

SPECIAL HUNTING & GEAR ISSUE

# ADVENTURESS

HUNTING | GEAR | ADVENTURE | MORE | LIVE | FALL 2018 | ISSUE 15

3rd Annual  
ADVENTURESS  
of the YEAR  
CONTEST!

+ Recipe  
with ELK

DO-IT-YOURSELF  
EUROPEAN  
MOUNTS

SKULL BOUND'S  
Jana Waller

ELK HUNTING:

READY  
>>> for the <<<  
BUGLE

STAYING  
WARM  
LAYERING  
YOUR GEAR





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# editor's note

## Is Social Media Hurting Hunting?

It's nothing new that the hunting industry is all about big bucks; however, I'd like address what seems to be a new trend with hunters, especially women hunters, in recent years that concerns me. I'm seeing more and more women new to bowhunting set



out solely to shoot a big buck and nothing else. I'm not talking about first gaining knowledge and experience to work their way up to a big buck someday, I'm talking about only to shoot a big buck.

This fall, for the first time, I honestly wasn't excited to share about my hunts on social media. Last year, I shot a 'buck of a lifetime,' and was recently struck with the unsettling thought that maybe instead of inspiring people, it just added to this 'big buck syndrome.'

I didn't start out with a big buck. My first deer with a bow was a button buck. My second was a doe. So far, I've harvested 19 deer with a bow, and if I had just skipped straight to a 'big buck,' none of this would mean anything close to the same - everything would be different. It's that journey that gave me my passion, it's that journey that taught me so many lessons, it's that journey that gave me the experience to fool and successfully harvest a buck of a lifetime in the first place, it's that journey that makes it truly something special. I would never trade all that for a big buck.

And that's not even getting into what's ethical. When I look at who I do think are on the 'right path,' posing with their successful harvest on social media - I go to comment congratulations full of excitement, only to read a photo caption along the lines of, "well, it's not much, but it's my first deer" or "it's just a doe" - wait, WHAT?! It should never be about size at this point. It should be celebrating a *start* and an *accomplishment*! Own it!

Every harvest - whether bow or gun - is something to be proud of. We need to see more new hunters sitting behind deer of any size with the biggest, proudest smile on their face and feeling like they just struck gold.

*Jennifer Pudenz*

## ADVENTURESS

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*The only magazine  
specifically for  
women hunters  
and anglers!*

ISSUE 15  
FALL 2018

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Do you have  
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who'd like to intern?  
Contact if interested in  
working with Adventuress!

## on the cover



Cover featuring  
Jana Waller of Skull Bound  
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Featured photographer: Stephanie Tsuneko





Cover Girl

# JANA WALLER

Residing in the Bitterroot Valley of Montana where she revels in her passion for the outdoors, **Jana Waller** has also traveled the globe hunting and fishing. As a bowhunter for more than 25 years, Jana actively promotes conservation and women in the outdoors in both print and TV. She has written for numerous websites and hunting magazines, and currently produces and hosts her own TV show called Skull Bound TV on The Sportsman Channel where her hunting adventures and skull artwork are shared with millions.

Also as a skull artist, she's been painting and beading European skulls for more than a decade, selling her unique artwork in galleries as well as custom designing skulls for enthusiasts across the country. Many of Jana's painted or beaded skulls are donated every year to raise money for conservation and veteran related organizations. To date, she has personally raised more than \$38,000 for conservation and veteran causes. Follow Jana on **Instagram-@skullboundtv**, **Facebook-Skull Bound** and **skullboundtv.com**!





# +Past Issues



<< Winter is coming! Lots of great information in last year's winter issue, including coyote hunting, reading flasher fish finders, snowshoeing and tapping trees!

Did you miss the last issue of ADVENTURESS magazine?! Check it out! >>



View and download all past issues of ADVENTURESS magazine for FREE at [betheadventuress.com/magazine](http://betheadventuress.com/magazine) and subscribe so you don't miss anything!



