <http://www.adventuremedicalkits.com>

In addition to the major wound care items the



All of the trauma kits covered in this article will easily stuff into a jacket or cargo pocket, or slip into the outside pocket of a small day pack.



The ResQ-Pak provides a mix of conventional bandaging material and a QuickClot sponge to deal with heavy bleeding and trauma.

ResQ-Pak also has some aspirin and Benedryl which, aside from having some snivel gear potential, can also be used for more serious issues such as heart attacks and allergic reactions. They also include a Mylar survival blanket for dealing with shock, and a rescue whistle for summoning help. Once again the plastic pouch can be used to help out with sucking chest wounds if needed. The MSRP on the ResQ-Pak is \$39.99.

- <http://www.resq-pak.com>

Tactical Medical Packs Tac-Pack

Tactical Medical Packs were initially designed by Dr. Maurizio Miglietta for use by the Secret Service and they make a few different versions of their Tac-Pack. The ones I had for testing are their safety and security model but they do list a dedicated model for hunters which adds a Mylar blanket, a rescue whistle, a tourniquet, and audio instructions on how to use the kit. They also offer two versions of their basic Tac-Pack, one with QuickClot, and one without. The contents of the

Tac-Pack with QuickClot are as follows; the basic model is the same minus the QuickClot sponge. Weight on the Tac-Pack with QuickClot is right about 4.5 ounces and the size measures about 5.5x3.75x.5 inches folded.

Contents:

- Latex-Free Gloves
- Roll Bandage
- Gauze
- Abdominal Pad
- N-95 Respirator Mask
- Triangular Bandage
- Tape
- Occlusive Dressing
- CPR Microshield
- 25 gram QuikClot® Sponge

The Tac-Pack is the only kit that offers a CPR shield and a dust respirator mask so that's something to consider if you're looking for those items in your kit. The Tac-Packs are also waterproof



Left:
The AMK Trauma Pak adds duct tape to the mix of bandages and other first aid items. One can never have enough duct tape during an emergency.

Right:
The TMP Tac-Pack contains a CPR shield and a respirator mask in addition to the bandaging material.



and vacuum sealed and can once again be used to help with sucking chest wounds. The basic Tac-Pack sells for \$24.50 and the version with QuickClot \$36.50. The Hunter model is listed at \$34.50 and is available directly through TMP's website.

- <http://www.tacticalmedicalpacks.com>

No Reason Not To Be Prepared

With the ready availability of trauma kits these days, and the variety of options available to you, there's no reason not to be prepared when you

hit the woods. The kits all pack small and are waterproof and airtight so they should survive anything that you do and they'll be there to get you out of a jam. With prices ranging from \$25 to \$40 depending on the kit these are extremely affordable too, especially when you consider that they could literally be the difference between life and death should tragedy strike.



Non-Seasonal Edibles

By Dave Mitch' Mitchell
Photos by Kristal Mitchell



Photo 1: Eastern White Pine Sapling



Photo 2: Cluster of Twig Nutlets

Knowing seasonal edibles like berries, fruits, nuts, seeds, flowers and leaves are great, as they are your seasonal gluts that help you pack on the weight and store away precious calories and vitamins. The question becomes, what do you forage in-between your harvest, in winter, or during a weather cycle that negatively impacts your foraging? Non-seasonal edibles is the answer.

That's what carries you day-to-day, season-to-season, and can be relied on as you hunt and gather other resources. They are always present regardless of what time of year it is or the current weather pattern. This is your "go-to" forage technique!

Many plants have non-seasonal edible roots. In the off-season however, they can be under several feet of snow, more difficult to locate, or hard to identify as only the root might exist. You need to choose a plant that is easily identifiable in all climates, quite common, grows in groups so you can save calories when harvesting, and whose edibles are easily prepared. With this in mind, I'm going to focus on the pine tree.

Mitch is an Instructor at The Pathfinder School, a Graduate of the First Northeast Advanced Class, and Certified in Phase I and Phase II of The Pathfinder System. You can find Mitch on his Youtube channel NativeSurvival and his Website Nativesurvival.com.

(See Photo 1)

Pine has nice edibles, five of which are non-seasonal. It is easily identified at all times and seasons, very common, prefers to grow in groups, and most of its edibles can be eaten raw! This ability to eat "scout style" or on the move is a huge benefit that can be utilized while you hunt for game, gather resources, set and check your trap line, build a shelter, or while on the move. Eating raw also saves you calories without the need to build a fire.



Photo 3: Gathered Twig Nutlets



Photo 4: Closeup of Twig Color Change

List of Pine’s Non-Seasonal Edibles:

- Twig Nutlets (Male Cones)
- Twigs
- Needles
- Inner-Bark
- Sap

List of Pine’s Seasonal Edibles:

- Seeds (In Female Cones)
- Blossom
- Pollen
- Immature Cones (Female)

Twig Nutlets

This is one of my favorites, twig nutlets can be found at the end of twigs as a small cluster of nuts. They’re actually the male cones of the pine and are easily harvested, and very prolific as each branch can have dozens of clusters! Collect them and eat them as is, while your at it fill up a pocket for



Photo 5: Twigs Gathered and Chopped



Photo 6: Pine Needles Slow Simmering

constant calories throughout your day. In camp add them to your bannock or mash them into cakes or loafs.

(See Photos 2 & 3)

Twigs

Twigs are another great edible that’s easily collected. A twig’s color will change from the dark brown of the branch to an amber or khaki-like tint the last six inches or so. This lighter section found at the end of the twig is the edible portion. As you might have already guessed, there is a huge abundance of twigs on each tree or sapling! Eat them raw as is, chop them up as a meat rub or add as an ingredient to a meal to impart some flavor and vitamins. Again your options are only limited to your imagination.

(See Photos 4 & 5)

Needles

Needles are the easiest part to identify on a pine as they are the Evergreen leaves. They must be infused in a liquid-like water, maple sap, birch sap etc.. until they lose some of their color. This usually takes about ten to fifteen minutes. This will extract the vitamins, minerals and their food value.

Although many books including Peterson’s Edible Wild Plants states that “all pines are edible” (pg.166), some sources state that the Western United States’ Ponderosa pine needles can cause abortions

when ingested. Always positively identify your edibles! This is the only pine that has garnered this reputation.

When I disinfect a mug of water I always throw in a twig with their needles still attached. This makes it taste better and it is better for me. I'm drinking the water for hydration, why not add some vitamins and make my water healthier? Two is one and one is none.

(See Photo 6)

Inner-Bark

Inner bark is affectionately known as backwoodsman's gum. In order to gather it start by , peeling back the outer bark. The inner bark will adhere to the inside of the outer bark. . Now it is easily separated with a fingernail. This is a fantastic edible that does a few things; first you feel like you're getting somewhere with your food intake, as this is a bit more substantial and slower to digest than the previous edibles. Second, is the slowing down and relaxation that comes over you as your hunger takes a back seat. Suddenly you can hear distant sounds from the forest, your thoughts are calmer and more decisive as your ability to think expands with the quick energy of the sugar content in the inner bark and its noted stimulant effects. Whenever I feel the need to "slow down" in the woods I grab some backwoodsman's gum, especially before a stalk when I want to move in harmony with the woods.

(See Photos 7 & 8)

Sap



Photo 7: Exposed Inner Bark



Photo 8: Gathered and Separated Inner-Bark

Sap is a hit or miss edible for me. I prefer my sap dried, crusty, and crystallized like a cough drop. Sometimes you can find flowing soft sap that looks like an icicle, clear and pure, however I find it a bit too strong for my preference. A multi-purpose edible as it can be used to produce pine resin or epoxy in addition to providing a prolonged and slow sustenance while you work on projects. A pine cough drop keeps you peppy while you repair kit, carve or burn out containers or build shelters.

(See Photo 9)

I hope this article helps you look at pine trees in a new light. They are truly constant providers of multiple edibles regardless of the time of year. It is imperative to realize the potential for non-seasonal edibles in your arsenal of foraging techniques. This concept is a core fundamental to successful sustenance from edibles, and I encourage you to locate a pine to get started in this ancient facet of self reliance!



Photo 9: Hardened Sap Gathered

Ti-Tri Caldera

By Cody Burwell



Ti-Tri 900ml cookset with Inferno.

As we go out to the wilderness to get our much needed dirt time, we all have our “go to” gear; those things that over time and hard use have proven themselves worthy of the trip. Now as a self proclaimed gear reviewer, I do enjoy trying new pieces of gear and to hold the newer gear to some sort of a standard as your “go to” gear. The Ti-Tri Caldera is that kind of gear for me. The Ti-Tri was collaboration between Trails Designs and the folks at Titanium Goat. The “Ti” is for Titanium and “Tri”, stands for the ability to utilize three fuel sources including denatured alcohol, Esbit, and because of the titanium cone, you can burn wood as well.

At first glance you may say to yourself, “that’s something I could make at home”. The more you use it, the more you realize the engineering

involved, from the Caldera Cone itself down to the 12-10 alcohol stove. This isn’t surprising since the founders of Trail Designs are three mechanical engineers from California who share a love for backpacking. The Esbit is held by the Graham Cracker stove.(see photo 1) A neat little setup to hold the Esbit tablet off the ground and to force the heat upward toward the pot’s bottom. At just three grams the graham cracker resembles a Tie Fighter from Star Wars with its wings able to move to increase or decrease burn times or if put vertically it can hold two tablets. The 12-10 alcohol stove (see

Cody Burwell grew up in Central Oregon with access to several diverse climates within a few hours travel. It wasn’t hard to fall in love with outdoors. From the top of the Canadian Rockies to diving in Puget Sound, involving the outdoors has been a part of his life for over 30 years.



Graham Cracker

photo 2) at .6 ounces is made from recycled materials, specially designed to work in the low oxygen/high heat environment inside the Caldera Cone. A built in primer pan and light weight materials insure there is very little time wasted to prime. The stove was built to run denatured alcohol which is readily available at most hardware stores, even in small towns that you may encounter on a



12-10 Alcohol stove

thru-hike; as an added advantage it is very economical to burn.

The Caldera Cone has been around since 2005 when Trail Designs got their start, quickly building a great reputation for outstanding performance with folks trying to keep their pack weight down. I was first introduced to Trail Designs when I was looking for a cooking system for hiking the Pacific Crest Trail. When hiking over 2600 miles ounces become crucial. I decided on the Caldera F-



Inferno with Fist size Log of Fuel.



Ashes Left after Inferno Burn.

Keg system weighing only 6.3 ounces ,mostly for just boiling water. Once I heard about the Ti-Tri I knew I had to try it. That was a year and half ago and has since made its way into my “go to” gear list.

The Caldera Cone is an integrated windscreen and pot stand offering 360 degree protection. It is available for most popular hiking pots and mugs, if its round they probably have a system for you. While running alcohol or Esbit the pot itself actually nests down inside the cone allowing the heat to be focused all around the bottom of the pot. This provides a very stable platform when Mother Nature is determined to halt your dinner plans. Going with the titanium doesn't save that much weight however you gain a lot of strength and most importantly it allows you to burn wood as your fuel. Having the ability to back up your finite supply of alcohol or Esbit on a trip is a great comfort. There is an optional floor for the Caldera, most claim it's for a “leave no trace” style of camping, but I have found it provides a great heat reflector, as well a dry base for building your fire on.

I chose the Ti-Tri 900 from Titanium Goat. Included is the .9L pot with lid, Caldera Cone, 12-10 alcohol stove, fuel bottle, measuring cup, graham cracker stove, two titanium tent stakes for a wood burning setup, and food grade caddy, all coming in at 12.1 ounces, and add in the Inferno for a mere 1.25oz (see photo 3). For \$117 this kit isn't common man, but it's right on par with other popular bush craft cook sets like the Bush Buddy, or Kelly Kettle. In my opinion the Caldera does it lighter and offers much more versatility.

The Bush Geek in me has conducted many tests for efficiency and boil times. Knowing this

stuff allows me to bring only the fuel I need, and not pack a bunch of “what if” extra fuel. Besides the Ti-Tri has me covered with its wood burning ability. Now with a sixty degree day and sixty degree water an Esbit tablet on average will boil two cups in eight minutes. Testing the 12-10 stove, using the measuring cup, I could get one cup of water to a boil using only 10ml of denatured alcohol in just under four minutes. Knowing this, and knowing that a quart or 947ml of SLX denatured is around \$5, tells me I can boil ninety-four cups of water for 1/2 cent a cup. I told you it was a bit geeky, but it helps plan out my meals, and when I only need a cup for coffee I'm not wasting fuel. A big reason I chose the .9L pot is it's about a gulp shy of a full canteen. When I need purified drinking water, I am not fussing around with smaller cups. Dealing with a full .9L pot, a single Esbit would only bring it up to 180 degrees, one ounce of alcohol would boil it in eleven minutes, a Pyropac Mil-Spec Gel packet took only nine and a half minutes. Now this will always vary for your own weather, and altitude but it gives you an idea of the Caldera's spectrum of possibilities and how



Caldera with Inferno purifying .9L of water from Snow.



Packed down and ready for your Ruck.

efficient it can be.

If you find yourself using its wood burning ability more than not like I did, look into Trails Designs Inferno(see photo 4). An inverted cone design with a grated bottom that transforms your Caldera into a wood gassifier, burns much cleaner and hotter. Leaving only ashes after a more complete burn compared to using it without the Inferno(see photo 5). The day I took these photos, it was below thirty degrees. Using only a fist size chunk of wood I was able to get a full pot of water boiling from nothing but snow to start, in under fifteen minutes(see photo 6).

The caddy conveniently stores all the components listed earlier. As it is food grade plastic they make a great mug and bowl. Toss in your spork , your other tent stakes, a bandana and you have a great cookset. The only downside to the original Tri-Ti is that you cant store the pot with everything else.

Trails Designs like any good company is always evolving and taking feedback from its customers. Newer Caldera Cone systems are available that are even smaller like the ULC or Sidewinder that will store inside the mug or pot, making a smaller footprint in your pack. I like having the caddy for it's multipurpose of having a mug or bowl, not to mention it keeps those sharp titanium tent stakes away from piercing other gear or your pack.

All-in-all, a very deserving setup. Compacts down to a tidy little package(see photo 7). It is lightweight yet strong with loads of versatility. If you have yet to experience the freedom of a multi-fuel stove or are looking for a sturdy bush cooker, I highly recommend the Ti-Tri Caldera.

- <http://www.titaniumgoat.com/>
- <http://www.traildesigns.com/>



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The CanteenShop

GrillTop

Stove Stand

By Brian Andrews



The canteen used in this article is not a GI issue bottle but rather a current production Nalgene Oasis bottle instead. The cup and stand are indeed military issue.

If you are looking for rugged, time proven equipment for the woods you don't have to look much farther than what the military uses. Granted, it's not always the lightest equipment on the planet, but I always use it as a benchmark for comparing other gear to. One exceptional military kit is the 1 quart canteen, cup, and cup stand combination. The cup stand nests on the cup, which then nests on the canteen. Together the kit takes up no more space than the canteen itself.

While I mentioned that military gear is rugged and time proven, that does not mean that it is perfect. Anyone that's used the cup stand has likely



A hazard of the military issue stand is that it's easy for the cup to tip while resting on the narrow rim.

found its flaw. The canteen, cup, and stand have a kidney sort of shape to them. When you use the cup stand and align the kidney shaped cup the two get stuck together. When you are messing with heat and boiling water, you soon learn that its best just to leave it, and live with the stand stuck to your cup until everything cools. The other option is the purposely mis-match the shapes of the cup and cup stand. In other words, turn the cup in the other direction. Sounds all well and good, but it seems there is a very fine line between it balancing properly and this happening. My eight year old son uses all this equipment too, and the military stuff is his favorite. With that in mind, nothing makes me more nervous than seeing him play with the setup in that

Brian Andrews claims that he doesn't have any professional qualifications to be a woods bum but he is a professional photographer, knifemaker, a lover of the outdoors and he enjoys doing things with hand tools - the old fashioned way.





The USGI cup stand on the left, and The CanteenShop GrillTop Stove on the right.

configuration knowing that boiling water could be spilled at any moment. It's not so bad if you're using an alcohol stove or Esbit tabs, but if you are managing a little twig fire, now you are poking your hand near a tip hazard. Not too cool.

Apparently, getting military issue cup stands (or stoves as most call them) has been getting more and more difficult. I personally wouldn't know, but that is the business of Rob Simpson, owner of The Canteen Shop, so if he says it's so, I trust him. With supply getting scarce, Rob decided to have some made so that he could continue to offer them for sale. Rob didn't just settle for creating the cup stand as it was. Instead, he designed his own version to address the deficiencies I already mentioned, as well as make

it a much more versatile piece of kit. So let's see what exactly he came up with, and how it worked out for me.

In the photo showing the old stove next to the new stove, you can see how Rob solved the sticky stand and tipping cup issue: he enclosed the whole top. There are a couple cool features that came about from doing this. The first is obvious and that is the hole pattern provided. With the old stand just being open, there is not much you can do with it. The new stand can be used as a mini grill. You won't be throwing a large steak on the grill, but I planned on giving the grilltop a try a little bit later. The second feature with the top is the part that actually holds the cup. There are 4 holes that rise above the grill top surface. They are equally spaced, so they support the cup solidly whether the kidney shape of the cup and



The GrillTop has a series of holes as well as 4 protrusions designed to hold the cup up off of the stand to allow for ventilation.



The grilling surface of the GrillTop Stove over top of a Trangia alcohol burner.



