

Northwestern Ontario

FREE

Outdoors



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE



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Early Season Goose Hunting

Early season success for honkers depends on careful scouting



By Landan Brochu, NOSA Member

During late summer in North-western Ontario, night seems to fall upon the land at an earlier un-invited time. To some, this may create concern as it signals the end to warm weather and summer activities. However, to an outdoorsman the seasonal change can kick off feelings of excitement and opportunity due to the dawning of open hunting seasons.

One of the earliest hunting opportunities to prepare for is the Canada Goose season. Opening day is a brisk September 1st, and purchasing a Federal migratory bird license can unveil one of the most exciting and fast paced hunts you'll ever experience. Every year I look forward to laying in my blind while watching a cool September sunrise. Feeling the excitement build as the seasons first geese cackles approach my set of decoys, is truly a thrill.

The first steps to goose hunting can seem challenging due to the ascertaining of permission on private fields. It's possible to find geese on crown land during the early weeks of the season -(located in public marshlands and waterways), however consistent numbers will be harvested over developed fields maintained by private farmers. Early season, the migration of geese usually hasn't started in full swing and you will primarily be hunting local birds.

These geese have spent the spring and summer in that general spot, and have developed routine flight habits. Locating goose flight habits in your fields is always the starting point of the early season checklist. Where the geese are frequenting daily in your field is an awesome spot to place your first spread. My experience is that fields alongside rivers or a water source can be a gold mine. Look for fields that have a large concentration of short grass, or oat and barley fields during September. The birds have been accustomed to landing in this routine location for its food source and are sure to commit to your spread as long as it's placed in a natural inviting configuration.

When pursuing local birds, they can be seen in small groups which can be referred to as "family's". Generally, birds who have summered together will remain in their family groups until the fall migration. Placing your decoys in spaced concentrated clusters of about 4-6 decoys as opposed to combining all of the decoys together will make your set more presentable for the early season.

If possible, the majority of your decoy collection should consist mainly of full body decoys. There are several brands of decoys with their own unique styles from the manufacturer." Final Approach" makes an excellent life-like full body decoy that can be purchased at D&R Sporting Goods, as well as "Bigfoot Decoys". However, there are plenty of other excellent brands on the market. Your spread should consist primarily of feeder decoys. These styles of birds mimic a relaxed goose that is calmly feeding and it is this type of body language that will pull any hungry goose from the sky. It can be a great idea to blend some shell decoys amongst the clusters of full bodies if available. Shell decoys are generally less pricey than full bodies, and come in larger quantities. When placing sets along waterways, having an assortment of floater decoys at your disposal is essential. Floating decoys must be secured in the water with line and weight to eliminated the possibility of lost decoys.

Concealment while hunting geese carries the same importance as the spread you've placed in the field. The keen eye of a mature goose can be just as sharp as a white-tail deer. A popular source of concealment is a layout blind. When placing a layout blind in your spread, the colours of the blind must match the ground around you. Completely stuffing the outside of your blind with the grass or hay from your field will ensure camouflage. Other methods that have proven successful in my experience are standing within tree lines of the field or circumferential burlap sheets mixed with field grass placed in the proper location.

Some final and important accessories for your early season goose adventures would be ammunition selection and goose calls. When hunting waterfowl, non-toxic steel shot shotgun shells must be used. In the ammunition market, there are endless choices for waterfowl shells. Score, Challenger and Imperial ammunition are three great shells which are produced and manufactured in Canada. Generally 3 inch- 3.5 inch shells in shot size 2's are my preferred shell when hunting geese. The most common calibre for geese is a 12 gauge in either pump or semi- automatic. 20 gauge shotguns and the large bore 10 gauge are also commonly carried into the goose fields. Goose calls are also a hunting essential. Your local sporting goods store should have a vast selection and style of calls. Watching videos on YouTube can teach the basics on how to speak goose language and hit the proper tones. With respect to goose calling.... practice makes perfect. In a way it's comparable to learning how to play a new instrument, - with time you'll become efficient!



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Attention Hunters

November 2019

Hunter Reporting is Mandatory

Hunter Reporting

How to submit your hunter report

All hunters that purchase or are issued a tag to hunt moose, elk, deer, bear, wild turkey and wolf/coyote (where a tag is required) must complete a hunter report even if they did not participate in the hunt or harvest an animal.

Generally, hunter reports must be submitted within 14 days following the end of the last hunting season for that species.