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-Vicki Cianciarulo

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FALL







## Stephanie Tsuneko

Boise, Idaho

Featured  
photographer

### PAIR OF KINGS

*A sunset stalk on two mule deer bucks at the Malheur Wildlife Refuge near Burns, Oregon.*

*"My goal as a photographer is to create an image you can feel in your soul. An image you can hear, taste and feel, just as if you were alongside me, capturing that one moment in time."*

Follow Stephanie on **Facebook**, **Instagram** and check out **stephanie tsuneko**.  
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TWO BIG GAME GUT GLOVE FIELD DRESSING GLOVES WINNERS!  
TWO SOUTHERN RACKS SHAMPOO & CONDITIONER SET WINNERS!

## NEXT PAGE FOR DETAILS TO ENTER!



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# ADVENTURESS OF THE YEAR



**The ADVENTURESS of the YEAR Contest gives you a chance to show off your skills as a total outdoorswoman! Includes a huge prize package to help the winner continue her outdoor adventures, plus 12 other winners!**

**TO ENTER:** ADVENTURESS has four categories: Hunt. Fish. Explore. Live. **SUBMIT** two photos of yourself from 2017-2018 for EACH category (eight total photos) showing your **SKILLS**. The more you have read ADVENTURESS magazine, the more you'll understand these categories! **LABEL** your high-res/original photos with your name and the category (firstlastname\_hunt.jpeg) and **ATTACH** them to an email(s) to [inspire@bettheadventuress.com](mailto:inspire@bettheadventuress.com), also including your **LOCATION** (state) and a **LINK** to your social media profile(s). You must clearly be in each photo and have submitted photos for all four categories to be considered for the main prize package. **DO NOT** send small, low-res social media copies of photos. Your previous support for ADVENTURESS will also be taken into account. **DEADLINE: Friday, December 28th.**







# ELK

## HUNTING BASICS

*Preparing for an epic journey to hunt elk*

**By Jana Waller of Skull Bound TV**

There are very few sounds in the wild that rival the intensity of a bull's guttural bugle echoing through the lodgepole forest. Many hunters yearn all summer for the cold fall mornings where the air is filled with the smell of changing leaves and rutting wapiti. Long before the expansion of the West by settlers, elk have been roaming the North American continent for thousands of years. Many Native American tribes honored the elk with painted pictograms and carved petroglyphs on cave walls and utilized all parts of the elk for food, clothing, tipis and tools. They are immense, magical animals that dreams are made of and who will humble even the most seasoned hunters.

### **CHECK THE REGS - EARLY**

Being prepared is the key to any hunt. While that may sound quite obvious, there are facets of elk hunting that you'll want to be aware of before the hunt to avoid frustrations once it gets closer, such as checking the regulations. Many states have varying regulations, which often change. It's critical that you are LEGAL.



If bowhunting elk, be sure to check for any state regulations well before your planned hunt.

Some states have poundage and bow length regulations if you are archery hunting elk. For example, Montana, a very popular state for public land elk hunting, requires your bow be



at least 28 inches long in total length and your arrow must weight no less than 300 grains with the broadhead attached. In South Dakota, you must pull a draw weight of at least 40 pounds for elk, but some states require 50 pounds.

Also, double check to see you have all of that state's required licensing. It's possible you'll need an additional archery license in addition to your regular hunting license. And thoroughly read the regulations for the unit you are hunting. Some units allow the harvesting of spikes and cows, while others require that the bull have brow tines to be legal to shoot.

If you're rifle hunting, make sure to check the blaze orange laws. It's also important to be comfortable with your gear. Know your capabilities in terms of shot distance for either bow or gun. Practice may not always make things perfect in elk hunting scenarios, but there's no such thing as too much time at

the target range.

## **BREAKER I-9, GOT YER EARS ON**

Calling, unlike many other big game hunts, is a pivotal part of elk hunting, but that's a whole other article if we were to get into the intricacies. While calling is primarily used in the early season rut, I've also called in bulls during rifle season and found success thanks to using both bugles and cow calls.

There are a lot of different scenarios that can occur when it comes to elk communication, but the basics are bull bugles and cow or calf calls. You'll need to be able to produce a nice bugle for locating the herd. It certainly doesn't need to be perfect, but the more realistic you sound, typically the better response you'll get. If fired up, they'll typically respond to a bugle and often times come to check out the competition.