The GrillTop with a variety of fuel sources. A natural fire, an alcohol stove, and Esbit fuel tabs.

stand are aligned or not. I found this valuable when using fire underneath later. It also elevates the cup just a bit to allow some air space. I have no data to support this, but I would guess that if the cup was not elevated, using an alcohol stove might not work so well. Some of them do not seem to go into full blast mode if they are too crowded from the top and sides. I am almost certain that the gap aids in the creation of a draft when using a twig fire or placing the stove over coals. The GrillTop Stove Stand is made from a heavy gauge stainless steel, and it is quite stout. It makes the original seem like a flimsy toy in comparison. It may weigh more than the issue stoves, but it makes up for it in durability.

That's enough talk about the stove, it's time to start playing with it. To begin using this thing, I wanted to start with the most typical fuel sources. I used Esbit tabs, my Trangia alcohol stove, and of course a real fire. So, I will go through them in that order.

I have to admit to not being a huge Esbit fan. It seems to me that it's a rather expensive fuel source (in comparison to others) and is fairly difficult to find around me. Still, for test purposes my son and I lit the Esbit tab and boiled some water. It burned fine, and boiled water fine, but without more experience with the fuel I cannot honestly tell if the

stove stand had any huge impact on the performance or not. What I can say is that the stove stand did provide a nice stable surface, and the cup could be held in pretty much any orientation. I liked it so far, but let's move on to something more exciting.

Next up is the alcohol stove. I was excited and nervous about this one all at the same time. I wanted MY favorite stove to work well with the GrillTop stove, and I just wasn't sure if it would or not. There are a ton of alcohol stoves out there from



The GrillTop allowed a Trangia stove with simmer ring to fit underneath and proved to act as an efficient wind screen when the stove was in use.



The GrillTop Stove worked well with a twig fire. It supported the cup securely and allowed for proper ventilation between the fire and the cup.

Pepsi cans to fancy titanium and everyone has their favorites! I can't tell you about everyone else, but I will quickly tell you why I like this stove. Pre and post burn fuel can be stored in the stove. Sometimes I don't even bring a fuel bottle. Second is that the simmer ring opens up a world of cooking possibilities instead of the stove either being "off" or in "full on" mode. But, alcohol stoves could be another article entirely! I just wanted to give you good reason for really wanting the Trangia to work with this cup stand. So does it?

The stove even fits with the simmer ring in place! I was concerned because the simmer ring sits kind of skewed off of the stove, but the stand allows you to have the simmer ring in almost any position and still be centered in the stand. My next concern was the height. I have seen some homemade stands that were just too close to the top of the stove and would not let it burn right, or snuff it out altogether.

My son and I did quite a few boils with the Trangia, both in full blast mode and with simmer

ring, and had great results. In fact, this is probably the best windshield/stove stand that I have used for this stove. It was large enough to let me do the things I wanted with the simmer ring, but small enough to provide lots of wind protection. I also discovered another use for the large holes in the grill top while using the Trangia. If I cook something that takes awhile I will usually blast it with heat (no simmer ring) until it gets hot. At that point, I will put the simmer ring on and let the food cook. Taking the cup off the stand easy enough, but now the stove stand is hot. So, I took two sticks and stuck them in the large holes to move it off the alcohol stove. I could then put the simmer ring on, and then used the sticks to put the stove stand in place. It worked great! Sure I could use leather gloves or a bandana, but for me, one less thing that I *have* to remember is a good thing.

Now, let's talk wood! All this fuel and stove stuff is cool and all, but I like simple. What if I get to the woods and forgot my Esbit, or my alcohol bottle leaked? Or how about I just don't want to carry all that extra crap? Being able to resort to something basic is very important for me personally. Even if you have a large fire, just setting your cup in the fire can present its own difficulties. If you have been there and done that, you already know what I am talking about. The wood fuel shifts and moves as it burns and can cause the contents of your cup to spill. The heat source is HUGE in comparison to what you really need to. Most likely it makes things hot (like the cup handles) that you don't necessarily want hot. My point is that even with a large fire, the stand can be useful. Instead of dealing with those issues, simply scrape away a few hot coals, put the stand on top of them, and away you go. Concentrate heat where you need it and create stable platform for your cup.

The other use is when the only fire is the one under cup, and that's the thing I tested with the GrillTop. I had some birch bark for tinder, and some dry sticks. Since I did not have any other tinder around, I shaved up a few of the dry sticks to get things going. Playing with a small fire on this scale is not rocket science, but, it does take a bit of playing with to get used to. How to get it going, when you get good coals, and how much and what type of fuel to add are all important. I have both played with and made many types of twig burners, so there is nothing overly new here in that regards. But, there is something very nice I liked about this combo.

When cooking with a twig burner or hobo



The GrillTop worked just fine for cooking up a small chicken breast. It'd work well for hot dogs or sausages, and small fish as well.

stove your cup or pot is filled with water or food. It's the heavy part. The pot stand or cup stand is usually very light in comparison. I am sure you see where this is going: weight it up high (did I mention it was hot) and you have your hand below poking around with sticks and such. Not a good combo. Usually I get around this by poking with other long sticks, but there is still a danger there. My point with respect to the GrillTop Stove is that it's fairly wide and stable and keeps the center of gravity low. So, at no time did I feel like I had a high wobbly pot in the air, ready to come crashing down on my hand. The stand is high enough to let you do what you need to, and yet felt very safe the whole time. I liked it even more.

Finally, I had to try out the grill top. One of the food staples that I take to the woods is Lipton's dried chicken noodle soup. While it's good, there's not a ton of chicken in it so I decided to add some real meat to it by grilling up a small chicken breast. The stove left some pretty cool grill marks! I cut the cooked chicken up in chunks, threw it in the cup with the dried soup and water, and finished cooking the

whole thing over the wood coals.

Aside from my testing, Rob had some other uses for the stove in mind as well. He states that "it can be used as a stove, grill, berry picker, strainer, small shovel, fire starting implement, lantern (with the new SS HC lid), or whatever else you can think of". While I didn't use my stand for all of these uses, I can definitely see what Rob is saying. I'd like to see what folks could come with for "whatever else you can think of." I am sure some really creative uses can be found! The GrillTop Stove stand is available direct from Rob at The canteen Shop for \$20.00. While that may be a bit more than a G.I. issue stove, they're getting tough to find and this one is a lot sturdier and more versatile to boot. It's also U.S. made in Rob's home state of Ohio. To close with a quote from Rob "This stove is Built Tough like American Made Products should be, and is one of many new quality products we are carrying from Ohio businesses!"

- <http://www.canteenshop.com>



Canteen Cook System, Modifications that WORK

By Gert Grohmann



Kit contents and required tools.

If you've ever watched a war movie, you have probably encountered a scene with a battle weary soldier leaning back in his foxhole, gratefully wrapping his hands around a steaming metal cup of coffee that he heated up on his canteen cooking system. You can see GI canteen cups and cooking systems carried by Clint Eastwood in Heartbreak Ridge, used by Tom Hanks in Saving Private Ryan, and put to a variety of other uses by the Duke in many WWII movies.

Gert Grohmann has been involved with the Midwest Native Skills Institute <http://www.survivalschool.com> for 5 years and also serves as the Scoutmaster for the Mequon/Thiensville Boy Scout troop 852 where he has earned a reputation through his fire making and shelter building demonstrations. One of his greatest joys is sharing his knowledge of woodsmanship with the next generation through scouting. He is also a firefighter/EMT and a father and husband. He camps, hunts and backpacks all over Wisconsin whenever he can find time away.



Marking the canteen to cut

For a growing group of savvy outdoorsmen, the GI canteen cup and its cooking system have become an inexpensive, reasonably lightweight alternative to the increasingly expensive cooking sets marketed by many high end manufacturers. In fact, in one form or another, this cup has been the cook system of choice for thousands of troops and, later, civilians for almost 100 years. Any GIs worth their salt modified and changed this system to better meet their needs. Some modifications work well and others don't, but here are two modifications and two new products that have served me well.

Making your own canteen storage system

One of my needs was for a simple, compact way to carry my cook kit, including my stove, spork, fuel, eating bowl, lighter, canteen cup and stove stand. Well, I found a solution while searching



Cutting the canteen



The canteen storage system with the top removed

YouTube one day and I wanted to share it with you here.

First you start with a standard USGI plastic canteen, canteen cup, canteen cup stove stand and canteen pouch.

Next, take the canteen, insert it into the canteen cup, and draw a line with a permanent marker around the outside of the canteen at the the top of the cup.

Now remove the canteen from the canteen cup and use a utility razor knife to make a horizontal cut through the plastic canteen about ½ inch below your marker line. Cutting ½ inch below the top of the cup makes the assembled system more stable.

You can cut the top off of the canteen using a utility knife, but I found that a pair of trauma shears



Kit in pouch top off



Kit in pouch top on

or tin snips are much easier to use, once you have enough room to get the blade into the canteen. Cut as neatly as possible around the entire perimeter of the canteen until you have completely separated the top and bottom portions. Clean up any rough or ragged edges and you are done.

It is just that simple. Now you have a great storage container that is just under fifty-eight cubic inches in size for your soda can stove, four ounce



Pre-filtering water using the canteen top and a coffee filter



Cup Stove with grill in front

bottle of fuel, lighter, some coffee or tea packets and perhaps some coffee filters to pre-filter water. I even keep several packets of USGI gel fuel, in case I run out of the Heet (gas line antifreeze) fuel that I use for my stove.

Now just pack your kit into the Molle canteen pouch. The boil lid goes in first and rests upside down on the bottom of the pouch. Next nest the canteen cup stove stand around the canteen cup and place it in the pouch. Put your stove, fuel, lighter, spork and filters into the bottom of the canteen and place that into the canteen cup. Place the top of the canteen over the items in the canteen cup. Roll up the pouch cover and tuck it behind the canteen cup. Place the strap over the canteen neck, buckle it, and you are set. The webbing and buckle hold the top of the canteen in place.



Cup stove with grill installed



Grill with canteen cup in place

The bottom of the canteen serves as a great eating bowl, and can also be used as a mixing bowl or used to hold hot drinks or foods from the canteen cup while the metal cup is too hot to drink or eat from comfortably.

The top of the canteen can be used as a funnel to pour water into a small mouth container or to hold coffee filters for pre-filtering cloudy or muddy water that needs to be cleaned.

Once you have assembled the kit in its canteen pouch, it is virtually impossible differentiate from a standard canteen kit. To make it easier to tell my water canteen from my cook set, I use my USGI canteen for the cook kit and I use one of the Nalgene see-through canteens for carrying water.



Canteen shop stove stand



Boil lid in cup

The beauty of this kit is twofold. First, you can assemble this kit, including everything you need to cook and eat from for under sixty dollars. (You can spend significantly more than that on a titanium pot alone) and, if you shop around, you can get everything for under forty dollars. Second, if you use the Molle canteen pouch/utility pocket, you can carry this kit on your belt, strap it to your pack, or even carry it on a paracord shoulder strap. This kit fits so neatly on your belt, you don't need to take up room in your pack. I carry this kit on the waist belt



Boil lid sideways

of my backpack on one side and my Nalgene canteen in a pouch on the other side.

Improving the USGI Canteen Cup Stove Stand

The GI Canteen Cup was intended to serve as more than just a drinking mug. It was also designed to act as a cooking pot. Just put whatever you want to heat up in the cup and put the cup on a set of coals. The trouble with this arrangement is that coals and flame will blacken the cup and soot can get on your clothes, cover, hands, etc. Besides that, the cup and handles can get too hot to touch with your bare hands.

Enter the GI canteen cup stove stand. Basically, it is a light piece of sheet aluminum that fits neatly over the canteen cup for carry and storage. When removed and inverted, it serves as a heating platform where the Canteen Cup sits on top with a couple of ventilation holes and an opening for adding a solid fuel tablet or twigs for fuel. Does this system work? Yes it does, but it can be unstable if you don't seat the cup into the stove securely. Also, when a hot cup is seated securely, it can be tough to separate the stove when you want to use the cup. Fortunately, it is really easy to dramatically improve this stove with the help of a couple of pieces of bent coat hanger.

Bend two seven inch pieces of coat hanger as shown and snap the bent wires over your canteen cup stove stand. This simple trick significantly improves the stability of the cup when on the stove stand. An additional benefit is that it also makes the stove more efficient because the stove now gets more oxygen and the flames can lick up the sides of your cup to heat the contents faster.

The Canteen Shop has also developed a version of this stove stand that works really well, right out of the box without modification and is built like a tank.

Boil lid

Another item lacking in the standard issue cooking system was a lid. Lids make heating food or drink much more efficient, can help strain off excess water after cooking, and they help keep your food and drink warmer for a longer period of time. I have used everything from aluminum foil to thirty-six gage tooling foil to try to make my own cover. But now that isn't necessary because Heavy Cover Inc. has come out with a great stainless steel boil lid that I have made a part of my permanent kit. It fits perfectly in the Molle pouch right under my canteen

cup when I assemble the kit.

All told, the standard issue USGI canteen cooking system still performs its intended duty admirably. Considering that it's been around for 100 years, I'd say that it was a testament to good design. Is it perfect? No, but with the easy modifications described above, it can serve your needs almost as well as kits that cost four or five times as much.

Let's put it this way... I have had a number of cooking systems over the years and I do own some high-end pots and stoves from companies such as MSR, GSI, and Jetboil. But I still find there are times when the USGI Canteen Cup cook system with a soda can stove is the only cooking gear that I carry. There is a history there that still intrigues me and the bottom line is, IT WORKS!!



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Alcohol Stoves, Cheap and Easy

By Joel L. Jessup



Photo 1: Completed AXE Large Stove, Fuel Bottle, Stainless Nalgene Nesting cup on “safe” surface for burn.

Before I became interested in primitives I was interested in light weight backpacking. I was in Afghanistan and found a lot of time to read and was living vicariously through Outside Magazine, Backpacker and constantly shopping for pieces of kit. I knew my military “surplus” gear was too heavy and couldn’t afford a lot of niceties. I put my primary investment into my essential tools, shelter, blades and pack. I became addicted to Kifaru packs and shelters and traded a lot of lesser kit to get there. One day I saw a penny soda can stove and started reading all I could about them and looking at designs and finally settled on the design below. (see photo 1). Included in this article are instructions to build this stove and photos of other stoves I have made and tested.

First, a note on safety, ensure you are wearing proper Personal Protective Equipment during the build and burn. Gloves and eye protection are good ideas here, do as I say not as I do. Also, only burn alcohol based fuels in these stoves. I have ONLY used denatured alcohol and rubbing alcohol in my tests but there are plenty of articles out there about other fuels. In addition, this thing is designed to make stuff HOT! I always carry a pair of 100%

Joel Jessup is a 12 year member of the Illinois Army National Guard with 20+ years small game hunting experience. He is an average outdoorsman who is constantly continuing his education through reading and is currently enrolled in Pathfinder Phase One.

Table 1			
<u>Stove Type</u>	<u>Fuel Amount</u>	<u>Boil Time</u>	<u>Burn Out Time</u>
Soda Can	1 oz.	11:00	18:00
Wannabe CAT	1 oz.	8:30	17:45
Axe Small	2/3 oz. (approx)	4:30	6:50
Axe Large	1 oz.	4:30	8:30

wool gloves in my pack; they don’t melt or burn very readily, leather gloves are a good choice as well. If you wear synthetic (fleece, polyester) gloves and grab your extremely hot pot you will melt your gloves to your fingers. Finally, these fuels burn in a manner that makes them difficult to see in bright light, be extremely careful to ensure that the fires are out before re-filling or grabbing your stove to pack it up.

When building and testing stoves I based my decisions on a set amount of fuel and the amount of time it took to boil two cups (16 fl oz.) of water, and finally on the amount of time it burned on that quantity of fuel. I tested four different stoves and the “Large Axe” as I like to call it wins for boil time and a similar design to the “CAT” stove made on a smaller can (individual serving of peaches) boiled faster than the soda can and burned out only a bit quicker. Times for each stove are as follows:

(See Table 1)

All stoves were tested indoors with a Coleman Max 2 cup, pot and lid, and no wind screen and all used the same Denatured Alcohol.

Photo and Times table: (See photo 2)

The only tools required to build the Large Axe are a drill bit or nail, a razor blade of some kind (or hack saw blade or large tubing cutter) and a single hole punch from the office supply section at work... I mean, at the store.

Start by emptying the can’s contents. This can be done the long way, by spraying it all out over your dog to get rid of the smell the fast way. I

STOVE TEST RESULTS

Boiling 2 Cups water using 1 oz. (max) of Denatured Alcohol

Burns conducted indoors with no windscreen, water was all room temperature and same pot and lid were used on all burns.

STOVE TYPE/MATERIAL	Boil Time	Burn Time
Soda Can Stove	11:00	18:00
"CAT" stove – made from individual serving peaches container	8:30	17:45
AXE stove (large)	4:30	8:30
AXE stove (small) (only held approx 2/3 oz. fuel)	5:20	6:50



Photo 2: Multiple stove designs and boil/burn times

removed the plastic cap and used a small nail and gently tapped it into the top of the can while pointing it safely away, once punctured I allowed it to depressurize on its own.