Hunter reports must be completed from your online account or by calling the automated telephone line at 1-800-288-1155.

Follow these three simple steps to complete your Hunter Report online!



Step 1
Visit www.huntandfishontario.com and select "Submit Hunter Report" to access the login page.



Step 2
Login to your online account. Don't forget to acknowledge and accept the privacy notification to proceed.



Step 3
Select the "Provide Report" button next to the mandatory report you wish to submit. You will be asked to provide the following information:

1. Did you hunt?
2. Did you harvest an animal? If so, where, when and what type of animal was it (for example, male or female)?
3. What Wildlife Management Unit(s) did you hunt in and how many days did you hunt in each?
4. What observations did you have during the hunt?

Once you are finished the report, select the "submit" button. A confirmation number will be displayed for your records.

Hunters who fail to report or who provide false or misleading information may be subject to penalties, including possible restrictions on the ability to purchase a licence or tag the following year and/or a fine.

Did you know how important it is to submit your hunter report? The information you provide helps us to better understand wildlife populations and we use it to make decisions about harvest levels and tag allocations.

If you require further assistance, please call the Natural Resources Information and Support Centre at 1-800-387-7011 or 1-800-667-1940. More information can be found in the 2019 [Ontario Hunting Regulations Summary](#).



Thunder Bay Bassmasters Wants You! To Join!!

By Samantha Neureuther, NOSA Member

Are you looking to learn more about tournament fishing and Bass fishing in general with like minded individuals? What about an excuse to get out on Thunder Bays best Bass fishing lakes and fish more?

Since 2010 the Thunder Bay Bassmasters have been meeting, sharing fishing techniques and competing in casual fun club tournaments which run late spring all the way through to Fall. The TBay Bassmasters are affiliated through OFAH Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and will be sponsored by the North-western Ontario Sportsmen's Alliance(NOSA) beginning in the 2020 season. The club's primary goal is to introduce new anglers to the world of tournament fishing and teach them about bass fishing as they compete. The club gives an opportunity for members to interact and participate regularly at monthly meetings, volunteer for outdoor conservation projects and join in local club fishing tournaments. Being a member of the club gives you a chance to improve your skill of bass fishing through a friendly exchange of fishing tips and ideas, while meeting other anglers who are passionate about Bass fishing as well.

You will have the opportunity to fish different lakes, during different seasons under every weather condition. You will be able to fish alongside different anglers at each event learning different types of techniques and styles of fishing. And if you think you need a boat to join think again, this is a huge perk for new members and people starting out. If a member doesn't have a boat, there is the option to go as a 'non boater,' so you'll have the chance to fish any tournament in the club regardless if you own a boat.

There is generally 8 -10 scheduled live release tournaments per year during the open water seasons. These tournaments are broken up into 3 hr week day evenings and 1 day weekend events throughout the season. A random draw is done before each tournament which then pairs a 'boater' with a 'non boater'. These two anglers then become the team for this tournament only in a "Team Event" with the combined total weight of the 5 biggest Bass belonging to both anglers. In other tournaments, a boater and a non-boater compete against each other and everyone else in a "Individual" tournament each angler weighing in their 3 biggest Bass. Depending on the turnout of anglers, there is a cash payout up the 3rd place. Each tournament fished will gain each member points for AOY Angler of The Year, the angler with the most points for their 4 best tournaments is crowned AOY. The tournaments also hold a pot for Biggest Bass.

The Thunder Bay Bassmasters strives to provide a competitive tournament experience that encourages sportsmanship, friendship, and a fun learning atmosphere for all skill levels.

If you love to fish and would like to learn more about tournament bass fishing and this is something your interested in and for more information check out the Facebook group 'Thunder Bay Bassmasters' or also contact Thunder Bay Bassmasters president Brad Rissanen brissanen@shaw.ca to join today for the upcoming season!

Father and Son Northern Moose Hunt

By Rich Brochu,
NOSA Member

*Rich & Landan
Brochu enjoy the
success of their
moose hunting
team work.*



Like most big game hunters in Ontario, waiting for an adult tag is something that keeps your anticipation throughout the summer months. As a family, we apply early every spring for a chance to draw a tag. We had three chances in Pool one this year and two of us had not drawn a tag in the past 5 years. Ironically my name was pulled and we received a cow tag for the 2019 fall moose hunting season. I was the only one that had not waited for a tag for five years. My wife and son will get to try again next year in Pool one.