**VIDEO: Pursue The Wild with Kristy Titus** - Click to watch some of Kristy's Titus' calling and general elk hunting tips. Check out Kristy's YouTube Channel for more elk calling and hunting videos.

Bulls are territorial of their harems and will often wonder who's trying to steal their ladies. If you're on the tail end of the herd and the wind is good, you can let out a few cow mews, causing the bulls to wonder if they've left a cow behind and come investigating. There are some fantastic videos on Youtube that will show you the ins and outs of elk talk. Look up *Pursue The Wild with Kristy Titus*, Corey Jacobson or Born And Raised Outdoors - all of them are veteran elk hunters, great callers and their videos are instructional and well-produced.

## LAYER UP

Mother Nature can be quite temperamental in the mountains and she can change her mind quickly. It's so important to be over-prepared in terms of clothing. Luckily, technology in hunting clothing has exploded in the past few

years, and it's one area where I recommend spending a bit more to stay comfortable, dry, warm and even cool, when you need it.

I personally have worn *Kryptek* hunting gear for the past five years and it's proven to be incredibly reliable and durable in the harshest of conditions. I recommend getting a merino wool base layer system and to take enough layers to stay warm during the cold, crisp mornings. A well-made rain gear set is a must for your backpack since the cold rain can deplete your core body temperature quickly and ruin a hunt in one downpour.

My typical elk hunting kit from inside to the outside layer includes merino wool base layers, medium-weight pants, long sleeve top, Sherpa-style hoodie and outside jacket with an added vest to keep the core warm. If it gets extremely cold, I add on a lightweight but incredibly warm packable jacket, like the



**Kryptek Aquillo**, which stores easily in my pack. A scarf to keep the heat in around your neck, wool hat and good gloves are essentials as well. Keep them in your pack, even if it seems to be nice out. They've saved me from many cold, miserable days in the mountains.

Same goes for your footwear - spend a bit more and you'll get more including waterproofing, good soles, ankle support and warmth. I've put the women's **Kenetrek Mountain Extreme boots** through every test imaginable during the past seven years and they've proved to be an incredible boot for me.

## JUST IN CASE

Elk are tough animals. They live in tough terrain. You can expect to be in the middle of nowhere while chasing elk, especially if you are hunting public land. I always carry a small emergency kit in my pack in case of minor

injuries. My homemade kit includes ibuprofen, baby aspirin (for the beginning symptoms of a heart attack), liquid stitches, band-aids, gauze, Benadryl, flint, fire starter, lighter, cough drops, hot hands and an emergency blanket. This kit doesn't weigh much, and will come in handy for those minor bumps and bruises.

If you are going into the backcountry, I would also recommend a **Garmin inReach global satellite device**, in case you need to make an emergency call. The prices have come down in the last few years and typically come with text messaging via satellite (subscription required), SOS to the 24/7 search and rescue center, downloaded maps, weather forecasts and GPS. No one ever expects an emergency to occur, but if you're going off the grid, it's best to be prepared.

In conjunction with an inReach, you can use the **onX Hunt App** on your smart phone.

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This app is a must on public land to guide you and aid in your hunt. You can look at boundaries, view topography, mark your truck or base camp, and even send waypoints to your hunting buddies. Plus, the maps can be downloaded or cached in when you have service before the hunt, if you're going to be areas with limited cell coverage.

If you're hunting in bear country, remember your bear spray. Whatever you

do, don't put it in your pack. Have it accessible where you can easily get to it in the blink of an eye. This fall, we spotted and filmed eleven different grizzlies on our elk hunt in Montana. There are areas that are littered with bears and you need to be bear-aware as where there are elk, there are most likely bears. Carry spray, especially if you're in grizzly territory. I carry spray on one hip and a Glock 10mm on the other.