(See photo 3 - 2 photos in one)

Next, I estimated the height, truth be told, this could be about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch shorter than I made it. It really depends on how much you plan to boil. This summer's trips will include a few more people so I will be boiling more water that's why I went for

a taller stove thus increasing the capacity. If you will only be boiling one or two cups at a time, the middle of the "A" on "AXE" should be sufficient. I score as straight a line as possible around the can, it is much simpler to wrap a piece of tape around the can and use the edge as your straight score line. Repeatedly trace the score until you can easily press the blade into the can's surface. Cut all the way around the can and separate the two halves.

(See photo 4 - 4 photos in one)



Photo3: New Axe can and can to be used, can with nail hole to depressurize.



Photo 4: Marking, scoring, cutting and separating the can halves

Next I rotate the can around the corner of the bench, flaring the top of the can. This will assist in providing some stabilization for your pot.

Using your hole punch, punch holes as far down the can as you can reach and space them approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch apart all the way around the can.

(See photos 5, 2 photos)

Punch “half holes” around the top edge of

the can spaced $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart, and re-flare the top.

(See photo 6 - 2 photos) That’s it, the stove is completed! It is an extremely simple design.

Now for the burn...

Pour Denatured Alcohol into the center of the stove and carefully light it. Here I used a grill lighter but this can be done with a Ferro Rod very easily. You should allow the alcohol to “prime” itself,



Photo 5: Punching lower burn holes



Photo 6: Punching upper vent holes

giving it time to burn for a while until it begins to bubble and the flame takes on the look of a candle light. At this point, you set the pot directly down on the stove. The stove will “pressurize” and force the flame out of the lower holes and take on the look of a true gas stove. With your gloves on you can pull the pot off after it boils and either pour into your container as clean water or into your dehydrated food. Your empty pot can now be used as a “snuffer” or cup to put the fire out and with some skill you can pour the remaining fuel back into your bottle. (See photo 7 - 6 photos)

My kit, including a small four ounce bottle of fuel all fits into my pot set with one exception, my wind screen is too long. You will need some form of

windscreen and in this case, bigger is better. Mine is made from packing tape, plastic (from a zip-lock bag) and wooden chop sticks. It is simple and very light.

The final thing to point out... we are all into pieces of kit that have multiple uses. The stove itself does not have many other uses but the fuel does; nothing says quick fire like a flammable liquid poured onto your tinder bundle right? I pointed out using rubbing alcohol which will work but does not burn as clean. Another use would be to sterilize wounds or tools if needed.

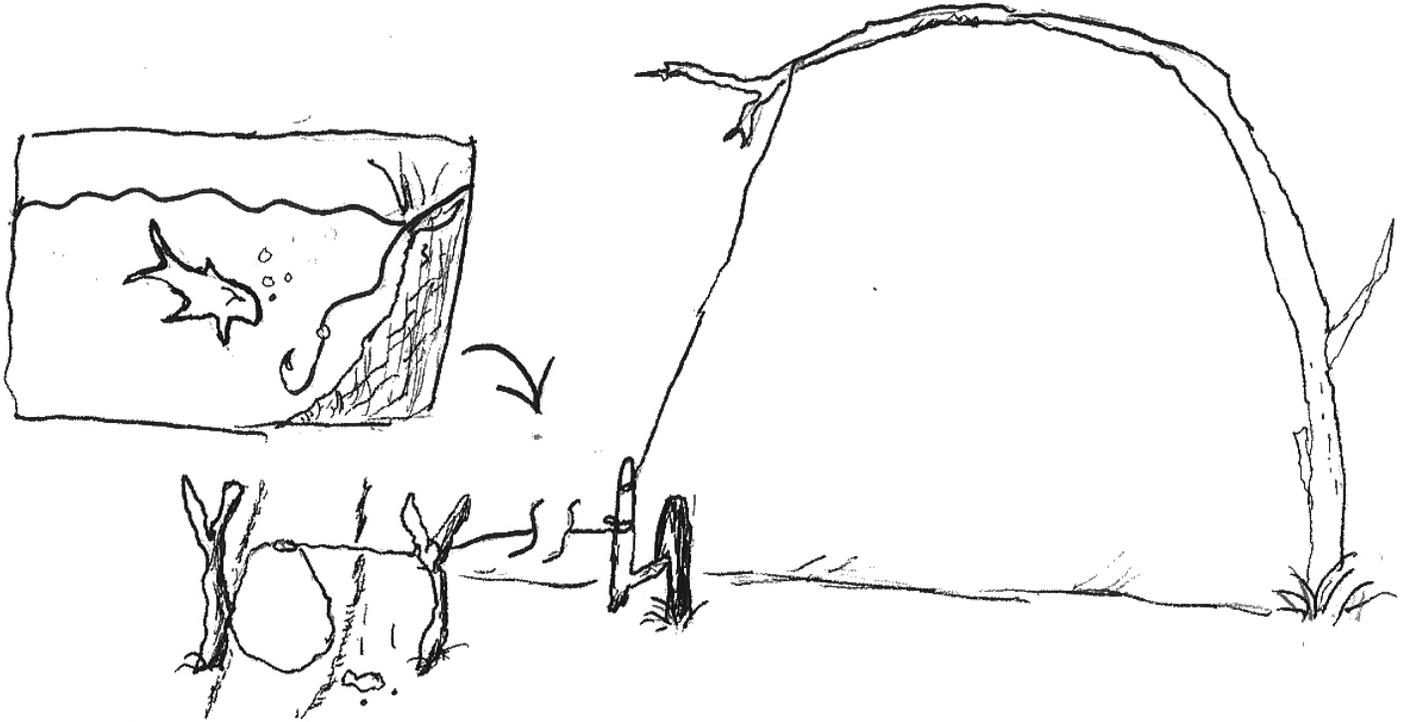
That’s the Large Axe alcohol stove; you have hot food, clean water and a better smelling dog for less than \$5.00.



Photo 7: Completed stove and its inaugural burn, boiling in less than 6 minutes with water from the refrigerator.

The Easy L-7

By Joe Flowers



The L7 trap remains one of the more painless spring pole traps to set up. Shown here is the noose variation and fishing variation, but the trap trigger is not limited to just this application.

Names change depending on where you are at, and who is saying it. The L7, also called the twitch up, and spring pole snare, is one of the easiest traps to set up. Not only is this trap trigger inherently easy to make, it is also very easy to teach, and applicable to a myriad of different situations. While this style trap may not be as effective as a deadfall trap in the humane sense, they are a fabulous tool to teach to kids and adults, and do not take up nearly as much time and knifemanship as

Joe Flowers lives in the mountains of North Carolina. Following his love for animals and the outdoors, Joe got a B.S. in Zoology from NC State with a minor and concentration in Entomology. In pursuit of his passions such as reptiles, amphibians, machetes, and bugs, Joe has traveled from the deserts of Utah all the way down to Peru in search of bushcraft skills, friendly people, and not so friendly creepy crawlies. Joe also writes professionally for many outdoor and nature magazines, designs and consults for knife companies, and makes videos on the side for fun. Joe also works at a non-profit center when he isn't writing, where he teaches survival classes, fitness, and coordinating youth activities for his community. He also has an affinity for Godzilla movies.

other traps, plus, one can be made even without a knife if the maker has a good amount of bush sense!

For the general construction of the L-7 trap, there are three pieces. The first is a spring pole, made of a sapling proportional to the animal that is your target species. For instance, you can use this pole to snare a deer; however it probably wouldn't be good to use a sapling that is only one inch in diameter. The trap does not the user to cut down trees to set it up too, a sapling in the ground functions even better than a cut piece placed into the ground. This sapling is the spring pole, a large upright pole, that is placed into the ground sticking straight up in the air, or set at an angle away from the source. To assist in the pole's springiness, another pole can be buried and lashed to the first part of it, either 1/3 or 1/2 the way up your spring pole, lashed to it to make a more rigid base. Alternatively, a smaller spring pole can be lashed to a heavy sapling base (Fig 2).

The second part of the L-7 trap, and the reason for the name, is the two sticks that form as triggers. I learned this name from friends on Bladeforums, and it really stuck. If you hold your



Here the L7 is shown setup with paracord holding a cut sapling to the base of another sapling. Simple lashings were used a third of the way up the sapling to give it more spring.

left hand in the shape of an L, facing you, and hold the right hand in a “7”, with the index finger as the top of the number, and the thumb as the bottom, you can see how they interlock together. Kids can relate to the name well, and love to make the little “L-Loser” shape on their forehead when I’m trying to explain it. The “L” portion connects to the spring pole, and the “7” portion goes into the ground. To get a spring pole into the ground and the trigger portion in the soil without ruining the triggers you just carved, use a different stick and pound that into the ground, take it out, and lightly tap the pole or



Part of a branch projection was used for this portion of the trap trigger. You can get by with just a few well place snaps of branches, though setting it up can be hard.



Here three traps are set up for use in a private pond. To help ensure the odds, treble hooks were used.

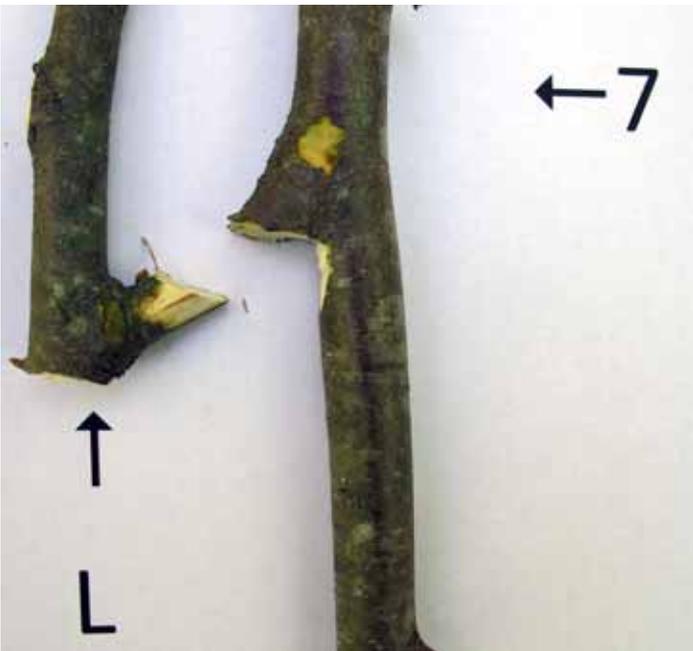
trigger into the ground deep into the hole.

The trigger portion requires two notches to be made, deeply, within each trigger. You can even use a twig projection for one, or two broken stick setups, making sure they are sensitive. To carve deep notches, you can use your two thumbs to do a push cut (Fig 5), or baton cross grain half way through your stick and carve out the notch towards the cut. If you are going very serious with your setup, make sure the bottom stick has a good carved notch in it, and select it so that there is plenty of length in the stick to bury it into the ground deeply. This will prevent any false sets.

Cord is attached from the pole to the L portion of the trigger, the stick that connects to the other stick in the ground. To set the snare safely, put



But using both thumbs, a lot of pressure can be exerted behind the blade to carve a notch.



This image may help clarify the name. The L7 can work the opposite direction as well, so don't get too caught up on what to call it.

the spring pole portion of the trap underneath the arm pit. This will save your nose later if the notch doesn't hold. The trap should be in line with the snare, not set at any crazy angle. Once the trigger is set, let the trap do the work for you. As with any trap, obey local laws and only use as a last resort. For teaching



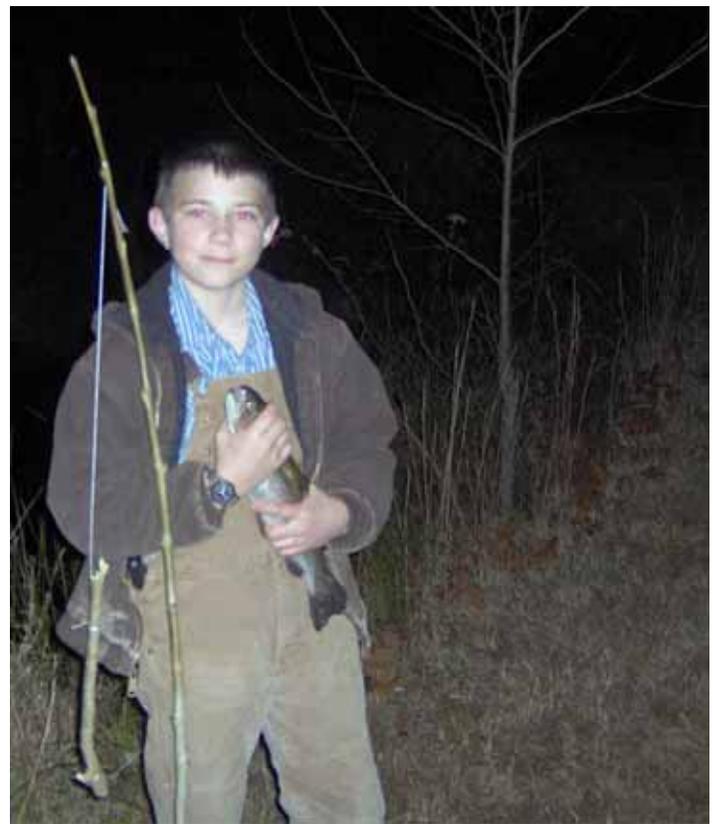
Watch those eyes! Setting the trap up with spring pole in your armpit will ensure safe sniffing later. This works for just about any spring pole trap variation.

purposes, if, for example you have it set up on a game trail, you can just have a setup so that it is engaged when an animal walks past it and trips the line, rather than actually snaring the varmint.

Perhaps the coolest part about this setup, and one of the reasons why I like it so much, is that it can be used for fishing just as easily. Instead of a snare,



Here, two notches were carved and wood material was removed to give this a snug fit. The less the two wood pieces are touching, the more sensitive the trap.



You can bet this guy was excited when he found this trout waiting for him at the end of his trap. Kids have caught multiple fish on this setup, and it is an easy way to ensure the information stays there!



Here Matthew is frying the biggest fish he has ever caught. It still counts when you catch it on a trap!

the rope is attached to a fish hook and thrown into the water. The spring pole sets the hook for you and holds the fish on, and has springiness that acts like drag on a fish line to prevent rippage from soft mouth fishes This trap has impressed me on more than one occasion. Most of the time, when teaching these, kids will set them up randomly, not use good knots, and might not sink the spring pole down enough in the dirt. Despite instructors trying to help as much as they can, these things happen. Well much to the students surprise, this trap lets you error a little bit, and has produced 14 inch trout on two different occasions, set by kids, their first time using the traps and carving primitive traps with a knife, horrible knots and all. If you want to see wide dishplate eyes, watch a kid who brings in a fish on the L-7!

The multipurpose spring pole can be set up many different ways, and is a great foundation for learning the mechanics around traps and trap triggers. Kids and adults start using their heads and find different ways of setting it up that are easier.

I've seen one kid who made one with an old fishing hook that he bent with a leatherman. As soon as he did that, another young girl used a cloths hanger scrap from a different project for hers. The whole class was thinking Maguyver style by the end of the day, and it was a joy to watch! The trigger can be made simply and quickly, and in a survival situation one could have twice as many of these set up as deadfalls, if they are proficient. This spring pole setup is still used today with many trappers, and even researchers who like to live snare animals. With some of the snare setups in the literature, I find myself scratching my head. Then I find a little comfort when I see that same switch up design again and again in countless books, manuals, and references. Long live the L-7!



Scratch and Win!

By Rev. Joe Classen



Image Courtesy NOAA, Mary Hollinger Photographer, 2008

“Scratch and win” may sound like a catchy slogan for all those alluring instant lottery scratch-off tickets, but much more important than winning a few measly bucks and buying a candy bar at the gas station (if you’re lucky), “scratch and win” is a recipe for winning the jackpot in the turkey woods while on your next hunt.

Let me start by saying that I’m a guy who has learned the ways of the crafty wild turkey by attending the school of “hard knocks.” I didn’t have a mentor to teach me how to hunt those dirty birds, so I had to educate myself by simply getting out there and doing it. Of course, before ever loading up the first 3 ½” magnum shell into my trusty shot gun or peppering a turkey target with many a deadly arrow, I read countless articles and watched hours upon

Rev. Joe Classen is a passionate, lifelong outdoorsman, and a Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, MO. He’s written several books and articles on subjects including the Christian faith, spirituality, and the outdoors. He has appeared on several TV programs and also is currently the host of a Christian, outdoors themed radio show. For more information, please visit HuntingForGod.com

hours worth of turkey hunting instructional videos.

Many of those articles and DVDs were very informative and entertaining, and I did learn a lot from them, but year after year, things never worked out like they did in the magazines or on those video hunts. The birds hardly ever “shock gobbled” back to my fancy locator calls that were “guaranteed” to make them go bananas! Half the time, when performing some new “break-through” turkey calling sequence that was supposed to make those greedy, lust-filled toms come a runnin’, they’d shut their mouths and go into hiding! Never once (until years later) did I have a bird just causally fly off roost, waltz right up to my seductive calling, take a gander at my lovely, lonely hen decoy and hold nice and still before his head got blown clean off, like in all those TV shows. I just could not catch a break! Something would always, and I mean ALWAYS go wrong during those first few years of trying to fill my initial turkey tag.

However while I was consumed with madding frustration as a consequence of those first several hunting seasons and felt like there was truly



some kind of a turkey hunting hex on me, I learned a very important lesson: as the old song goes, “Aint nothing like the real thing baby!” As a result of spending countless hours in the woods during both the spring and fall seasons, hunting every possible minute of the day no matter what, even during some extremely dangerous weather conditions, I got a REAL education! I began to genuinely understand and decipher what in the world those crazy birds were saying to each other (and to me), what message their body language was sending, what kinds of sounds they’d truly react to and why. I learned how to “speak the language” as game calling legend Will Primos says, and as a result, success began to come on a regular basis. Indeed, while arm-chair knowledge can be a great starting point, I learned that there is just no substitute for that real life, in the field experience.