We start scouting for moose from spring to fall every chance we get. We spend a lot of time in the forest and enjoy finding new areas to hunt. The amount of moose sign in our hunting territory was promising and some animals were witnessed as the season approached. The most exciting part of scouting is being aware of the areas these ungulates travel and live. Moose are creatures of habit and dominant bulls can be territorial. Once their patterns are deciphered, luck and a little patience can come in handy.

This year, my son was scheduled to work on the first two days of the moose gun opener. He asked me if I was going to hunt the first two days alone as I had the tag and he was committed to work. My response was that I would wait for him so we could hunt together. As excited as we both were for the opener we both had to cool our jets and wait till the Monday of the opening weekend. With it being Thanksgiving and his birthday the following day, we celebrated as a family the night before our first hunt.

DAY 1

We woke the day of his birthday to have breakfast and get ready for a full day of hunting. We had many areas to scout and were not sure how many hunters might already be stationed in our choice spots. I was surprised to see that the first area we hit, no one was there. As my son posted up on a hill, I continued on to the back of an old cut. I was happy to see a good amount of fresh tracks and felt hopeful there might be a few moose left in the forest. Nothing happened after a few hours and we headed to another destination that might hold promise. This area again was void of hunters. We scouted the cut and decided the moose sign here was also promising. Evening was a few hours away and we decided to check one last spot.

We witnessed other hunters but most were driving and a few were posted on the edge of cuts. We arrived at the third destination we wanted to check and drove up to a majestic bull with an antler span of 50 plus inches. We looked around for a cow, but none were to be found. The giant moose trotted away unafraid of our presence. Day one was a success. We found sign, saw a moose and had three possible choices to choose from.

DAY 2

The second day of the hunt arrived quickly after a well deserved sleep. We had breakfast and discussed which area we might go to and weighed which one might hold a cow. The first and second choice held promise. The third area where we witnessed the majestic bull was also a good possibility. We both discussed our options and chose to go back to cut with the bull. We drove to our destination and again no hunters were ahead of us or in the vicinity. We made our plan and decided to post near the forest's edge within the cut. I sat for half an hour and heard two shots. My excitement mounted as I waited for my son to radio whether he shot or not. The words came through clear.... "Cow down!" I was pumped. My first reaction was to confirm....is it really down? My son assured me that the animal expired quickly and he was standing beside it. Right on! I quickly started to head towards his direction feeling grateful for a successful hunt, thanking the good lord and proud that my son had taken the animal so quickly.

Hunting has been a family tradition for many years. Like most hunters, the hunt is more than taking an animal for sustenance. It's about family, friends, companionship and the time spent together. Being successful is the icing. Enjoy the outdoors and be safe while hunting.



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OMNRF Moose Aerial Inventories Planned for Northwest Region on Ontario

WMU	Last Flown
16A	2010
16B	2015
16C	2015
2	2013
2P	2013
3	2014
4	2014
15A	2015



THIS MONTH'S NEWS

OMNRF conducting Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Surveillance Program in NWO



CWD is a fatal disease that infects members of the cervid (ie. deer, moose, elk) family. The disease is caused by abnormally folded proteins called prions, which cause brain lesions leading to death. White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), elk (*Cervus canadensis*), and mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) have been shown to be very susceptible to CWD and several moose (*Alces alces*) have also tested positive for the disease. The disease is not known to naturally infect species other than those in the cervid family.

CWD has been identified in 26 U.S. states and three Canadian provinces (Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec), and is now considered endemic in several states in the west (i.e., Colorado and Wyoming) and mid-west (i.e., Wisconsin and Illinois). Since 2003, it has also become established in several eastern U.S. states (e.g., Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia). Currently, CWD is not known to exist in Ontario but has been discovered in all five bordering states: Minnesota (2002), New York (2005), Michigan (2008 in captive animals, 2015 in free-ranging animals), Pennsylvania (2012), and Ohio (2014).

Due to increasing concern about diseases in Ontario's white-tailed deer and re-stored elk populations, a surveillance pilot project was initiated in 2002 to determine whether CWD was present in Ontario's wild cervid populations. The Ontario Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance program became operational in 2003.

Each year, surveillance samples are collected from hunters during the fall hunting season. Small crews of Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) staff roam patrol areas in the predetermined surveillance area, asking hunters for permission to remove a brain and lymph node samples from their harvested deer. Hunters also have the option of dropping off deer heads at depots within the surveillance area.

