
What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by Hillacious - 2007/09/21 16:51

Why would anyone want to trudge up and down mountains or sit for hours glassing a ridge? And what's the thrill in trying to kill an animal anyway? These questions have probably been hurled your way a time or two. My response usually didn't supply any logical explanation at first. So I thought more about it...as I was trudging up a steep slope. Everyone has there own reasons. Why someone hunts is a personal matter. Many do it to spend time outdoors with friends or family. Others hunt to continue a tradition passed down from their parents and grandparents. Some go for the satisfaction of providing their own meat or the challenge of outwitting a wild animal. Many hunt simply because they feel an urge to do so. As environmentalist and hunter Aldo Leopold put it, "The instinct that finds delight in the sight and pursuit of game is bred into the very fiber of the race."

It's hard to generalize what hunters are doing when they go out each fall. But it's possible to explain what hunters are not doing, and to shed light on some aspects of hunting that might puzzle those who don't participate. Are there misconceptions out there? Absolutely.

Over the course of the next week, I'll be listing some of the misconceptions about hunting that I've heard.

In the meantime, what do you think are the big myths about hunting that drive people to hate what we do?

Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by Doogins - 2007/09/21 22:49

I've heard people over the years say that there's no need to kill animals for meat when it can be bought in a grocery store. These guys obviously don't understand how food happens. Whether someone eats venison or beef, a mammal has to die first. The animal doesn't care whether you pay someone else to kill it (butcher) or you do it yourself. I agree though with what Hillacious said about hunting being a personal thing. For me, finding the solitude and peace that the outdoors provide along with the challenge of pursuing big game is the reason for my sanity. I'd like to ask those pencil pushers, who are the ones who have all the negative things to say, one question...What's the cheapest meat that you can buy in a store? Yep, that's right, deer balls. Why deer balls...because they're under a buck. :woohoo:

Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by 300 Rem. - 2007/09/22 05:59

Well first things first. Doogins that joke about Deer Balls was some funny stuff. I hunt for the simple fact that it is a tradition and way of life in my family. As my Grandfather showed my father, iam teaching my son. The most memorable times i have had with my Father was when we were in the field hunting. And these are the same thoughts and memories iam striving to have with my children and hopefully their children. So in closing the true appeal to hunting for me is the quality time i get with my family and the solitude i get to experience in the wilderness. And please everyone take a kid hunting, If we are to ever build a positive view about hunting we need to start planning for the future and not the present.

Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by Baduski - 2007/09/24 14:30

After putting some thought into what you wrote Hillacious, I think some of the misconceptions about hunting can be caused by hunters themselves. I was in a sporting goods store one day and a lady came in to talk to the clerk behind the counter. I overheard their conversation which started out by her asking the best way to get rid of some deer that have been coming into her yard at night and feeding off her garden and trees.

Instead of the clerk coming up with some respectful answer he says something like, "Just give me the say so and I'll pop those little suckers off as they cross your property with my 270".

After the lady said I don't want to hurt them I just don't want them messing up my garden anymore he asked if there were any bucks in the group.

Anyway this went on for a couple more minutes until she finally walked out frustrated having just had a negative experience about hunting.

I mean it's things like this that some hunters do that help to fuel the fire of those who oppose hunting. In this case the woman probably left with the idea that hunters are trigger happy and just want an excuse to shoot anything in sight.

Anyway, just my thoughts...

Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by Hillacious - 2007/09/25 14:32

I agree that sometimes a hunter's worst enemy is themselves. But I really think that's an exception to the rule. I think most hunters are responsible sportsmen.

As I started this topic I mentioned that I'd be including some of the misconceptions that I've heard but I've also included ways a hunter can refute the statements when they're brought up.

Misconception #1: Hunters are being cruel to wild animals.

My Thoughts: Most wild animals don't pass away in comfort, sedated by veterinary medicine. They usually die a violent, agonizing death. True, a hunter's bullet or arrow can cause a wild animal pain and trauma, such a death is no worse than the other ways wildlife perish. A deer not shot eventually will be killed by exposure, starvation, predator, or even a car. An old, weakened elk doesn't die in its sleep. It gets caught by a wolf, coyote, or other predators and eaten. Of course, hunters don't do individual wild animals any favors by killing them, but they also don't do anything unnaturally cruel.

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Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by Hillacious - 2007/09/27 14:56

I remember hearing this misconception about hunting on a cable news show not too long ago and afterwards, I researched some of its claims.

Misconception #2: Huntering is dangerous, and many of those who do it are inept, inconsiderate, or trigger happy.

My Thoughts: Hunting would seem more prone to accidents and fatalities than outdoor activities that don't use firearms. Not so. The National Safety Council's most recent statistics show that roughly 100 people die nationwide in hunting accidents each year. While any hunting related death is unfortunate, that number pales in comparison to the more than 1,500 who die annually in swimming-related incidents.

Just as they handle their gun cautiously, so do most hunters strive to kill game as cleanly as possible. Hunters practice their marksmanship, study wildlife behavior, and take pains to follow a wounded animal to ensure any suffering ends quickly.

Most hunters obey the law and act ethically. To nab wrongdoers, hunters themselves have created programs where they can turn in poachers. In Minnesota this program is called Turn in Poachers (a lot of thought obviously went into that name). These organizations are nonprofit and offer rewards for info leading to the arrest of game law violators.

Any activity or sport has bad apples. But the majority of hunters are respectful, educated, and conduct themselves with safety being the highest priority.

Anyone out there have thoughts as to why hunting has such a low fatality rate and is proven to be one of the safest activities you can involve yourself in???

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Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by #12 - 2007/09/28 15:14

One reason in my opinion why hunting is one of the safest sports you can be involved in is that most states require young hunters to pass a firearms safety course. States usually have thousands of volunteer instructors each year give firearms safety training. In fact in Utah alone I'll bet 15,000-20,000 young hunters take these courses each year.

On another note, I think this topic started by Hillacious is an important one. I appreciate that along with the myths and misconceptions that non-hunters have about hunting, you've included definitive proof backed by stats and research to refute what those people are saying. It's helped put things in perspective for me and I look forward to reading the rest of your list...

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Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by Sherpa - 2007/10/03 14:38

I agree #12. Having training for young hunters that focus on handling firearms safely, ethics, laws, and regulations are the cornerstone for the safety of our sport. I would also add that a young hunter's dad doesn't hand his kid a gun, give

him a pat on the butt and say, "Go get em Johnny". Father's, grandfathers, and uncles are usually flanking him on all sides giving pointers, sharing experiences and doing many things that continue with the learning process where Hunter's Safety leaves off.

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Re:What's So Appealing About Hunting Anyway?

Posted by Hillacious - 2007/10/03 15:09

Sherpa and #12 hit the nail on the head. The combination of hunter's safety and the guidance of fathers set the tone for a lifetime of safe, enjoyable experiences.

In recap, the misconceptions or things people perceive about our sport that I've found are #1: Hunters are being cruel to wild animals. #2: Hunters are dangerous, inept, inconsiderate or trigger happy.

This third thing I've come across a lot throughout my life and has been said repeatedly by one of my best friends. I don't buy it, and here's why...

Misconception #3: Hunters harm wildlife populations by unnaturally killing them.

Think about what hunters do simply out of the self-interest they have for the sport. They support state and federal conservation agencies which limit seasons to just a few weeks or months a year, limit the number of animals they kill, and place restrictions on killing females of some species. These regulations that hunters support help ensure that wildlife populations stay healthy. Also, they make the pursuit of game more difficult, requiring hunters to use their wits, patience, and hunting skills. Just my thoughts...

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