After hunting for many years now and filling my fair share of turkey tags with both gun and bow, I’ve noticed that one of the most deadly turkey calls of all is rarely talked about in hunting articles or demonstrated on videos. The call I’m talking about does not require any fancy, new, scientifically engineered gizmo that will reproduce the exact frequency of a yelping hen, or make toms gobble from a sub-sonic tone that only they can supposedly hear. The simple, yet incredibly effective call that I am referring to is that of leaf scratching. That’s right, the simple sound of rhythmically, yet methodically scratching around in the leaves or brush on the forest floor (either wet or dry) brings the birds in like nobody’s business. Doing this, coupled with making some quiet soft feeding “purrs, putts” and relaxed “yelps,” is indeed a recipe for a majorly successful turkey hunt. In my experience, it has been the “ace in the hole” and has proved extremely effective in both the fall and spring seasons.

As many of you know, once a tom turkey is with his hens first thing in the morning, it can be incredibly difficult, if not impossible, to pull him away from his ladies in order to come check out your desperate calling. One can use decoys and all manner of turkey trickery to try and get a long beard to come in out of the breeding urge, jealousy, dominance, etc. One can try to call in the hens, hoping that ol’ tom will follow, or even try to ambush or stalk up on the birds and take one out, but in most cases, if the gobbler is with the girls, he’s going to stay with them until his business is done. However, when the ladies go back to their nests later in the morning, leaving Mr. Tom all alone, he can be

quite vulnerable and much easier to call in using the traditional yelping, cutting, etc.

Something else that many of you experienced hunters can attest to is the fact that even when alone and vulnerable, quite often that bird will only come in so far, and he will not budge another inch! “Hung up birds” are very tough and frustrating to deal with. As we know, most of those older birds stay put for good reason. The natural order of things is for the hens to go to him, not the other way around. It is in this type of scenario that this “leaf scratching” technique is especially deadly!

I have wise, old gobblers hang up on me every year, just out of range, and most of the time, they will eventually just get tired of gobbling and strutting, and simply move on. On these occasions, I’ll immediately lay off of the mating calls, and start gently purring and putting, and scratching through the brush like turkeys do when they are feeding. I’ve found again and again that if a bird will not come in because of greed or lust, he will because of gluttony. Yes indeed! Even animals fall prey to the “seven deadly sins!” When a gobbler or hen hears what he or she thinks is another bird stuffing its greedy beak with all kinds of delicious turkey chow, they almost always come right in. Sometimes they come running in so fast that they are right on top of you, and other times they come stealthily tip-toeing in to investigate, so be ready for anything.

This technique has worked so well that I’ve even called in birds by accident with it! While deer hunting last fall I had to suddenly get down from my tree stand and dash off to an area of the woods that I was not specifically hunting to take care of, well, #2 if you know what I mean. As I was kicking the dry leaves and dirt over my earthen toilet, an entire flock of long beards came right in, all the while leaf scratching away themselves, thinking I was another turkey who had found the jackpot! Boy, were they in for a surprise!

So I certainly encourage you, the reader, to get out in the field and learn the ways of the wild turkey from the greatest teacher of all, the bird’s themselves. I’d most assuredly recommend learning and using all the tried and true traditional (and more recent) turkey hunting tactics, but don’t be afraid to try things “out of the box,” as they say. There are many simple, yet incredibly effective ways to get a bird’s attention that can produce results as exciting and rewarding as scratching off that winning lottery ticket!



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Jungle Boots get a Makeover

By Barry Bright



Sideview of Junglelites showing three drain holes and ‘microfiber’ material and mesh panels. They’re designed like running shoes and feel like them.

My love affair with the jungle boot began when I was a Marine reservist in the 80s. The older Marines, some of whom had served in Vietnam, told us about them and stressed that they were far superior to the clunky almost smooth soled lowest bidder boots we were issued in boot camp.

They were right. Even with the standard steel shanks in the bottom of the shoes installed in the factory to protect against punji sticks and other booby traps, the old jungle boots felt better. The old boots were lighter and they would tie tightly around the ankles to help prevent sprains and other injuries.

They were always sized a little oddly as well. My usual shoe size for years was 8 – 8.5 American, but my feet always felt more at home in 7.5 wide Jungle boots regardless of brand. The older ones we bought back then may not have been branded. But in

later years other companies started to make them.

For a year or so now there’s been a new jungle boot in the woods, the Junglelites by OTB (Over The Beach), a company now owned by New Balance. They are a close approximation to a dream I had for years, designing my own updated version of my favorite combat boots.

When I read about them I had to try them out, especially since my old ones didn’t seem to fit as well. It seems that some peoples’ feet grow a size or so at a certain midlife age and mine have grown at least a size in length the past two or three years. I’m

Barry Bright is a patriot, photographer, reporter, former Marine infantryman, veteran of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, grew up on a small farm and has hunted, hiked, biked, fished, swam, kayaked, explored and photographed in the outdoors off and on all his life.



OTB uses a ‘sticky rubber compound,’ to make these modified Panama soles with ‘siping’ to reduce squeaking on finished floors or slipping on wet surfaces.

now up to about 9.5.

Mine were ordered through the U.S. Cavalry Store in Radcliff, Kentucky near the Fort Knox Army base. They don’t keep them in stock but they do keep the twin to the Junglелites, the Deserlites, so I tried them on to get a size approximation before ordering. On OTB’s website they say to order the size you would normally wear. That hasn’t been as easy for me in recent years.

The older version of Jungle boots with the ‘Panama’ soles were goatish on rough ground. Here in central Kentucky there are generally two directions, up and down. The ground is also often wet or at least moist and can crumble or slip out from under your feet on the many steep inclines we have here on the Muldraugh Escarpment.

I noted early on that I could angle up most steep inclines while walking on the edges of the soles of those old jungle boots. The square knobs of the ‘Panama’ soles just dug right in and provided almost non-slip traction, except on wet creek rock with that green or brown algae growing on it. That’s usually an invitation to skate, bust your butt, or swim.

The modified Panama soles on the Junglелites are ‘siped’ which means little grooves are cut into the bottom to prevent slipping on wet surfaces. This allegedly displaces the water, much like the grooves of a car tire are supposed to do. The wet creek rock I’ve walked on so far didn’t seem as slick as it once did but one learns to be careful of such dangers regardless of the footwear you are using. There’s also a question in my mind as to how long those little grooves or ‘sipes’ will last.

At long distances on hard flat surfaces the



Above: Rear of Junglелites. Note the re-enforced webbing around the top. It still soaks up moisture and dries readily.



Above: Top (left) and Bottom (right) view of insole. Notice the holes on the bottom that allow drainage.



The photograph on this page and the following page illustrate why you need ‘jungle’ type boots in temperate summertime. Stream crossings can be done quickly without consideration of ‘keeping one’s feet dry’ because the shoes will drain and partially dry out over time.

Vietnam era boots could be murder, even for younger feet. Those steel shanks don’t absorb the repeated shock of pounding on asphalt very well, especially with a 50 pound pack on ones back.

One hump my reserve leaders took us on involved not only asphalt and normal gravel roads, but some geniuses at whichever military base we were training on had layered on what was probably 3” limestone for several miles. Most of the company were probably wearing jungle boots and most, probably all, got severe blisters that day. The big rocks did it, to be fair to the boots.

I had never had blisters before. I’ve had to be careful of them since. In the ol’ days we were taught we could wear panty hose under our normal socks to reduce blisters, and keep a little mole skin in our packs for when we start to develop hot spots.

I only tried the panty hose once or twice, but I still keep some mole skin in my pack and wear only rayon or polyester socks when going on serious walks.

The steel shanks in the old-style jungle boots, from my experience, are cold in the winter as well as hell on long humps. Some of us would simply remove them to make the boots more comfortable,

and add after-market insoles.

According to OTB, Junglites are built using “a composite full-length shank” as opposed to the old steel insole boards. The insoles are perforated with decent arch support.

OTB claims to use a “sticky rubber compound” so as to not get too technical, that “will not squeak”. In my experience the noise is significantly reduced but not silenced completely so don’t get visions in your head of Spiderman type stealth.

What looks like leather is actually a microfiber material, with mesh panels that were canvas on the old versions, according to an OTB video on YouTube and the U.S. Cavalry website: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8Z4sIO1RUg>

Junglites also have “sausage” laces that are fairly easy to tie, but hold their place well once tightened. The first few times I tried to put the boots on they were really tight even with the laces loosened as much as possible. With a little more wear they became easier to get on and off.

Caring for the boots is as easy as cleaning them and keeping them out of excessive heat, so don’t dry them in the oven. No need for shoe polish



nor mink oil, which I used on my old style jungle boots to the consternation of those who preferred shiny to spit shined, something I never understood, especially for combat purposes.

My chiropractor recently told me that the lower top hiking style boots are better for one's legs because they build up the muscles in the ankles while the higher top boots can cause problems.

While this may be so I've spent enough time in the woods to know that low-top boots can easily become filled with dirt and they simply don't provide the ankle support and protection that I prefer. While jogging a week or so before going to boot camp I sprained my ankle. It was re-injured in boot camp and for years afterward popped easily, even with 'hunting' boots that didn't lace tightly enough around my ankles and lower legs.

Many hikers use 'gaiters' to cover their ankles and keep out dirt and protect from snake bites. I haven't tried them but to me that's just more kit to keep track of and to spend money on.

Since working a local job where I was on my feet for hours a day I've started putting Dr Scholl's massaging gel arch supports in all my shoes. I bought a pair for my OTB Junglelites and wore them on a couple occasions. But they seem to make the soles feel too built up or padded and the boots too tight so I removed them.

I asked OTB via email how to build up the arches a little. They recommended Super Feet' brand insoles then later possibly custom made insoles.

"The support comes from your footbed, if you have a foot that is not standard in shape, there are many who make custom footbeds" they told me. I've yet to try either solution. A few more humps will help me decide whether I need more arch support.

The only problem I notice walking on uneven ground now is the shoes seem to slide side to side too much, probably because my feet have grown in length and not width.

Those who think this is all a bit much over a pair of shoes may have never actually done any real humping in the military, or 'hiking' as civilians like to call it. I'll leave out those hard core Appalachian/Continental Divide Trail walkers. Though that kind of walk probably far surpasses a 'hike' as well.

If I were rich enough to have the time to walk that far I would try these new boots. I haven't been able to go on any real long humps so far but I have gone three to four miles across terrain with asphalt and with a small (10lbs) and medium weight pack (30lbs).

I walked about four miles on hot asphalt with the light pack, a camel back with some basic survival

gear and an old-style poncho, on a mission to retrieve my dog from his girlfriend's house. He's the second dog I've had that seems to believe in long term relationships.

The Junglelites didn't hurt my feet, though they did seem too short at first. Toward the end of the walk, which was mostly at a quick pace, enough to wind me on the hills. My feet were beginning to develop blisters on the bottom and a small one between my big and middle toes. I don't blame that on the boots, but on not enough time spent walking.

In the summer I rarely hike, or hump, as they called it in the Corps. Instead, I prefer to bicycle and swim. But still I wanted these boots for that occasional foray into our temperate jungles where streams often have to be crossed in a hurry.

Wading creeks in hot weather can seem like sweet relief and bring back memories of childhood. The Junglelites take on water even faster than the old jungle boots. But once out of the water I didn't notice them being 'squishy' at all. My thin WalMart brand 'dry' socks seemed to suffice as well and did not bother me on the next two miles of dirt and asphalt after the wading session

The first few times I attempted to run in the Junglelites my toes seemed to jam up, which is probably a symptom of my aging and not any fault of the boots. My middle toe is longer than my other toes and the nail on one of them used to turn black on occasion when I jogged, in shoes that otherwise fit me well.

There are a few similar brands out there. I've read about Blackhawk's Warrior Wear Light Assault Boot but haven't seen or tried them. But the article I read about them highly recommended them. I just hope the idea of a combat boot like that doesn't die out. I hope others try the Junglelites and OTB keeps making them.

Now if they'd only create a dry sock, that could reach up to the knee, that would allow for the use of these types of boots in colder weather.

While shopping at the Cav store during their warehouse sale held on the same weekend as the Machine Gun Shoot at Knob Creek Gun Range in Bullitt County, Kentucky, another customer trying on shoes told me he wanted water proof boots.

Water proof boots have their uses, unless one has to do a serious stream crossing, in other words too rushed to take them off. They'll fill with water and not dry out very quickly, if at all. In hot or cold weather this can be a very bad thing.

An online military report about immersion

foot syndromes reported that early 1800s Surgeon General Joseph Lovell noted that letting the feet remain wet and cold for any length of time led to 'constitutional illnesses.' Lord knows we have too many of those in this country.

The same report said the first jungle boots were designed for use in WWII in the South Pacific. A 'tropical combat boot' consisted of spun nylon, a leather midsole, and a full-length rubber outer sole. Production was not started until the summer of 1945.

As usual the military was behind the game in gear for the grunts. Things seem to be a little better nowadays. We had to contend with older 'Alice' type packs and war-belts with 'alice' clips.

Later in Vietnam 'rubber shower thongs' were issued to some troops for use after combat operations. The report states:

"By allowing soldiers to use these open rubber thongs upon return to base camp, and limiting the continuous wet exposure to not more than 72 hours, the rate of tropical immersion foot problems was generally kept to a level of 10% or less. Prior to institution of these policies, a combat unit could experience 70% to 75% loss of personnel due entirely to inflammatory skin diseases of feet that had been continuously wet more than 72 hours."

In summary the Jungle boots of whatever era, vintage or not, help keep your feet dryer than they would be if you have no choice but to leave them on for extended periods.

The report also lists the different names of immersion footwear that can produce casualties: "...trench foot, swamp foot, tropical jungle foot, paddy-field foot, jungle rot, sea boot foot, bridge foot, and foxhole foot."

From personal experience I know my jungle boots can help keep me drier all over. A couple years ago I went on a photo hike in the spring and for some reason wore my waterproof winter boots, combat style with high tops, instead of my old style jungle boots even though the creek water was plenty warm.

While crossing a small stream that was deeper than the top of my boots I tried to step on rocks to keep from flooding them with water. I slipped and ended up immersing myself along with my camera gear.

That was a lesson I shouldn't have needed to re-learn but oh well. The camera, a Nikon D100, and lens both still work despite my camera repairman telling me the camera's body was on it's last legs.





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Discovering Your Outdoor Space

By Craig Cole



The author's shelter, which he leaves up for extended time periods.

Step onto the woodland forest trail and admire the forest as it begins to slowly awaken from the long cold winter. The buds are in the early stage of springing forth to produce this year's new growth. The smell of the earthy forest is pungent to my nose and brings back memories of childhood hikes through the woodland forest with my friends as we discover nature together. I brought my camera with me this day and snap photos of the forest as I reach the wet weather creek where the water dances over the rocks forming a small waterfall. After a leisurely walk, I reach my anticipated destination. I anxiously remove my backpack and start gathering firewood from the forest floor. In a few short moments I'm sitting comfortably under my shelter enjoying the warmth of a red hot fire that was started without the assistance of matches. Once the fire stabilizes, I take

out my cup and pour in some water and place it on the fire. In no time flat, I have a full hot meal that brings comfort to my soul and satisfaction to my stomach.

The scene that I colorfully described could be a story of how I happened to get lost in the eastern woods and had to setup a survival shelter until help rescued me from my wretched condition, but it is not. It could also be the wonderful scene that I describe as I walk to my campsite at the end of a grueling five mile hike through the mountains, but it is not. This is a scene that I can repeat just about any time I want because it took place a mere two hundred feet from my house. It is important that every outdoorsman find an outdoor space to practice his craft. There is a reason that we are often reminded of the old cliché, "practice makes perfect," because it is loaded with truth. In a real life situation you will revert to the lowest common denominator. Your mind will be racing as you attempt to remember what you learned in that survival class years ago and you will in all likelihood fail miserably—unless you practice your craft until you have perfected it!

One of the obstacles that stands like an

Craig Cole has enjoyed a variety of outdoor adventures including canoeing, hunting, camping, wildcraft and so much more. He lives in the Allegheny mountains of West Virginia where he has plenty of outdoor opportunities to enjoy. He is the host of The Outdoor Podcast where he shares his passion for the outdoors with his listeners each week. His website is : <http://www.outdoorpodcast.com>





A wet weather stream running through the author's property.

immovable stonewall to many people is simply finding the space to practice. Just as a football team has a practice field, every outdoorsman needs an outdoor space to practice his outdoorsman skills. In this article I would like to share some tips to finding areas where you, the outdoorsman, can practice.

The first question that every outdoorsman needs to ask himself is, "how much time do I have to dedicate to my craft". This an individual question that only you can answer because everyone's work and family schedules are different. I believe that by following my tips, anyone can discover an outdoor space to call their own. I have three properties that I consider my outdoor space and all three vary in size and proximity as you will soon bear witness.

The first is my personal property where I live. I'm fortunate enough to live in rural country and have a few acres of wooded land that surrounds my house. I use this area when I am short on time because it is so convenient and I do not have to worry about traveling to and from my outdoor space.