## MAKE A LIST AND CHECK IT TWICE!

All of us live hectic, busy lives, and that's why making lists come in handy. I have a variety of prepared lists for different hunting trips depending on the location, animal and season, but here is my basic gear list for what I will need in the field for big game hunts:

- ☐ binoculars
- ☐ spotting scope
- ☐ water
- ☐ water bladder
- ☐ water filter
- ☐ rain gear
- ☐ wind checker
- ☐ range finder
- ☐ calls
- ☐ knife
- ☐ sharpener
- ☐ game bags
- ☐ emergency kit
- ☐ release or ammo
- ☐ snacks
- ☐ Jetboil cooking system
- ☐ gloves
- ☐ wool hat
- ☐ camo paint
- ☐ headlamp
- ☐ fire starter

Of course, if you are doing a backcountry-style hunt, you'll want to make a base camp list for all your tenting needs. Make your lists, and check 'em twice!



## PUT YOUR BACK INTO IT GLADYS

If you're not hunting with a guide or outfitter, you'll need to be prepared for the real work, which happens after the shot. On average, a field-dressed bull elk weighs 500 pounds, yielding approximately 250 pounds of meat that you'll need to get off the mountain quickly and efficiently. Add on another 50 pounds for the head and hide, depending on the size, of course. You will definitely want a backpack that can not only hold that amount of weight, but is comfortable for you on what could be a long and demanding hike off the mountain. I recommend finding a pack that has the capability of such hauls, but that also fits your torso correctly. I use the **Eberlestock Kite pack**, since it can be expanded to hold as much as I can carry.

Skinning knives, a sharpening tool, gut gloves and game bags also make your job a lot

easier. Make sure you take plenty of drinking water and snacks to help give you energy for the pack out as well. And if you're going back to base camp, unable to get your meat into a freezer quickly, have a large cooler with ice that can handle your precious cargo. In my opinion, the true trophy is the delicious, organic meat that you, your family and friends will be dining on all year-round.

Hopefully you found one or two helpful tips. You can watch our previous Skull Bound elk hunting episodes online on **MOTV.com**, future episodes air on the **Sportsman Channel** January thru June and the brand new Skull Bound Chronicles will launch on **Carbon TV** in 2019.

*Jana Waller of Montana and Skull Bound TV is featured on the cover of this issue. Check out her bio on page 6 and [skullboundtv.com](http://skullboundtv.com).*

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# CHEESE STUFFED SHELLS *with* ELK

*By Sarah Honadel of Huntress View*



*When it comes to cooking, I look for easy and delicious. I don't like spending hours in the kitchen. And I definitely don't like buying special ingredients just for one recipe.*

Serves 5 (3 shells each)

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 30 minutes

## INGREDIENTS:

- 15 jumbo shells
- 1 lb ground elk (or other meat)
- 2 cups whole milk ricotta
- 2 tsp basil
- 2 tsp Italian seasoning
- 2 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp garlic
- 2 tbsp parmesan cheese
- 1 jar spaghetti sauce
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

## DIRECTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350°.
- In large pot, bring 4 cups water to a rolling boil. Place shells in boiling water and reduce heat to medium. Add a teaspoon of salt to prevent shells from sticking together. Cook for 10 minutes.  
*Tip! If you boil too hard, the shells will tear.*
- Brown 1 lb ground meat in skillet.



- While shells and meat are cooking, mix together ricotta, basil, Italian seasoning, oregano, garlic and parmesan cheese.
- Drain meat. Mix in jar of spaghetti sauce, reserving ½ cup for later. Simmer meat sauce on low.
- Drain shells. Spread remaining ½ cup spaghetti sauce in the bottom of casserole dish.
- Carefully fill shells with ricotta cheese mixture and place shells in casserole dish.  
*Tip! To make filling easier, use a pasta spoon to hold the shells.*
- Pour meat sauce over shells. Sprinkle shredded mozzarella and some basil on top.
- Bake covered at 350° for 30 minutes.
- Serve with garlic bread, salad or soup.





## Congratulations, Elk Hunters!

Follow **ADVENTURESS** on Facebook and post your recent photo to the page or follow **@adventuressmagazine** on Instagram and tag **#beththeadventuress** to possibly be featured in ADVENTURESS social media or magazine!









# Layering

Staying comfortable and warm  
throughout your hunts

**By Jennifer Pudenz**



**H**unting is unpredictable. But that's what we love about it. However, how weather can be just as unpredictable is not so fun. Sometimes half the challenge is just being able to stay comfortable and warm out in the field, and as women, this is even more of a challenge for us than men. Ladies, it's not just you - women ARE naturally colder than men - it's scientifically proven and there are several reasons why.

