

Survival Tips For Deer Hunting

There are times when even the best of woodsmen are forced to spend a night in the wilderness. A man might travel so far into the woods after a deer that it might be unsafe or impractical for him to try to find his way to the camp in the darkness. He might become lost as to direction, and prefer to camp out instead of risking the chance of becoming more confused by aimless traveling. If, for any reason, it is necessary to spend the night in the woods, a knowledge of some of the fundamentals of woodcraft will aid in the comfort and even the survival of the lost person. People seldom become lost on a day when the sun is shining, so the chances are that cold, wet or stormy weather has to be dealt with. Fire is the most important item in the camp. The hearth is the symbol of the home and nothing does more to make a man feel at ease in the woods than a good fire. Build it against a fallen tree or a dead stub so that there will be a back-log to hold the heat. Gather as large a supply of dry limbs and down-wood as possible, because an open fire can use a surprising amount of fuel in a night and it is no fun to hunt for it in the dark. Gather anything which might burn and which can be dragged. Sometimes a man will be caught with no dry matches or other conventional means of starting a fire. In such cases it is possible to borrow a page from the days of the flint-lock, when the hunter would use his gun as a fire starter. This modern adaptation should not be used except in an emergency, but it is usually effective. The fire should be located with the thought of some sort of shelter in mind. A shelter is almost a must on a stormy night. A log at the back is better than nothing. A vertical ledge or rock is better and a small cave is probably the best of all natural shelters. Lacking a natural shelter, a brush lean-to can be made. Before a person retires for the night, the boots should be removed and the socks dried, if such a thing is possible. Usually the feet will be warmer if the boots are left off during the night. The arms should be removed from the coat sleeves and the coat buttoned with the arms and hands inside next to the body. Sleep should be possible as long as the fire continues to burn. Many people are afraid to sleep in the snow without a fire for fear of freezing while they are asleep. This fear will sometimes cause a person to continue to travel until he is exhausted and in such a case there is real danger if he should try to sleep or rest in the cold. If a man is in good health, properly dressed and conditioned to cold weather, and camps before he becomes too tired, it is possible for him to resist the effects of low temperature. After the lost hunter has spent the night in the woods, he should try to orient himself in the morning. This should not be hard to do if the sun is shining. He should not trust to instinct, but should reason things out. Even if the sun seems to be somewhere else, it must be in the east, so there is one sure direction. The other points of the compass should be easy to figure. This information is of no value unless the lost person knows the direction in which he left camp or the direction of the road which runs by the camp. If these things are not known, it is best to remain in the temporary camp and wait for aid, keeping plenty of damp wood on the fire as a signal to searchers.

About the Author

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