This allows me to maximize my efforts in a short time span. The added benefit is that I have setup a shelter that I leave up, so once again I gain the benefit of having a shelter without much lost time or energy in having to set it up time and again. I'm sure some of you are complaining because you live in an urban environment filled with concrete and asphalt and do not have the wonderful benefit of owning wooded acreage. Well, you can still benefit from your property where you live no matter the size. A small fire ring does not take up much room, and instead of using matches to light the fire, try using your fire starter the next time you and the family want to sit out back by a campfire. Examine closely what your property offers and look for ways to practice your craft at home when you are short on time. The next time you light a fire in the fire place, get out your knife and practice the baton method of splitting a piece of wood, or the next time your kids want to camp outside in the yard, instead of setting up a tent, you can create an unforgettable memory by



The author's outdoor space in West Virginia.

getting a tarp and making a diamond shelter. These are just a few examples that can turn ordinary activities into a chance to practice your outdoor skills and better prepare you if times get tough.

The second property that I can visit is a mountainous woodland forest that I do not own. It consists of approximately two hundred acres and includes a small pond. The landowners live out of state and I have permission to visit this property and to utilize it benefits which helps them by preventing trespassers coming on the property. This property is situated about forty minutes from my house, so I use this space when I have an extended time to practice my outdoor skill set. It is also perfect for a short overnight camping trip where I desire to be more isolated than what my own property allows. I encourage you to look around to family members, friends or even coworkers who may own plots of land and are more than willing to let you use their land as your outdoor practice space. You can even offer to teach them some of your skills and bring them into the outdoorsman lifestyle in exchange for the use of their land. If you are still unsuccessful, then try befriending a local farmer or landowner. Offer to help around the farm for permission to use his wooded areas for practice.

The third and final property that I have access to use as my outdoor space is a local Wildlife Management Area. This property is also an extremely rugged and mountainous woodland forest and consists of approximately 15,000 acres and is available for up to eight months out of the year. It takes me two hours to drive to the very back of the WMA, but gives me almost complete privacy for extended practice sessions. It is amazing how few people actually use our public lands around us. Look for public areas of land around where you live that may offer opportunities to practice. A word of caution here, check with your local authorities to make sure that you are legally permitted to practice some of the skills on public land. If not, then look for public spaces that have campgrounds within them and then practice at your campsite.

Finding your outdoor space is simply a matter of observing your environment and identifying the best solutions to your problems. It does not matter whether you are practicing your skill set on a tenth of an acre or ten thousand acres. What matters is that you are getting outdoors and practicing your craft. So if you ever find yourself in a challenging situation you will be confident in your abilities and in your kit.



Bushcraft on the Go

By Marc Hallee



The Author helping his kids identify where the squirrels nest is located.

Bushcraft can be practiced anywhere, everywhere and just about all the time. The key to enhancing your skills is to keep applying them to everyday life and wherever your travels take you. Most of us probably relate Bushcraft and/or Woodlore to being out in the wilderness, sitting by a campfire while a small tin hangs from a tripod heating up some pine needle tea. Yes that does sound like a great time, but Bushcraft can mean so much more than that.

To really apply the Bushcraft mindset you need to be thinking about your resources every moment you can. Keep a sharp eye for something that can be used when we do actually make the time for that campfire retreat. Look for items all around you every day and try to think of a Bushcraft type

use for it. Just keep an open mind and open your eyes to a whole new world.

Let's create a few scenarios to help illustrate and put this into better perspective. Say you're a city dweller like me and you can't make it out to the forest today because time just won't allow it. So

Marc Hallee is an outdoor enthusiast with a passion for bushcraft & wilderness skills. Living in NH his entire life has allowed him to expand his primitive skills knowledge. Being a scout leader, martial arts instructor and an obsessive hunter is how he spends most of his free time. As a husband and father of three, he believes that everyone has the ability to learn how to survive, and that it's also everyone's responsibility to pass that knowledge onto younger generations. Marc has also had the pleasure to be one of the first students in the NE Advanced Pathfinder class in which he has made many new close friends.



Hailey and Benjamin identifying and gathering the squirrels' preferred food of oak acorns located in the local city park.

after work you decide to take the family to the local park, which is about a ¼ acre in size. There's a nice statue, a couple huge oak trees, some pine trees, fresh cut grass and a bench to rest your tired feet at. As the kids are playing, watch how the squirrels and chipmunks act. This time of year the squirrels are starting to gather acorns from the oak trees and burying them for winter storage. Which limbs do they use most frequently? Which trees do you think they are living in? How many squirrels are running on those trees? How much time do they spend on the ground? Do they have a route that they prefer over another? Why do you think that is? What obstacles do they seem to avoid and which ones do they ignore? By questioning what you see and attempting to find answers you have just put your mind on a task that will provide valuable information the next time you are trapping for squirrels for your next meal. Not that you'll be at the local park trapping squirrels, but gaining knowledge on animal behavior is extremely valuable when you really need to find a

food source. And while you're at it, talk to your kids about the behavior and have them answer the same questions. You'll be amazed at what they actually pick up for details and the things that you missed. It's just as important to pass the Bushcraft skill on as it is to apply it.

As you can see, Bushcraft on the Go is just a matter of putting your mind to it. Before you even get to the park, take it back one step. As you're strolling down the sidewalk and avoiding the dangers of modern man, you can test your plant skills. Is that an edible plantain weed coming thru the cracks? Is that a sugar maple tree in that guy's yard? Is this a red or white oak and how do you know? Have you ever noticed just how much Queen Anne's Lace was actually growing next to that shrub? Expand it to even more than plants as one man's trash is another man's treasure. You can use this old soda bottle to collect some pinesap or tar when you get to the park. Will this quartz stone give a spark? I could go on all day with the possibilities of trying to find every little



piece of trash for some use, but I'll leave that up to you. Putting your Bushcraft brain to work takes practice! The options are endless. As always teach it to your children. They absolutely love to identify plants. Make it like a game for them. Explain the differences and have them explain it back to you. Then quiz them as you walk down the street. You should act like the two year-old asking why and how do you know. Teach them to be observant and have the Bushcraft mindset.

Using your skills and knowledge is such an important tool in keeping you sane when you can't make it out to your Bushcraft playground. So start training yourself to have that Bushcraft on the Go mentality and open your eyes to what's around you. And the next time you go for a stroll to the local park, by all means try not to step in that big pile of dog poop; for a real test, ask yourself what can you actually use that dog poop for? Till next time, always remember...Bushcraft is everywhere and anywhere.



Above Left: Adult Gray Squirrel hanging on with just it's back legs and having a snack.

Below: Gray Squirrel's in the city can get really big since they are not hunted much and food is plentiful.



Common Man's Haversack

By Ken Seal III



A haversack can hold all you need while in the woods, and keep it within arms reach. Making it yourself, just makes it better!

As many of you may know, I love the common man approach to life. It's not that I can't buy a lot of the things that I want, it's about the pride I have in knowing I made something. That pride only grows when I make something and it has served me for many years as faithfully as the store bought item would have. I make many items I take into the woods from tarps to alcohol stoves, but my favorite is the home-made haversack. What good is equipment if you can't take it with you, right? I am going to walk you through the steps I use to make mine, and hopefully when you are done reading this, you too can make a durable and functional sack for

Ken Seal was born in Sumter, South Carolina and has lived in Florence, South Carolina all of his forty-two years. He served in the US Army with the 72nd FA Brigade in Germany, is an avid outdoorsman, a leader in the Pathfinder Youth Organization, and an all around knife fanatic who also enjoys making knives from time to time.



light scouts.

Before we begin, you are going to need a few items. At the top of the list is a good sewing machine. While this can be done by hand, it will go much faster and save the wear and tear on your fingers if you have a machine. You will also need a spool of lightweight nylon thread for its strength, of any color you choose, but I prefer the mute colors, or something matching the fabric you will use. Depending on the width of the fabric you use, you will need one to two yards of material. I use the heavy BDU material with the Marine camo pattern on it...it was free to me, and I have a good bit of it laying around for projects. It is a poly cotton blend, lightweight but durable, and packs down quite well to fit nicely in the pack so I can take it along as a scout bag without sacrificing much room on the main pack.

I have marked the cut lines on the back of the fabric using a marker (picture one) but the





measurements are as follows: One section 14" wide by 40" long. Two strips 5"x14" and one strip 4"x46" long.

It is best to start with the easiest part, the strap. Fold the 4"x46" strip in half long ways, with the pattern on the inside (picture two). Sew a 1/4" seam along one end and the outside long edge (picture three) and when you get to the open end do

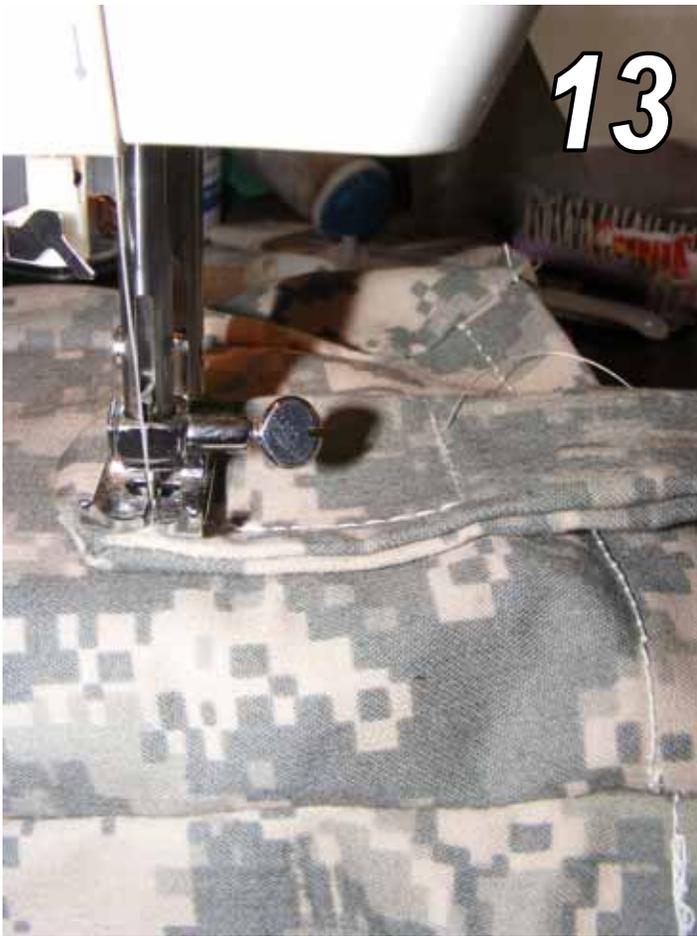
a back stitch (there is a button on the machine that takes the stitches backwards to lock in the seam) and remove the fabric, cutting the loose ends of the thread. Now turn the tube inside out (picture 4) and fold the open end in, and sew shut with a seam as close to the edge as you can. (picture 5). This piece will be the handle or sling for the haversack.

For the side panels, laying the fabric print



side down, sew a 1" seam along the short end of both pieces. This leaves a nice edge where the bag is open, and stops the material from unraveling over time. Now sew a 1/4" seam on each end of the long panel. (picture 6) Again this is just to stop the fabric from unraveling and to make it look better when you are showing it off to your friends. The next part of this project is the most time consuming, but every bit as easy as the others. Laying the fabric so the patterns are facing each other, take one side strip and the main body section, and place the sewn seams together. (picture 7) Now sew the two together using a 1/4" seam from the top seam to the bottom, stopping 1/2" from the bottom but do not remove the fabric from the machine. (pictures 8 and 9) Leave the needle in the down position, and lift the foot (there is a handle on the back of the machine) and

rotate the fabric so that the bottom of the side section is in position and align the main panel section with this to sew the bottom seam. Again using a 1/4" seam, sew this together stopping about 1/4" the end to leave room for the back panel of the main section to be sewed on. (picture 10) Now repeat this process for the other side. It is now time to repeat the previous steps but this time continuing to the end. Sew a 1/4" seam from the bottom of the bag all the way to the top of the flap where you sewed the seam over earlier. This will join the side and the main compartment the rest of the way, and from the seam along the side of the flap to keep it from unraveling. (picture 11 and 12) Now repeat for the other side. Now it is time to put on the handle. Turn the bag inside out and place one end of the strap made earlier along the side panel 2-1/2" down from the top of the



sack edge. The use of a box stitch on this will add strength to it for the heavy load the bag will carry. Starting at the bottom of the bag, sew a seam 1/4" from the edge along the bottom. (picture 13) Leaving the needle in the down position, lift the foot, and rotate the fabric 90 degrees, drop the foot, and sew a seam along the side. (picture 14) Repeat these steps for the top and side seams. You should have a box. It



is important to sew a line from corner to corner to form an "X" in the middle of the box. (picture 15) This will form a solid connection and ensure the handle stays on for years and years. Do this again for the opposite end of the handle, making sure to keep the fabric flat and untwisted, so that it sits on your shoulder more comfortably.

That's all there is to it. It's not as hard to do as it may seem in reading it. ALWAYS start and end a seam with a backstitch. Look on the machine, and you will see a button, or a lever that has a return symbol on it. This is what makes the machine sew back over itself, locking in the seam so it doesn't come out. Measure twice, cut once, just like in wood working. Go SLOWLY, especially if this is your first time on a machine. Mistakes are easier to fix BEFORE they happen, but if you make a mistake, you can cut the thread and remove it, taking out the seam, so that you can re-sew it correctly. Imagination is the only thing holding you back. You can add a loop of paracord to the flap panel, and a button on the body of the sack to hold it closed if you like. I have done this with some antler, and it came out nicely, but most of the time I leave the flap loose so I can access the inside easily. You can make the main body of the material longer, so as to leave enough fabric for a pocket on the flap, just remember to take this into account when you begin. Most important of all HAVE FUN DOING IT!!! That's what it's all about. The enjoyment of making something for yourself.

I Hope this has helped you to make some gear for yourself, and look for a future article on making a tarp from scratch and waterproofing it at home inexpensively. Until then, thanks for reading!



On-Person Survival Kit

The O.P.K.

By Mike Lychock



Figure 1: The OD green Best Glide Pouch, loaded and sealed. Total weight, 1-pound.

It seems like you can't pick up an outdoor magazine or click on an outdoor website without getting another opinion about what you should or shouldn't carry when venturing out of doors. The emergency kit or "survival kits" run the gamut from small matchbox sized pocket kits to full backpacks. While I personally subscribe to the idea of some kind of back-up emergency equipment, I am a realist in what will actually be carried with the person. Last fall, some friends and I planned to canoe the Moose

River in Maine. Having never been to that area before, we didn't know what to expect. The trip was billed as a wilderness canoe trip with thirty-four miles of river off the beaten path. Though it is one of the most popular canoe trips in the state, we were going at the end of September, a time that some consider to be out of season. There would be no other groups on the water at that time.

With the lack of company on the river, our initially secure group of six able-bodied canoeists, pared down to two by the time the trip date came. Realizing we would be on our own, we brainstormed what type of on person emergency equipment we

Mike Lychock is a retired police officer and trainer. He is a practitioner of outdoor skills and outdoor pursuits. He currently resides in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey.



Figure 2: Contents of pouch from top left: decoy line, whistle and light, fishing gear, PSK knife, compass, butane lighter, mirror, fire starters, water filter straw, ferro rod and striker. Orange Heat Sheet is below pouch.(Note paracord knot and cord lock for securing kit)

should carry in case of a spill in the river where we would be separated from our canoe, our gear, and possibly each other. You can always stuff your pockets with gear or, utilize a pouch or carrier for your redundant, in case of emergency only, never leave your person gear. It would just be more comfortable not to have stuffed pockets when seated in a canoe for hours on end.

Most pouch kits are either too big due to unnecessary equipment or too small due to a lack of the necessary essentials. They are almost always carried in one's gear or pack. Rather than a Personal

Survival Kit (PSK), which can be carried anywhere, this is an On Person Kit (OPK). I was looking for a blend of on person practicality without the bulk. An online search yielded a wonderful little belt pouch made by Best Glide. The Best Glide Personal Survival Kit Holder was designed to hold the ubiquitous Altoid tin kit. I am not a huge fan of the Altoid sized kit; they are modeled after the British military survival tin which is actually quite larger (tobacco tins were originally used). The pouch measures 4.5 x 3.25 in. x 1.12 inch and comes in OD green. The pouch has two pockets, the large is



Figure 3: An inside view of the kit. Water filter straw now wrapped in plastic.

closed with a zipper with two pulls. The front compartment is sealed by the Velcro tabbed flap which covers the heavy nylon pouch. Two small tabs are sewn onto the back as well as a belt slot.

I sent for the Best Glide and upon receipt, was tasked with deciding what to carry. Again, realistically I would need equipment to make a fire, obtain and purify water, provide shelter and signal if necessary. Direction finding with a compact, accurate compass would also be desirable.

Given my worse case scenarios of being dunked into the river without any equipment or somehow being separated from my canoe, I wanted on person gear which could be utilized instantly in the case of hypothermia or injury.

Shelter

I decided on an Adventure Medical Kits, 2 Person Heat Sheets Survival Blanket. Wind proof and waterproof barriers are difficult and labor

intensive to produce with natural materials. Plastic is a wonderful invention and an instant way of retaining body heat and staying dry. It can be wrapped around the body or utilized in a shelter. The large Heat Sheets weighs only 3.5 ounces and measures 60 x 96 inches. Silver on one side and blaze orange on the other, it could be utilized as a ground marker panel, visible from the air. The packaged unit measures less than 3.5 x 5 inches and can be compacted to just over ½ inch thick, perfect for my belt pouch. I have 20 feet of nylon decoy line which is very tough and compact in the pouch as well. The kit is wrapped with about 3 feet of 550 paracord. Both can be used in shelter building and general binding.