### **WHY AM I ALWAYS COLD?!!!**

A study done by the University of Maryland School of Medicine found that while body temperature does vary from person to person, day to day, women's body temperatures are consistently higher than men's. While that seems we should be warmer than them, when your body is used to being warm, colder air feels even cooler to your body. And to top this off, hormones also affect your body temperature (*and we all know we have hormone issues*), so depending on where you are in your cycle, you could be more sensitive to cold temperatures than normal. If you're using hormonal birth control, you'll be *even more* sensitive to the cold.

Many women first say their hands and feet are *freezing*. And also like many women, I get a fair warning to keep my feet off my husband when I climb into bed (*laughs*). Yes, another study found women's hands and feet tend to be three degrees colder than men's.

And last but not least, men have a metabolic rate about 23 percent higher than women's. Your metabolism is the rate at which you burn food to fuel your body, and this process heats up the body. So women's bodies are also colder than men's because our metabolisms are slower and not warming our bodies up as much.

So yes, as a typical woman, I am ALWAYS cold, and being an avid bowhunter, the odds can feel stacked against me even more because staying warm, but still flexible enough to pull back a bow, is yet another challenge. Through social media, I often receive questions on how I stay warm. Over the years, I have just had to learn from trial and error what works for me to keep myself in the game. The main thing I have learned during cold hunts is that you must have a complete system. One simple thing forgotten, whether it is a major or minor component to your system, can leave you too cold to function. I hope some of the following ideas will help you stay in the game as well!

### **LAYERS/STAYING DRY**

In my beginning bowhunter years, I saved up for the warmest coat I could find. It was a big deal for me because at the time, I didn't have much gear or that great of gear. However, once I had my coat, I was soon unhappy with it. I only wore it when I absolutely had to - and even then, I found myself taping it tighter all the way down my bow arm. Being a bowhunter, bulk is your enemy and a slap of the bowstring on the arm of your coat is plenty to either warn a deer enough to react to your arrow or enough to throw off the correct path of your shot.

Ever since, I have never trusted coats for bowhunting. But how do you stay warm without the bulk? Layering is a pretty common concept nowadays, but it used to not be so known. I naturally started layering just to keep warm enough to not have to wear that bulky coat. I soon realized how well this layering worked for me because it also solved another problem I had, which aside from getting cold easily was that I also get hot or overheated easily. If I walk to my treestand with all my clothing on, I'll eventually be sweating. When



preparing for cold weather hunting, staying warm and staying dry are two main key points to remember, and these go hand-in-hand.

## UNDER LAYERS

If you sweat when it's cold, you will soon get chilled once your body is at rest. I think highly of good under layers as they can wick away sweat while at the same time keep heat close to your body, helping you stay dry and warm. These need to be snugger-fitting leggings and long-sleeved shirts. This is the only layer that should fit tighter and be touching the skin, the rest should move freely and allow you freedom of movement.

Have different under layer choices such as light-weight for warmer weather early season, mid- to heavy-weight for typical cool/cold weather regular season and warmest thermals for extreme weather late season.

I typically wear two under layers to stay warm. Right now, my first layer is Under Armour's *Extreme Base Top & Bottom* that has thin cooling material in certain areas, such as down the sides/armpits of the top. My second layer is Under Armour's *Treestand Base Top & Bottom* - I really love this set, and it is the warmest I've personally found so far.

For when I'm able to upgrade my under layer gear next, I would really like to try merino layers. I have read about the great benefits of merino wool, though it's typically a more expensive material, so I haven't been able to fully try it out yet. However, this summer, I did

happen to try out a 100 percent merino wool active shirt and tank top from *Woolx* and was amazed how great it handled sweat and odor!

One thing I would like everyone to know is, especially with today's gear easily being a costly investment, you do not have to spend a lot to start out. I've never had a lot of money, and I seriously started out my layers with cheap long johns and sets of normal sweat pants. If you do this, it's just important that you designate them for 'hunting' to keep them scentless, as you would with any expensive hunting clothing.