OMNRF uses a dynamic risk model to determine which areas within the province should be targeted for surveillance and testing. The following is a list of key risk factors used to determine which areas must be tested on a priority basis. Risk factors are:

- 1) presence of game farms/zoos
- 2) neighbouring cases/incidents of CWD outbreak
- 3) deer/elk population density of a given area
- 4) prior sampling efforts
- 5) unstudied elk/red deer populations
- 6) deer aggregation areas
- 7) winter severity

In 2018 a total of 457 deer were tested in Ontario with zero cases of CWD found. But also in 2018 the first case of CWD was found in Quebec where it was detected on a game farm 15km from the Ontario/Quebec border.

Since 2018, Quebec Min. of Forests has tested over 1,100 wild cervids in the area surrounding the initial CWD outbreak and all have tested negative for the disease.

For 2019, in the Northwest Region of Ontario, WMU's 8, 9A/9B, 10 and 13 will be targeted by roving OMNRF crews as the CWD Surveillance Program is carried out in these units. Testing will occur from Sept-December. Hunters can contact their District OMNRF staff to make arrangements to have a testing team visit them in the field, at hunt camp or at home. OMNRF sampling teams will come and collect samples from yearling or older deer and will give participating hunters a crest.

Hunters can also drop off their deer heads to collection depots within the specified WMU's/testing areas and site staff will collect information from hunters there. A list of drop-off depots can be found on OMNRF's website at ontario.ca/chronic-wasting-disease in addition to more information related to the chronic wasting disease program in Ontario. For more information about the program call 1-705-313-6752



Where do we stand as Canadian firearms owners

*Tracey Wilson, VP, Public Relations
Canadian Coalition for Firearms Rights*

The election has come and gone and while the results were not what we were hoping for, the numbers are very telling. The Liberal government ran on a huge platform, some of that being gun control, in particular gun bans, yet failed to get the support they previously enjoyed.

So, will they do it? Let’s explore this.

During the last election cycle the big gun control piece for the Liberals was C-71. While in comparison to bans and confiscation, the bill was relatively moderate, it was met with enormous opposition from gun owners, Conservatives and the big advocacy groups. The CCFR led the fight against these ineffective measures and when the dust settled, C-71 did indeed receive Royal Assent. In spite of the list of amendment recommendations submitted to their peers in the standing committee, the bill passed without any considerable amendments after a 14-month battle. The length of time it took to get this through the House and then the Senate Chambers was the topic of many news stories and put the anti-gun lobbies into a frenzy of dismay.

Still, the bill passed intact, yet most of the measures were never implemented, due in part to the timelines of the impending election. Those measures will likely come to force through a series of OIC’s (Order in Council) in the New Year when the House resumes sitting after the Christmas break. There is no stopping it at this point, but we will be watching and objecting as the foundation for those measures is laid bare for us to criticize.

If and when the Conservatives resume control of the government, Bill C-71 will be repealed, as promised on multiple occasions by the current leader Andrew Scheer. I myself attended his presser in centre block when he first publicly announced this and have had it confirmed since.

Moving on to the proposed gun bans that we saw in the Liberal gun control platform...

We must keep in mind this is a weakened, minority government with some incredibly pressing issues to be tackled such as western alienation, climate change/hysteria and a pipeline sitting dormant that was bought with our money. Trudeau is going to be busy trying to dance his way along with partners who don’t always agree with the promises he made. This should keep him busy, but we know



THIS MONTH’S NEWS

all too well what happens when a Liberal government is failing; gun control. Nothing changes the channel quite like the manufactured crises of legal gun ownership.

There are two main promises we should focus on:

1) the national ban on “assault rifles” – an intentionally misleading, yet still undefined, term the Liberals love to use. Implementing such a ban would be incredibly involved; define which guns are now banned, issue notices to owners, implement and wait out a 2-year amnesty as promised, create the entire infrastructure required to collect and destroy our legal guns, administer the program to identify, appraise and pay out a “fair market value” as promised and the list goes on. This is an extremely complicated endeavour, not to mention the fact that many gun owners simply won’t comply. Then what? They don’t know.

2) giving municipalities the ability to ban handguns/ammunition within their jurisdiction – a task even more impossible to carry out. Even the anti gun lobbies are fretting over this one because it would amount to the same as a parking ticket for those who remain within the “banned” city.

Why did Trudeau not go as far as a national handgun ban? Because it would be so incredibly expensive, it would be an absolute impossibility to carry out. It will cost the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars to “buy back” the 250 000 rifles they are targeting, yet over 1 million registered handguns exist within Canada’s borders. The expense alone would be so staggering there is no chance the general public would support it.