Water

Lacking a container or cup for boiling, I opted for an Aquamira Frontier Emergency Water Filter. It's a type of straw in which you draw the



Figure 4: On person gear from the trip: Gossman PSK Jr. neck knife and Brian Goode Bushcrafter with the O.P.K.

water through suction. The filter is good for 20 gallons and is 99.9% effective. Since you can drink directly from the water source the hydration is instant without a wait time like tablets and other treatments. Purification tablets are useless without a container or bottle to hold the water. The filter is compact, measuring 3 3/4 x 7/8 inches and weighs a little over half an ounce.

Signaling

A mil-spec 2x3 inch glass mirror for daytime, sunny conditions and a Photon Micro light with multiple settings for night. A Fox 40 Micro whistle rounded out the signaling group. .

Fire

I am somewhat fanatical when it comes to fire. I packed a 4 inch ferrocerium rod with a shortened carbide sharpener to act as a scraper. (very effective). I also carry a butane lighter with the flame adjustment set high a la Cody Lundin to ensure

a strong flame. Pre-made fire-starters are a must so I packed 4-1/2 inch squares of Diamond Brand Strike-a-Fire which can be ignited by flame or spark and have a long burn time. If making the trip today, I changed my fire-starters to petroleum saturated cotton balls. They take a spark better, can be made at home and burn like crazy. Just use caution when packing petroleum cotton balls as they can stain your gear and clothing if their container leaks.

Food Procurement

For more long-term than short-term emergencies, I had the space for some food gathering supplies. I figured it would be best to include fishing supplies rather than snares or wire. We would probably be close to shore and since it is a river, I put in two types of line (mono and braided), some small hooks and split shot. There is also a #10 scalpel blade in the fishing kit in case a sharp blade was needed.

Navigation

I own a small, brass, Viet Nam era military watchband compass. It is the best compass of its kind that I have ever found. Accurate and durable, I prefer metal compasses to plastic especially in an urgent situation.

That covers my emergency supplies; simple and what I expected to need and use. Of course a folding knife and alternative fire source may have been in a pocket or two. I carried a 4.5 inch fixed blade knife attached to my belt which would be my main cutting tool and hopefully survive a dunking or loss of the canoe and equipment. I also used a neck knife, which I had attached to its kydex sheath a small ferro rod, and capsule with petroleum jelly soaked cotton.

In my constantly evolving process of equipment selection, I have added a small flat skeletal fixed blade knife, the CRKT Ritter RSK MK5. The knife is only 3 ¾ inches long and made to fit into a small tin kit. I switched this knife with Turley PSK which is a solid tough little knife also designed to fit in a kit. I know that there are a lot of opinions and beliefs in what should be carried on person, and we have read several of these personal

preferences in this magazine. This is my opinion of a mission specific kit based on my abilities and this particular trip. I urge you to experiment with adaptable, on person equipment as well.

As you have probably guessed, the trip was pretty uneventful. We didn't see another soul for 3 days. Though not very far from civilization, we were none-the-less separated from roads by miles of swamp and bog. We were also out of mobile phone contact. In case of an emergency, we were on our own. I felt comforted in the fact that we were better prepared because of our foresight, planning and the addition of our on person survival kits.

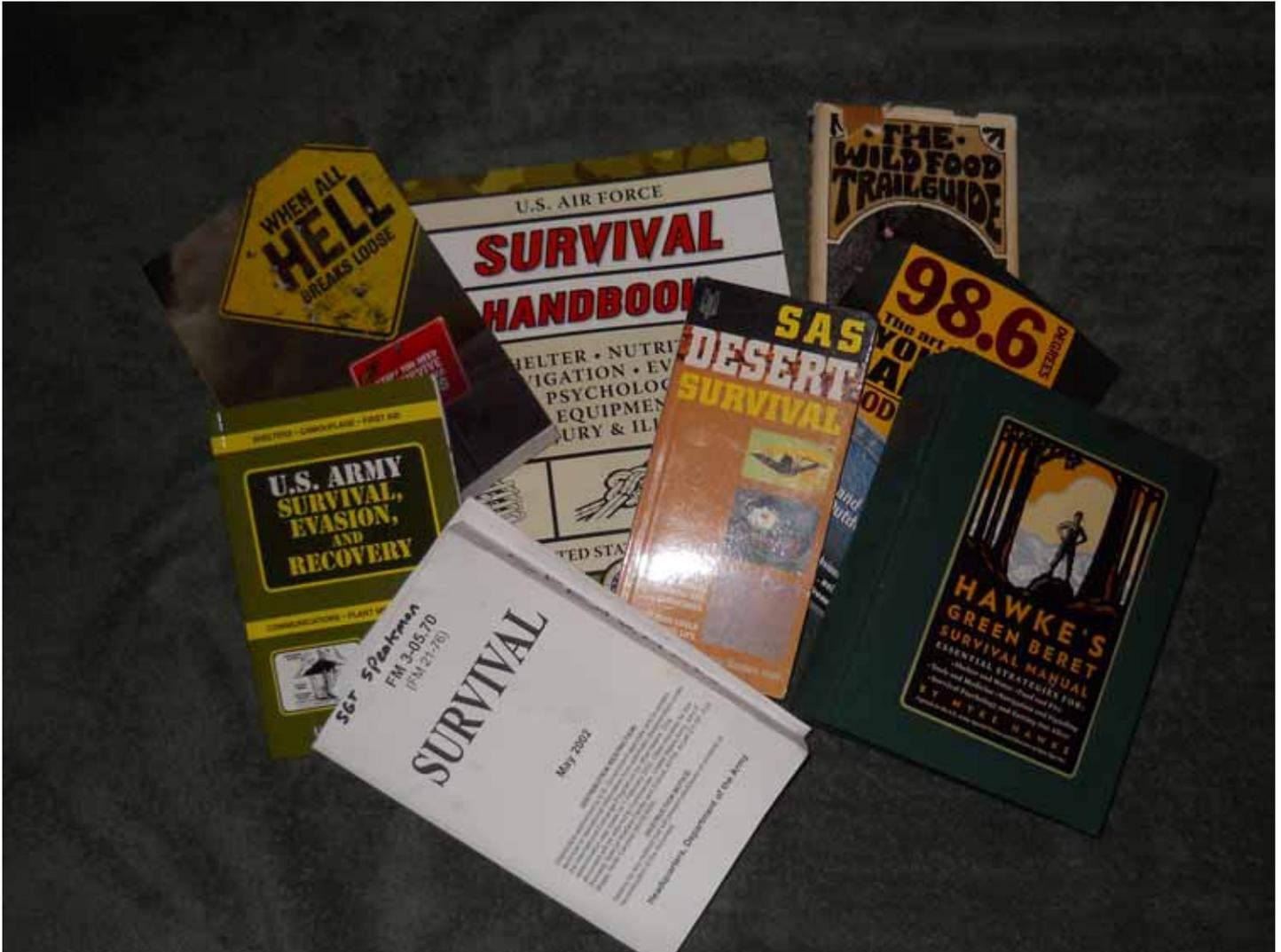
After the positive review of this kit, friends in my outdoor group have embraced the Best Glide Pouch as well and assembled their own belt kits. One friend dubbed his the "immersion kit." Appropriate when immersed into an emergency situation or in the case of our canoe trip, water immersion.



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What's in a book?

By Charles "Sgt." Speakman



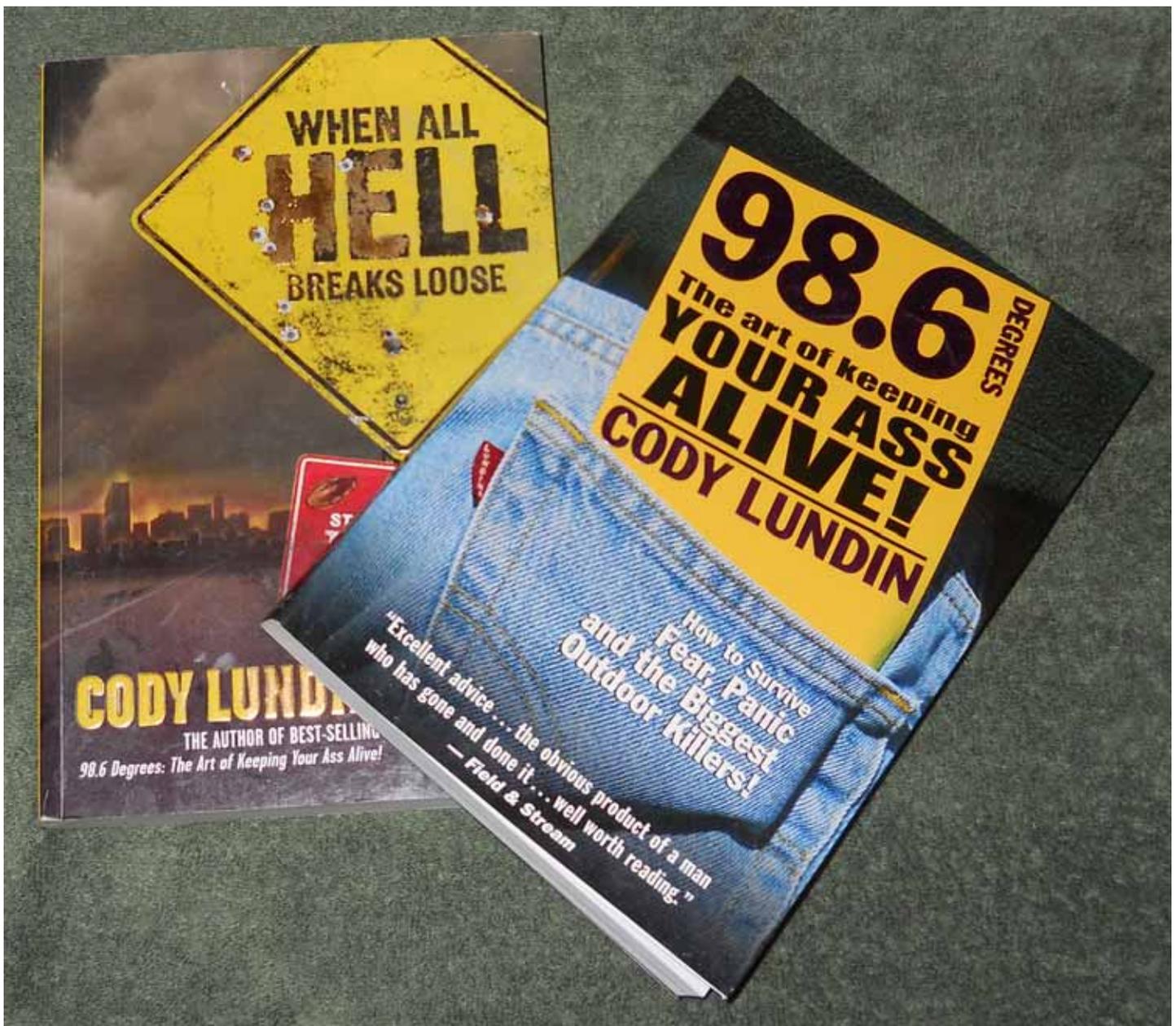
There are numerous types and styles of survival manuals out there. It's important to find the one that fits your needs.

It is a pure fact today that there are a plethora of survival manuals, books and guides and the like out there today. Just go to any major book store and look for the outdoors recreations section and there are shelves upon shelves, and authors upon authors of survival and self reliance related books.. It definitely seems that everybody and anybody in the business today has a book out there on the market. Even I am in the process of writing two survival related books . It by far seems a common trend.

In this article I am not trying to knock or disprove any one author or promote another, nor is this a sales pitch for any of my own works. This article is simply a dissection of the types of books out there. The end state of the article is that you, the reader, have a better understanding of the types of

books out there and can better judge what book may be best for you when you venture to your local book market or click on the internet to order. I will feature a few select books in this article but once again, it is to illustrate the types of authors and content out there. I wish that this article will be a tool in the choices you make and help you purchase a book that's right for you.

Charles "Sgt" Speakman is the president and lead instructor for his survival and primitive skills school Earth Walker Primitive located in south east Pennsylvania. He has over 15 years of military service including multiple tours to Iraq as well as Jungle and arctic survival training. An avid outdoors man he combines his lifelong self learning of the outdoors and military training to teach well rounded long-term survival skills.



The “urban” style of survival manuals are great for the common civilian or for being prepared for urban “off the grid” survival and for situation most common civilians may find themselves in.

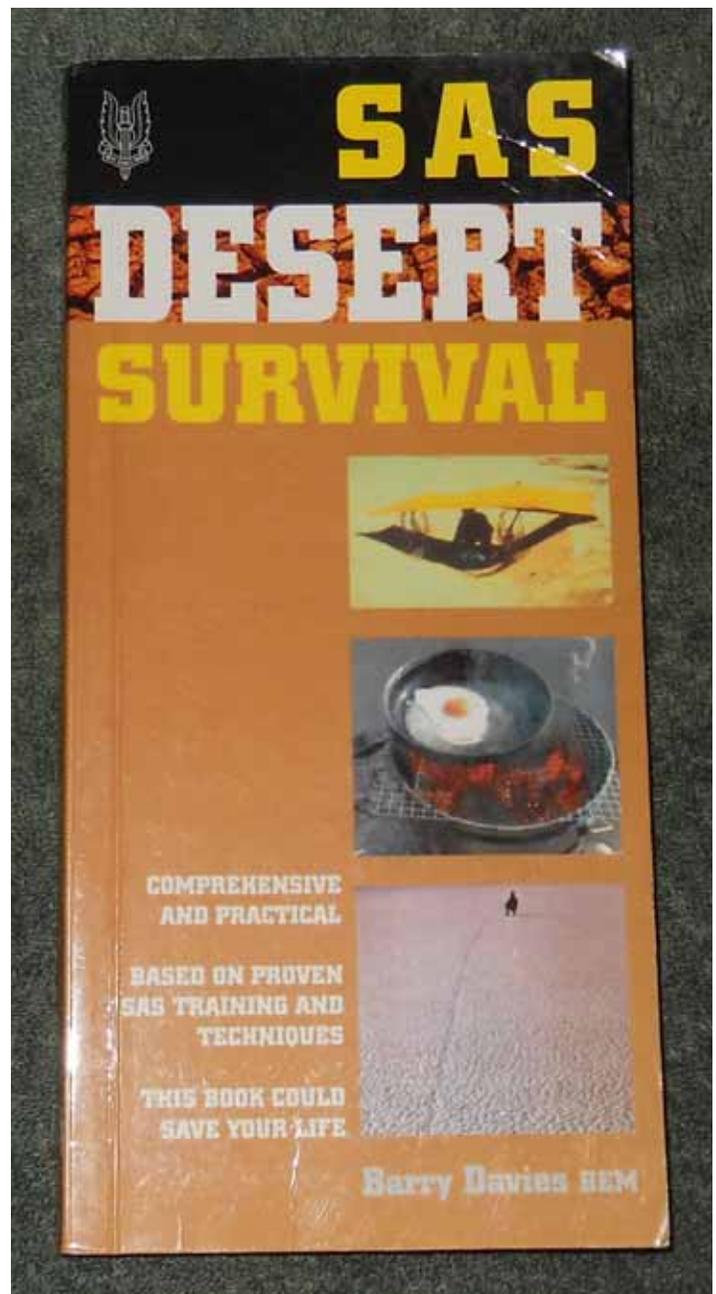
So let’s start out with the question that is the title of the article. “What’s In a Book?” This can be the deciding factor among many others that can help you decide what to buy. Illustrated in Figure 1 is a pile of books. Each is related to survival, self reliance and getting yourself out of trouble and surviving when you are in an emergency situation. Each respectfully covers most topics related to survival. It is not until you look into the book and see what is in each one that you will find your determination as to whether that book is right for you. Because it is best seller, because some famous celebrity or magazine gives it rave reviews or because you heard some famous bush crafter promoted it does not mean it is best for you. I own

and have read cover to cover each of these. They are all great but I can assure you that some do not pertain to me in my environment, and some would not be 100 percent beneficial to you in your environment or for the scope and purpose you wish to use the information. So let’s get into the dissection of the book types.

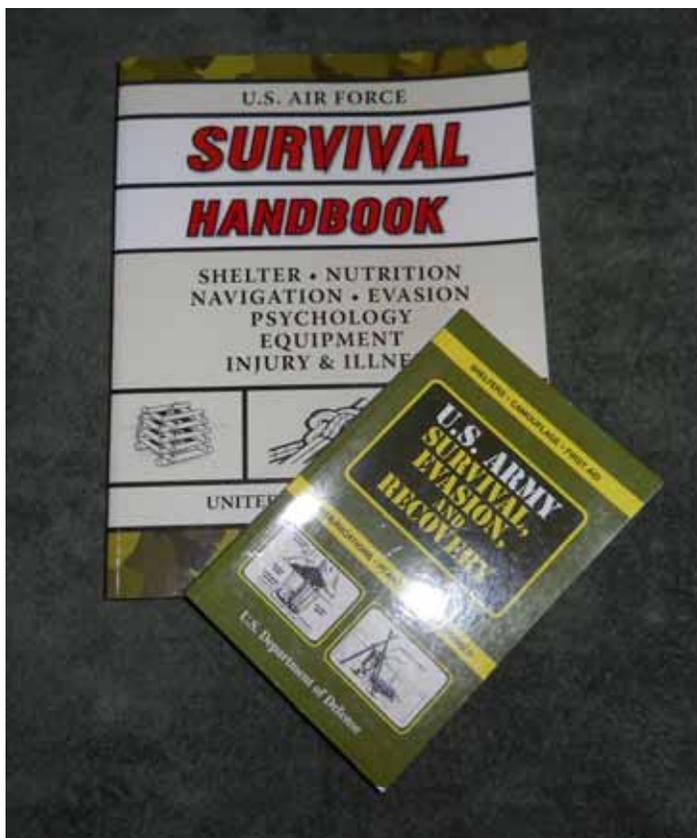
I have broken the books into four types, for the purpose of this article. Those four types are: military, urban, geographical specific and common survival. These types will help me describe a bit better to you the genres of books and where the authors of each book focus their point of view.