## 'OUTER' LAYERS

Next, my middle layer is actually one of my outer layers that is lighter in weight, so this layer needs to be camouflaged and able to hunt in as your outer layer, because it will be for warmer, earlier season temps, just not your the last layer during colder weather.

For me, this layer is *Kryptek's Women's Dalibor Jacket* and *Pants*. To avoid overheating and sweating while walking to my hunting position, I wear my under layers and these pants, but usually pack the jacket and the rest of my layers in my backpack.

When it comes to material for this layer, stretch is the most important aspect for me. My previous camo had no stretch, so it made layering enough to stay warm very hard. For the last two seasons, I've worn the Kryptek Dalibor set and realized how much the stretch it provides helps me out. I can easily fit those two thick thermal leggings underneath my pants and they still fit. The pants also have a great built-in Velcro/elastic belt that I can adjust and still fit in my pants also without all the layers. This flexibility is really important to me.

And the same goes for the jacket. I can wear my two thermal tops, and when things really





get cold, I actually throw in a third layer, which is a hoodie, underneath the jacket and it still fits and I can still move for pulling back my bow.

### SEE MY VEST

I have been a huge fan of vests for years. They are truly a bowhunter's best friend as they give you an extra layer to help keep your core warm, without adding any bulk to your arms or restricting any arm movement.

Keeping the core of your body warm is important because if it gets cold, you will start shivering and it will be hard to stop it. I wear a vest on every fall hunt - even on



warmer days because you still have cooler air early in the morning and late in the evening. Packing a vest takes such little space and makes such a big difference when you start getting a little chilled.

### EXTRA LAYERS

Another layer I rarely go without is bibs. (Not to confuse this with coveralls, which include sleeves - as a bowhunter, you want to stay away from these as if you ever have to shoot while kneeling or sitting down, these can restrict your arm movement and possibly even make it where you cannot pull back your bow at all.) I'm a huge fan of bibs with adjustable straps over your shoulders because like a vest, they also add warmth to your core

# FOOL MATURE BUCKS







UNDER  
LAYER 1  
TOP



UNDER  
LAYER 2  
TOP



EXTRA  
LAYER  
HOODIE



UNDER  
LAYER 1  
BOTTOMS



UNDER  
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BOTTOMS



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VEST  
INSIDE OR  
OUTER

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BIBS

BAG  
TO PACK  
LAYERS



without bulk to your arms, but they protect your core even more since cold wind can't reach the small of your back between your top and bottom layers. I also prefer bibs to have a full-length, double zipper along the legs so you can zip from the bottom for ease with boots and from the top for ease into layers underneath or leaving open if ever needing a quick cool down.

Then for when things get their absolute coldest for me during bow season, I have one more layer, which is **Kryptek's Women's Aquillo Jacket**. This very lightweight and packable jacket really keeps your body heat in, providing a lot of warmth for just a little more material. However, packable material often makes a bit of noise as a bowhunter, so I discovered if I just wear it inside my Dalibor Jacket, which is more of a soft-shell material, instead of on the outside, switching these two around still fit great and got rid of any noise.

If you are gun hunting, you can afford to have more bulk and noise, so you might want to go with a heavier coat and material. You can look for materials with properties such as waterproof and windproof to protect you on extreme conditions.

## BACKPACK

If you're like me and can sweat while hiking to your hunting position, it's important to carry some of your layers so you don't work up a sweat. With the right backpack, this is where layers really shine because then you can customize your clothing to every hunt, adjusting to the conditions by adding or taking off layers as needed.

However, fitting a lot of layers into a

zippered backpack is not an easy fit that often turns frustrating. Instead, use a backpack with outer straps that adjust or stretch to carry some of the bulk on the outside of the pack. I use **Slumberjack's Wild-Her Pack**, and absolutely love the function and fit as it is specifically built for women.

Another tip for not sweating is to be prepared and allow plenty of time to get to where you are walking, as a slower-moving hunter is less likely to get overheated. If you do arrive overheated or close to it, spray your face, neck, wrists and lower back with a scentless spray to help cool down quickly. I

carry a travel-size bottle in my backpack for this.