Whether or not this government keeps their promise to ban our guns will depend greatly on how motivated they are to do it, taking into consideration the more pressing problems Trudeau is facing and whether or not he needs a distraction from let’s say, a resurrection of his many scandals like SNC. Either way, these are very uncertain times for our sport and our community.

The CCFR will be launching the largest, most comprehensive public relations campaign to defend gun owners in the history of our country. This will require an enormous amount of work, funding and support. Stay tuned to the CCFR in the New Year as we unveil our plans and find out how you can help us, help you, keep your guns.

In the meantime, all eyes will be on Trudeau and Blair as they reveal the mandate letters from PMO in the coming weeks.



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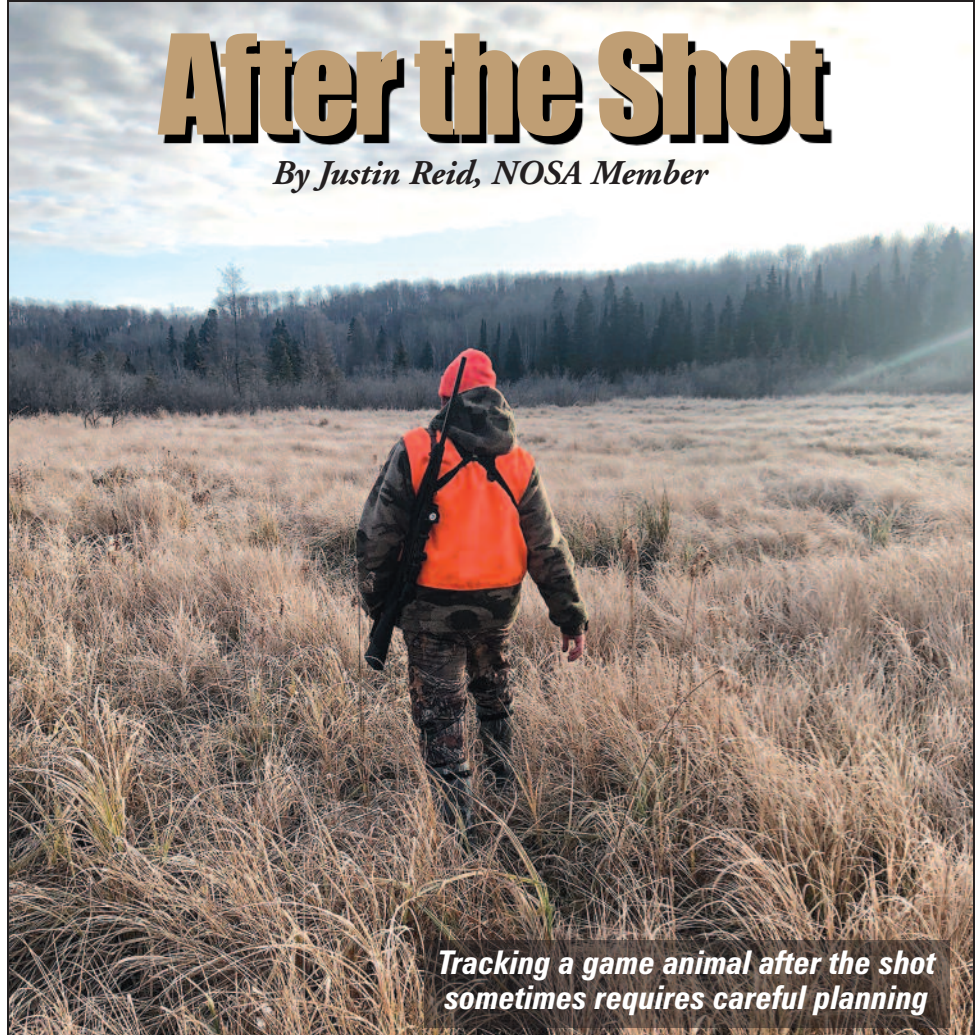
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After the Shot

By Justin Reid, NOSA Member



***Tracking a game animal after the shot
sometimes requires careful planning***

As hunters, we spend so much time and effort preparing for upcoming hunting trips and long sits in the tree stand. I think some hunters, including myself, have overlooked the thought of what happens after pulling the trigger on a big game animal. I recently did just that without even knowing it. I have shot enough big game animals to know all the basics and have confidence in my ability to stay focused at all times when hunting and tracking. We're not all perfect, but we all can learn from every big game harvest. Whether it's shot placement, being attentive as to where the animal runs, or showing patience as we wait to go after our animals, all steps are important in a successful recovery. Furthermore, we must ensure we look out for our own safety and respect the animals we hope to bring to the dinner table.