First and foremost I will start with the military type of survival manuals. The military manual has

seemed to be the most popular and most commonly available book I have seen on the market. They have been around long before a lot of the civilian marketed books and due to my experiences I have had to deal with them a lot myself. In Figure 2 you can see two examples that are specifically what I am talking about in this portion of the article. Military survival manuals are great in that they do teach and focus on great life saving survival tasks and skills. The only drawback is the focus on the intended readers of the books. Most manuals as is the case with the two in the illustration are focused on pilots and small units that may be lost, captured, shot down or hiding behind enemy lines. Furthermore they focus on short term survival lasting only a short while with the hope of a pending rescue. For example, it teaches a pilot who has been shot down how to tough it out for a time as short as a few hours to as much as a few days that it may take for a rescue crew to reach him. Most of these tasks and skills are from a short term point of view, not from a point of view where one may have to survive and sustain oneself for a long period of time. A lot of the skills and tasks that are covered are also taught with the use of military equipment or what the soldier or airman may have been issued by the military. This

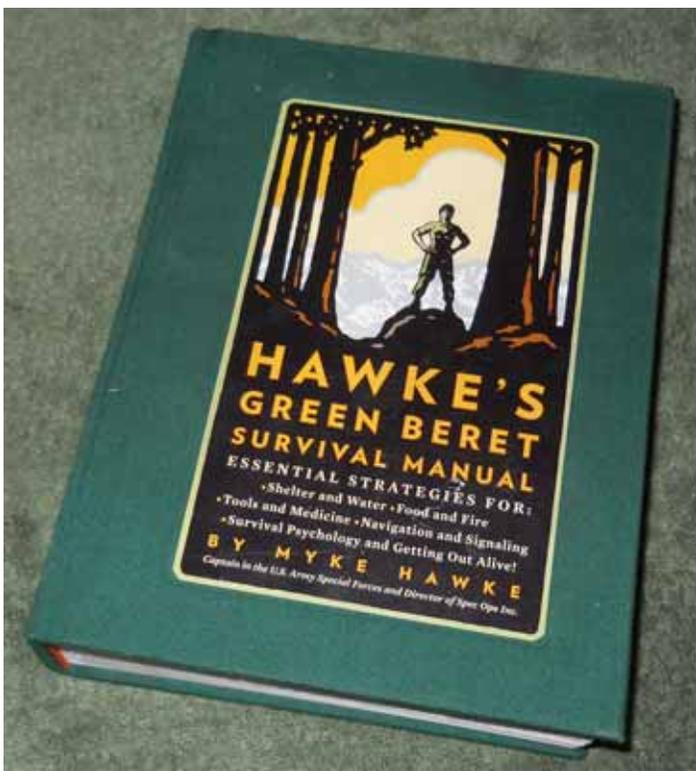


Geographically specific manuals pin point one specific location. They are great to have if you plan on traversing that kind of region but little use anywhere else. Great for being prepared for trips to specific locations.



Military Survival manuals are great but lack in some areas of skills and also have much unneeded extra information not pertaining to the common civilian.

does not pertain to most civilians. Most of these books also deal with an individual being behind enemy lines or in the face of imminent danger or capture. Once again, this is not necessarily what the focus of a survival book for the general populace should focus on. So in a nut shell my outlook on the majority of these military manuals is that they 1. Don't have enough long-term life sustaining skills mentioned and 2. Has a lot of unneeded skills and tasks not useful to or needed by the common civilian in the majority of the situations one would find oneself.



Common survival manual type covers all the bases. A bit on everything for each region and covers all the basic life essential skills. A great source to study and practice from.

Figure 3 illustrates the second type of survival book. I title this group the urban survival books. These books are great for the common civilian in America. The focus on the two Lundin books in the illustration is on keeping your core temperature to a survivable state and how to survive off the grid or when the grid in your locale fails. These types of books and they options they offer are endless., They are great to keep in your home, RV, truck or back pack. They cover the ins and outs of basic survival and how to prepare your home and yourself for long-term survival from the everyday citizen, in a town to one who resides in a rural setting. This type of book is ideal for any common person to have. I have read both of these and they are very practical and common sense oriented.

Geographical specific books, as pictured in Figure 4 have a very small focus. The book pictured is a very well written book by the British SAS, however, it covers specifically one environment, the desert. There are many like this for many specific environs. It is simply not necessary if you never have found or will find yourself in that type of environment. One benefit of these books however, is where most full scope books only cover briefly each type of environ, these contain full lessons on specific geographical regions. So if you plan on

taking that tourist trip to the Sahara, then they would be a great purchase and a valuable source of information. .

The final book type I wish to talk about is in Figure 5. These are the common survival types. These books cover all scopes of survival and geographic regions. The specific book pictures, although written by a U.S. Army officer, have been broken down for civilian feasibility and is in no way a military manual. This particular author has actually made a very funny, easy to read instructional book covering all aspects of survival in both short term and long-term scenarios as well as that of a hostile environment.. A book like this is ideal for you to have on your shelf or in your pack.

A good common survival book that also has a specific location you are in make a great combination . Throw in a wild edibles book and you are set. With all this there is one more important thing about survival books I wish to discuss. Even more important than the type of book you buy.

Once again I ask you to ask yourself: What Is In a book? The answer should be simple; Skills, techniques and ideas. A book is only as good as a paper weight if it is not read, and the ideas are not learned or practiced. Don't be like many people who toss a book in their pack and think they are good to go and find themselves struggling with cold shaky frozen hands trying to read how to start a fire in a blizzard. The value of a book is increased when you read it and learn its contents and skills beforehand. You are smart to buy a book, but even smarter to read it and practice the skills in the comfort of your home and back yard or personal space. This will assure you the skills you've read and learned about will work when you do need them. Then the purchase of your book will come full circle and the true value of the book will have paid off.

Don't get stuck out in the wild with a paper weight. Take this article and use it to decide what is the best book for you.. Then, dive into it, read it from cover to cover and get out and practice what it has taught you. This will ensure your success. Like the saying we have in the army, "the more we sweat in training the less we bleed in combat." This holds in survival as well. Make your purchase worth much more than you paid for it. So, what is in your book?





ASK PAYGE
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Deep Sea Fishing
...You name it and she has done it!

Q: What are my options for a chemical-free mosquito repellent? – Cindy, CA

The CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) recommends oil of lemon eucalyptus as an alternative to DEET. This natural oil, which comes from the lemon eucalyptus tree, has proven in clinical studies to be an effective natural mosquito repellent. It lasts up to eight hours and is comparable with repellent containing 25% DEET. It is not recommended for children under three years of age.

If you want a toddler and baby friendly natural repellent, try using soy-based Bite Blocker for Kids. It contains all natural ingredients including soy-beans as well as geranium and coconut oils. It lasts up to three hours and is comparable with repellent containing 10% DEET.

Q: Besides an overhand knot, what knots are most useful? – Charles, PA

There are over 4,000 recorded knots and a plethora of uses for each one. Activities including sailing, rock climbing, fishing, and search and rescue all have their favorites. If I had to pick two knots to know:

- **Bowline:** Known as the ‘King of Knots’, it is a

Do you have a question for Payge? Send it to payge@turnthepayge.com

Payge McMahon is an adventure athlete, world traveler, writer, fitness coach and popular web personality with sponsors and fans worldwide. She is the ‘country girl-next door’ from Pennsylvania, with five older brothers and only a few generations removed from being Amish! You can follow her adventures at www.turnthepayge.com

simple knot used to form a fixed loop at the end of a rope. It is commonly used to tie a rope to a fixed point. It does not slip and no matter how tight the knot, it can almost always be loosened or untied when needed.

It’s uses include: Tying a boat to a dock, wrap around a victim to haul out of a hole, climbers use it to tie into their harness and for anchoring rope to a fixed point, i.e. trees.

- **Double Fisherman’s Knot:** Consists of two-doubled overhand knots each tied around the standing part of the other. Most commonly used to tie two lines of ropes together. The length of combined rope can be adjusted.

It’s uses include: Tying fishing line to hook, in rock climbing and mountaineering, it is a common back-up knot used after securing a rope into a harness with a Bow Line or Figure-Eight knot. Canoeist and kayakers use it to secure rope ‘grab handles’ to their boat.

- **Knots Rule of Thumb:** A knot will reduce the strength of the rope by 50%.

Q: When backpacking, what do you bring to make fire? – Bill, IN

I am a firm believer in the military saying; “one is none and two is one.” You should always have a minimum of two ways to make fire. I also believe in multifunctional items. That being said, I bring a Bic lighter, knife with ferro rod, waterproof matches and Chap Stick. If I break the lighter, I have the matches. If I lose the matches, I have my ferro rod and knife. As for the Chapstick, it is a great

lip moisturizer and makes an excellent accelerant!

Q: How can I avoid getting struck by lightning when out in the wilderness? – Tom, OH

- If you are on a mountain, get to a lower elevation as quickly as possible.
- A wide open field is the best scenario when out in the wilderness.
- Get away from any conductors; i.e. boulders, caves, large rocks etc.
- Avoid big, tall trees. When struck, liquid inside the bark and trunk will instantly turn into gas and cause a grenade like explosion. If a limb or the whole tree doesn't fall on you, projectiles from the explosion can kill you. If that wasn't enough, lightning will travel through the tree and down

through its roots. If you are standing on or near these roots, you can still be lethally shocked.

- Get rid of any metal in your possession like trekking poles, earrings, iPod, cell phones, keys, knives etc. Place them in a secure area 100 yards away and retrieve them when storm is over.
- If you are in a group, disperse yourself so that you are not acting as one big target.
- Get down low to the ground, but do NOT lie on the ground. Make yourself as small as possible by squatting on your toes, with arms wrapped around your shins. If you are camping, put something non-conductive between you and the ground when holding this position, i.e. your sleeping mat.



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Pathfinder Youth Organization

How much good can we do?

By William Sigler

In the last issue I tried to give you an insight into the PYO by asking you WHY. The questions were supposed get you thinking along the lines that may bring you to some of the same answers I got. This time around I will try to explore my thinking a little better.

I promise to try very hard to not get this introspective again.

Is the world truly going to “Heck in a hand basket” or are we still trying to gain the wisdom that is required to allow us to survive the “Technological Adolescence” that we find ourselves caught up in? Where in the history of this world has there been as much change affecting the way we live as there has been the last 200+ years. Nowhere, you say? So what does it matter where we find ourselves technologically? We have made great advances that have enabled us to extend our lives, communicate across the globe within milliseconds, and reach far out into our small corner of the Milky Way with an eye towards adventure and learning. Why is that a problem, why should we be concerned? Progress is good, isn't it?

For the question of why “Pass on the Tribal Knowledge”? There is an old Japanese proverb that reads, “Knowledge without wisdom is just a load of books on a fools' back”. We pass on the Tribal Knowledge so that our children and grandchildren will have the advantage of their ancestor's wisdom to help guide them. You may get knowledge from reading a book, but you gain wisdom from what you know in your heart and what you absorb into your soul. Tribal Knowledge is wisdom, Tribal Knowledge is experience, Tribal Knowledge is the result of all of our ancestor's successes and failures, and most of all Tribal Knowledge is our hope for the future. This is not as Zen-like as it sounds; it simply means that raw knowledge is not the be-all and end-all of our future. A smart man knows how to make a firecracker; a wise man knows not to set it off in a room full of gasoline. If we are smart we will seek to pass on ALL of our knowledge, experience, and

wisdom to the next generation.

Why teach “Wilderness Self-reliance”? Here we get a “Two for one Special”. Can you really think of any child that is interested in learning Wilderness Self Reliance (and the skills necessary for it) that will not become more self-confident and open to learning? Our responsibility here is to teach them how to join this powerful knowledge with the wisdom gained by our ancestors, parents, and role models. Because if we don't, their peers and the present day media will be Johnny-On-The-Spot filling them with all of the wisdom and understanding that today's society has to offer.

Why teach the next generation to respect nature and to use its resources wisely? For most of us this is a no brainer, but I will put my two cents in. We are living in an ever increasingly ME-ME-ME society. In today's' modern society we want more, we want it quicker, and we don't seem to care too much about tomorrow. Please understand that this is not a new attitude. It has become MUCH more of a problem lately because of how much smaller our planet has become. Within our lifetime we have developed the ability to destroy this planet virtually forever. Is this where we have been destined to end up? The good news is we haven't done it yet. Our best hope is that this may be an example of someone using the wisdom that they have learned, and if I am not mistaken our leaders did not figure all of this out on their own. They MAY have gained wisdom from what they were taught. Maybe we can get a “Two for one Special” here also. “MAYBE” if our children and grandchildren learn a greater respect for nature and its' resources then they can pass that wisdom on to their “Next Generation”. Maybe we

William Sigler is 52 years old and has been a resident of Western Pennsylvania his entire life. He is part of the Pathfinder Youth Organization family and has been named as the President of the soon to be formed National Pathfinder Youth Organization. He is a certified commercial and public safety diver, and is also a student of Bushcraft and Wilderness Self Reliance.





technology increases we need greater resources per person to live our everyday lives. If we don't show respect for this planet we will continue to abuse its resources like we are at an endless all-you-can-eat buffet. If it is truly "All about ME" why should we care about "Ma Nature" or the next generation? I truly think that it all goes back to respect and wisdom. The good news is that we as students of wilderness self-reliance are not alone in caring about nature. The better news is that being able to provide the most needed resource, ENERGY, can come from more reliable and less harmful sources as technology improves. The BEST news is that there is a growing number of people with differing viewpoints that realize that it is NOT an endless buffet. But the down side is that man (like water) will tend to take the easiest path. The path of least resistance, which means that the easy way out, is to go back to the buffet for some more. It is my most sincere hope that technology will help us to regain the respect for "Ma Nature" that we have lost by taking the easiest path.

Is it worth the time and effort of so many if it helps to change the life of ONE child, or to keep that child safe in the wilderness? I say ask a parent if all of this effort is worth it. This Global Village that we find ourselves in allows us to utilize the most abundant resource on this planet, ourselves. Once you find your way out of the "It's all about ME" world you will begin to see that by helping the next generation you can affect them and those who follow just by helping ONE child. It all starts with ONE! We don't have to try and change the whole world; we only need to start with ONE child. A good part about this global village is that you do not have to be a parent to help a child. How many organizations do you know of that are dedicated strictly to passing on the wisdom and experience that we gain during our study of wilderness self-reliance to the next generation? It is a sign of the times that I can only think of one, the PYO. In retrospect I think that all of the above reasons are why I jumped at the chance to join the PYO. The combination of having caught the wilderness self-reliance bug along with having the opportunity to volunteer with such a unique organization was irresistible. The question you have to ask yourself is "Can I put forth all of this effort without a guarantee of nothing more than maybe a thank-you"? If you can't answer yes before finishing the question then your answer for this question is NO. Our responsibilities as parents and our self-imposed responsibilities as mentors cause us to think

will find ourselves living in less of a ME oriented society, and best of all "Maybe" we will be able to understand that RESPECT is something that we receive by giving it away. Lofty goals you say? "WHY" is my answer! Respect is a self-perpetuating concept.

Is it worth fighting a battle to show the next generation that not every problem can be solved by technology? Look at it this way, there are tremendous advantages that have been gained by technology but if we depend first on someone or something else to solve all of our problems the wisdom we have gained will be held by only a select few. Hmmm... This could work if these "Select Few" are constantly working to make everyone's lives better. In my opinion I don't see that happening in the society I live in. If they do what we expect of them we wouldn't have to worry, would we. If the way we are going doesn't work it will likely have the effect of people expecting more and more to be done for them and we will become less self-reliant. Sort of like what we see today.

Is it worth the time and effort of so many to pass on our love for "Ma Nature"? It seems that as

differently from the main stream.

There will always be more questions for us to ponder but there are more fun things to do and there will always be more interesting things to learn. These skills seem to have come naturally to first nation's peoples, but that is because they were immersed in them. Passing on the knowledge and wisdom of the past was a way of life for them. By us trying to learn these skills and by trying to pass them on we are setting ourselves apart from the mainstream of today's society. But one of the great advantages of today's technology is that even we few can reach out across the world for help and have a friend that we have never met give us just what we need without them expecting anything more than a simple "Thank You".

The people that think that technology is evil because it seems to be destroying our past wisdom and killing out planet don't seem to understand that technology is not the problem. Technology can be used as a tool or as a weapon. We can use it as a weapon to destroy ourselves quicker or we can use it as a tool to improve our future. We are an anachronism for trying to learn skills that have been around for thousands of years by using much of the same technology that have made those skills obsolete. This is a perfect example of how the proper use of a tool can be a great benefit. Our extended on-line family would not exist if it weren't for technology. This global village makes us a global brotherhood. It makes it easy to reach out to the rest of our family for help, to share and develop ideas, and for support. Today someone from across the globe can spur an idea, help you to understand something new, or can help you learn a better way to do something as simple as tie your boot. The great challenge is our children and ours. That challenge is to find the wisdom to use these tools properly.

I don't see us as trying to take everyone back in time. I see us as trying to keep alive past wisdom while using the tools available in an age of technology. Just remember the majority of us are practicing Wilderness Self Reliance today so that we can pass it on to the children of tomorrow. If we aren't committed to doing it right, what is the point of trying at all?

Ok, enough of the peering into our navels with Zen-like ponderings. Let's do something fun! Let's get out there to learn a new skill and then help the next generation to learn it.

Be Safe,
Bill



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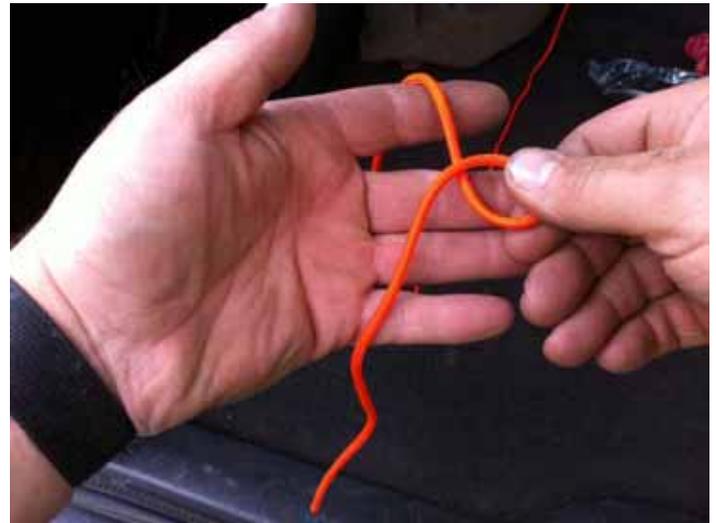
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Knots

The Bowline

The Bowline is one of those top 6 knots you should know. As I mentioned in the last issue, I use the Bowline as the secure loop for when I start the ridge line and my Trucker's Hitch rigging. This knot was mentioned in "The Sea-man's Dictionary in 1644 and first illustrated in "Elements and Practice of Rigging and Seamanship" in 1794. Now, not for a long time has this been used as a 'bow line knot' used to hold the weather leech of a square sail forward, closer to the wind. This was to keep it from being pulled back. Some variations of this are the double bowline, triple bowline, and bowline in a bight. I'll show you a couple of these at the end of this article.



“Take a bight out of the working end, think turn on the ignition in a car.”



“Now take the working end and put it through the loop from the bottom.”



“Take the cord in your left hand, standing end up, working end down.”

Scott Wickham Jr. is an apprentice knifemaker at Blind Horse Knives. In addition to knifemaking he has been writing for ten years now and has had a love for the outdoors since a young age. Scott is also the co-founder of the Fort Pitt Land Rover Group and when he is not making knives or writing can be found in his Land Rover.



outside the big loop if you think it might get in the way of what you are working with.”



“Pass the working end around the back of the standing end.”

“Make a bight in the working end as before, pass it up through the bottom of the loop but instead of going behind the standing end, go in front of it.”



“Take it down through the loop you made and into the big circle.”

“Now go around the back of the standing end.”

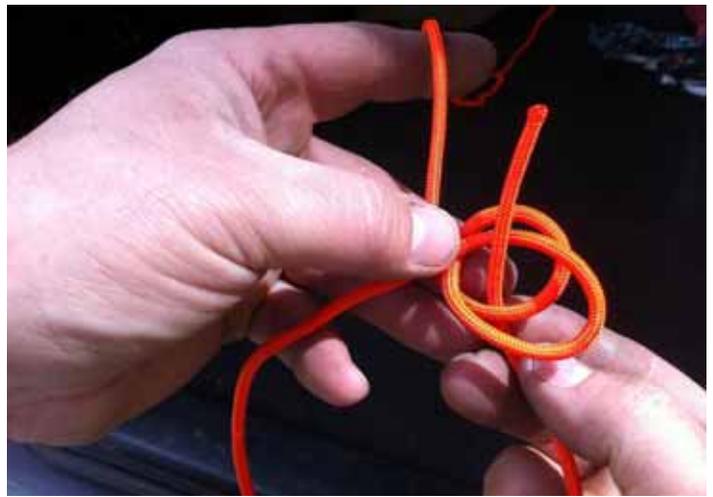


“Here it is tight. Notice the tag end is inside the big loop. You can also tie it with the tag end”

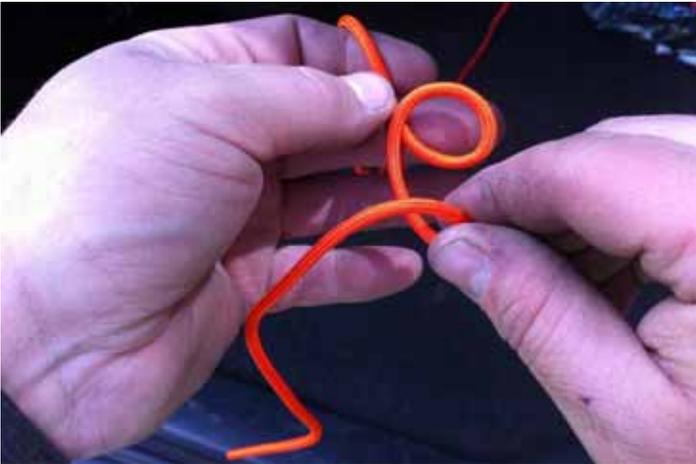
“Down through the bight and pull tight.”



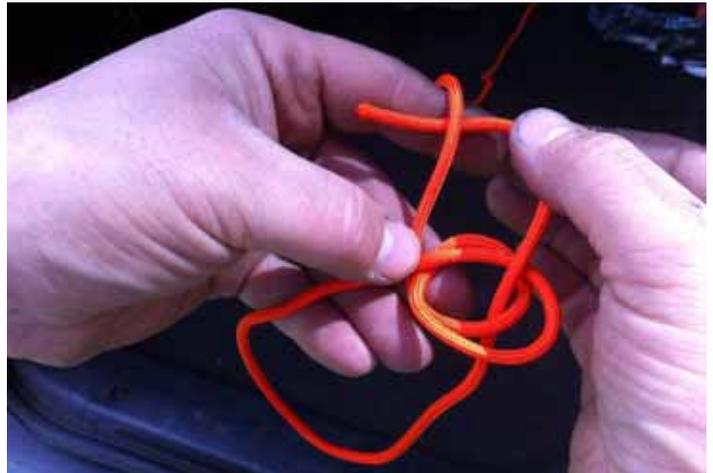
“Here it is tight. Compare this to the other pic with the tag end inside to this one and you’ll see how easy it is to tie this variation.”



“Make your big loop and pull the working end up through the bottom as you did in the single bowline. You can either go around the back of the standing end and the tag line will be inside the big loop or in front, then behind the standing end. The tag end will be outside the loop.”



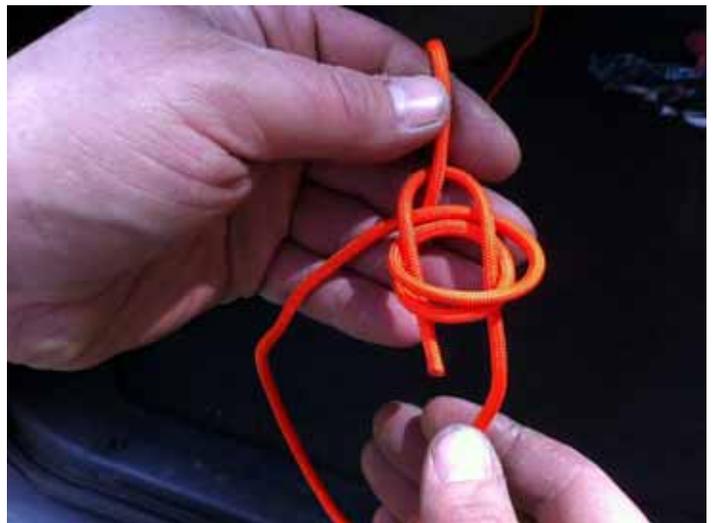
“This is how you’d tie a double bowline. If the knot will be in rough use or you just want to make sure, no matter what, it will stay tied, use the double bowline. At the beginning of the knot, instead of taking a bight in the working end, take two as below.”



“I chose to go behind the standing line here.”



“Here are the two loops



“Go around the standing end and back down

through the loops.”



“Here it is tight. You’ll have to pull the 2 pieces on your right to tighten the knot. You’ll see.”



“This is the back. You can see it looks nice and uniform on the back as on the front.”



“The bowline on a bight is used as an

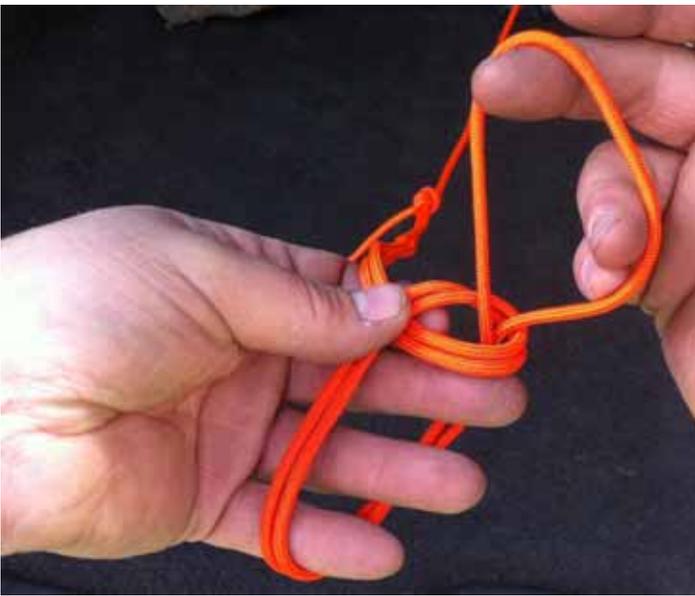
emergency rope seat for rescue. Once tied, you put a leg through each loop and hold the standing end in your hands on your chest. It is tied in the middle of a rope so, imagine the rest of the cord above my index finger is the rest of the rope and I have pulled a long bight in the middle.”



“So, first you do the old turn on the ignition trick.”



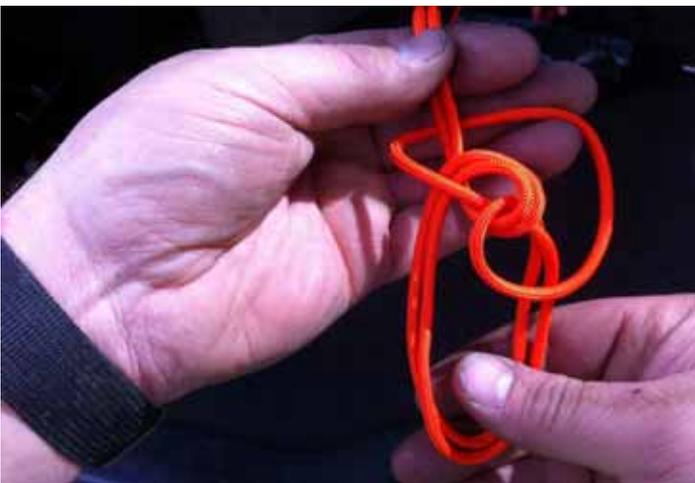
“Make your bight, a big loop, and come up through the loop as a normal bowline.”



“The loop you just pulled through the bight, open it up big...”



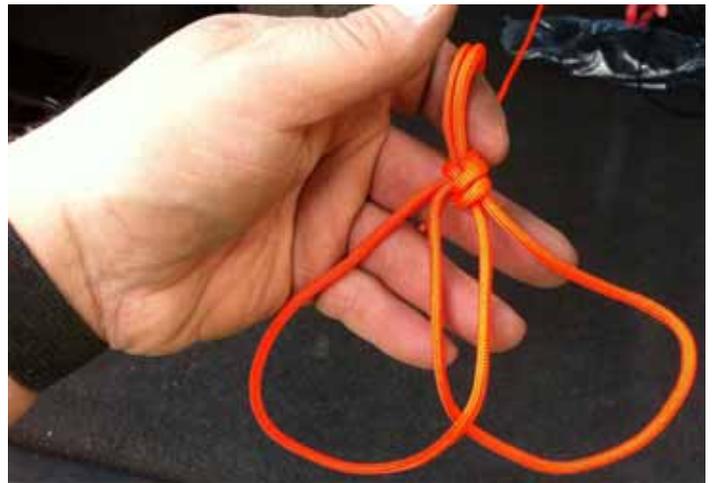
“...and take it under the whole mess.”



“now pull it up around the back and you will start to tighten it up.”



“Here it is tight. Again, quite uniform and smooth.”



“Here are the two loops separated, one for each leg.”



“Our hero police/ninja guy is now ready to be rescued using the bowline on a bight knot. Thanks folks. Next month: The Sheet bend.”



What's New at Blind Horse Knives

By Scott Wickham Jr.



What's happening at BHK this issue? I decided to focus on the machinery we use here at the Steubenville shop. It's really just basic tools used, no CNC machines and nothing using a laser. We have 4 drill presses, 2 disc grinders, 2 belt grinders, 4 buffers, 2 polishing wheels, and a slow slack belt machine. There's stuff for doing Kydex but that is just a toaster oven, a vice, a small belt sander, a router and some foam lined boards.



The main machines used are the two big belt grinders. One is set up for LT, it's got a lift kit, one is set up for regular folks. These machines run a 2X72 belt which can be had in numerous grits for steel or non steel applications. We even have blue





and red Scotch-Brite belts for doing a certain finish. They can be run flat and you grind on the front wheel, you can tilt it and use the vertical slack belt for finish work, or remove the front wheel and use different attachments for grinding different styles of knives. We have an adjustable wheel for doing hollow grinds, and a flat platen for doing flat ground and Scandi knives. Full convex is done completely by hand. Just like any piece of machinery you use daily, you get to know the nuances of how it works and what it wants to do. You have to show it who's boss but also respect the fact it can do serious harm to you if you are not paying attention! You can use these machines to just about make a whole knife. Square up a blank, grind in the hollow, profile the knife once the scales are attached, add different finishes or looks to that steel, and sharpen the finished product. It's quite versatile.

But, all that adjustability comes at a price: you really have to pay attention to what setup works well for what application to become consistent. You don't want 50 knives all looking different. That's where the artistry comes in. Can you make that

machine do exactly what you want it to day in and day out? If you're building one-off knives every time, no big deal. If you are building 50 like pieces, you better get them as close as possible to each other. No matter how hard you try, each knife IS hand made and will look slightly different than the next. That's part of the beauty though too, no two will ever be exactly the same.

The next most used machines are probably the buffers. These are what we use to put the final polish and shine on the scales. Depending on the grit of compound used, we can also remove fine scratches with the buffers. There are a multitude of designs on these as well. The way the cloth is sewn together to make the buffing wheel has a big impact on how stiff that wheel is and what you can do with it. Mainly either spiral sewn or circular sewn seems to be the majority. Some are very stiff, some are very soft and this is slightly adjustable with the speed of the buffer and the compound used. A fast machine will remove more material than a slow one, and different compound will really remove material. You have to watch the heat generated with the buffer too, you don't want to shrink the maple scales you just labored profiling with too much heat from the buffer. The buffer is also one of the most dangerous machines in the shop. In the blink of an eye, that wheel will grab the knife and whip it right out of your hand. At the very least, it'll hit the ground and just require more buffing. At the worse, you were touching up an already sharp knife and it throws it into your leg. Ouch. You really have to set your feet right, brace the knife against your body, and hold on.

The drill presses and band saws do yeoman's duties. We have one band saw for cutting steel and G-10 scales material, and one for cutting softer things like elk, stag, maple, Micarta, and Kydex.





Our new-to-us Rockwell/Delta band saw is much faster than cutting the soft stuff on the metal cutting band saw and a real time saver. One great thing about bigger industrial equipment like this is it usually has lots of life left in it when purchased used. This one is no exception, she's built tough. The little metal cutting band saw is where we cut out steel blanks for custom knives that people have sent in drawings for. It also cuts our bulk purchased brass pins and lanyard tubes for some of the knives. It moves a bit slower than the wood cutting saw but she'll still bite you if you're not careful. Another machine we use everyday but never think about is the vacuum system. There is a main unit that collects all the dust we generate and duct work running all through the shop to each machine for collection. We can open and close each one independently depending on who is working where at the time.

Other than some small hand tools, cordless drill, screw drivers, punches, scrapers, etc. that's about it for the knife making tools. It's really not that

complex tool wise, it really is a matter of who is operating the tool. There isn't much here that is, "stand in front of the machine and mindlessly press the start button every 5 minutes to make knives". It all requires concentration, attention to detail, a good eye, and being a bit of an artist/craftsman. We use things like FaceBook, web sites, virtual knife shows, iPhones and computers every day to help the business along but none of that would have any use if it wasn't for old school tools and craftsmen behind them making the knives. Yes, there are STILL jobs out there for skilled craftsmen in a small business environment. Anyone who has ever purchased one of our knives, I thank you for letting me do what I love to do every day: getting my hands dirty making useful tools.



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