I recently sat in my tree stand for an evening sit with a buck and surplus doe tag in my pocket. With the weather hovering around the freezing mark and rut activity picking up rapidly, I was excited to get out knowing anything could happen. Shortly after climbing into my stand and settling in, I spotted a doe and fawn feeding 120 yards away across a field. Great sign, but not one of my target deer I had on my trail cam. There has always been a debate about shooting a doe accompanied by a fawn and leaving the less than a year-old fawn to survive with no guidance from an adult deer. While others may disagree, I like to hold out for single does with no fawns or best-case scenario, a buck. This also may depend on the area you're in. Some areas have high deer numbers while other areas just don't have the same kind of numbers. Shooting one adult deer with a fawn may result in the fawn not making it through the winter or being incapable of evading predators alone, like moose calves and bear cubs. As I watched the deer feed across the field, I heard some leaves rustling from behind me. My heart started to race in hopes that a buck was passing through my line of sight to check out the doe which was visible and in the open. As the deer came out in front of me, I identified it as a mature single doe with no fawns. After a 5 minute stand off the deer presented a clean broadside shot and I squeezed the trigger.

I watched the deer run off in the same direction it came from. This is very typical as they usually resort to running in the direction where they were last safe. I heard a lot of rustling amongst the leaves and then dead silence. I had a lot of confidence in my shot but still opted to wait 30 minutes before going after the animal. I realistically should have waited longer, but darkness was coming fast, and I wanted to avoid following a blood trail in the dark. What did I learn from this experience? Don't try to rush tracking a deer. As an avid hunter who loves pursuing animals throughout the fall, I'm not 100% proud of the way I handled this. I followed what was a solid blood trail at first which then ran completely dry. I knew it was a good shot, but I didn't want to bump the deer also. I opted to back out for the night and made plans to head back at first light to continue the search. I contacted a buddy who was confident the deer was down after hearing my story and suggested going back right away as opposed to waiting for daylight. We went back where I left off and began looking for the route the deer took. After a half hour of searching we picked up a heavy blood trail and found the deer shortly after, fully expired. I was ecstatic as we were able to find the doe before wolves or coyotes polished it off. Unfortunately, within just 3 hours of this deer being expired, there had already been either wolves or coyotes picking away at one front shoulders.



I'll be forever grateful that we set out to look for this animal in the dark instead of waiting for daylight, but the thought of sharing a deer with wolves or coyotes is not something I'm proud of. I'm not happy about the way everything played out but there were lessons learned which I hope to pass onto hunters reading this. Slow down, take your time and be observant even after the shot. With no snow on the ground, tracking is a lot more difficult and can lead to experiences like the one I went through. I hope sharing this story helps someone in the future after taking a shot at an animal. Be safe, stay focused, and good luck hunting.

This deer was found after only a three hour wait to track it and coyotes had already scavenged it.

Members In The Field



Caitlyn Moore and Kevan Holroyd share in deer hunt success



Dani Duquette tagged a big buck during the November rut



Mandi Weist with her big 2019 buck



Sherry Brochu shows off a big early fall walleye



Father/daughter Brad and Alexa Legree teamed up for moose hunting Success



Samantha Neureuther with her first whitetail buck



NOSA Member Dennis Ukrainec and his 2019 buck



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bi-weekly +HST

Finance example: \$10,000 based on 5.99% APR over 36/48/60/72/84/96 months with a biweekly payment of \$140 / \$108 / \$89 / \$76 / \$67 / \$60. Total interest over term \$944 / \$1,270 / \$1,596 / \$1,929 / \$2,267 / \$2,611. Total obligation over term \$10,944 / \$11,270 / \$11,596 / \$11,929 / \$12,267 / \$12,611. HST and License extra. 0.99% financing on select Nissan Certified Pre-Owned vehicles available up to 24 months. \$10,000 @ 0.99% for 24 months = \$420 per month. Total interest \$103. Total obligation \$10,103. Certified Pre-Owned vehicles come with a registration fee of \$399 Cars/\$499 SUV's and Trucks. HST and License extra.



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