## NOGGIN

Lots of body heat escapes from your head if it's not covered properly. This is why it is important to have warm headgear as well as to protect your ears and face from the cold and windburn. Instead of a facemask, I prefer to wear a warm neck gator that is long enough to tuck into the front

and back of jacket layers.

You can push this up to your nose or eyes when needing protection from the elements, and push it down out of the way when needing to shoot your bow.

Wear a stocking hat, and when it's really cold, I layer two. No matter how cold it is, I still pack a regular camo 'baseball' cap hat





with a bill in my bag as you can still have very strong sunlight during cold weather that affects your view, and will wear this under a stocking hat.

## HANDS

Hands are definitely one of the first body parts that scream at you once cold. It can be especially hard to keep your hands warm while bowhunting since you can't wear thick gloves, as you must be able to feel your release. The best way I have found is to wear a thin pair of gloves, a second pair thin glove when needed and wear a hand muff. Hand muffs attach around your waist and have holes on each end so you can put your hands inside with fleece and add heat from hand warmers. This way you keep your hands ready until a deer approaches, but can still feel your release and not torque your bow once ready for a shot.

Even with the gloves and hand muff, one of the problems I always had was from the metal on the front of my bow handle. The chill from the metal seemed to immediately go through my thin gloves and freeze my hands when I had to stand ready with deer around. If you have this problem, there are ***LimbSaver Insulator Strips*** for bows that not only help against bow vibration, but also insulate your hand from the cold. This product has an adhesive backing that simply sticks to the front of the grip directly to the riser. I have hunted with it for years and it's worked really well for me.

Another idea is ***Better The Hunt's Insulated Bow Mitt***. As it's named, this is a big mitt for your bow, fitting directly around the handle, protecting it with insulation and waterproofing to keep you from freezing your fingers while holding it.

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## FEET

Just like the rest of your body, your feet need to stay dry to stay warm. I double up with two pair of socks. For your first layer of socks, choose a pair with the ability to wick away moisture from your feet. For the second pair, choose one solely for insulation, such as thick wool socks. When needed in colder temps, I also stick an adhesive chemical foot warmer to the bottom of my socks before putting them inside my boots.

For boots, I have two pairs of rubber hunting boots to chose from - one lighter pair for milder temps and one heavily insulated pair for cold temps. I am a fan of Lacrosse, and have pairs similar to their newer versions of **4XALPHA** 16" rubber boot with 3.5mm of neoprene and **AEROHEAD** 18" rubber boot with 7mm of neoprene.

Years ago, I stumbled upon **LittleHotties Thermal Insoles** and have worn them inside my hunting boots ever since. They are a thick padding insole that provides another good layer between your feet and a cold metal stand or the frozen ground. They also have a foil-like layer that reflects your body heat too to help with warmth.

Another idea to help your feet out when temps are at their worst is by using boot covers. These covers slip over your boots and help to give you even more insulation. These are not for walking in - only for while in the stand or blind. You can also add a chemical foot warmer inside these, if needed.

## THE LITTLE THINGS

There are other things that can be done to help ensure your body stays warm in cold weather. Although they may seem small and unimportant, they really do make a difference.

Remember that metabolism we talked about earlier? When your body is breaking down food, it's heating up your body, so you don't want to go hunting on an empty stomach, especially in cold weather. Eating a protein-rich or high-fiber meal before your hunt is a good idea to keep your body working so you have energy and warmth. However, I don't know about you, but waking up very early for morning hunts, I never have time to eat breakfast, as well as usually need another snack when heading to the woods a couple hours after lunch, so I usually eat one or two granola bars and have a small drink (juice box size so I can last the hunt without having to go to the bathroom) while driving to the hunting property. Granola bars often have good fiber, as well as some protein, and will stick with you for the next few hours of hunting. And the colder your body gets, the more dehydrated you will get, plus water actually helps to temporarily boost your metabolism, so stay hydrated.

After just 15 minutes of sitting still, your body actually starts to shut itself "off". So during slow times of your hunt and when you could use a warm boost, stand up, stretch a bit and concentrate on working on your body from head to toe through flexing. These small movements can be undetected while in the treestand, but help provide circulation and keep





the blood flowing. It also helps to take your mind off the cold while you're doing it.

Now for the outside of our bodies, during cold temperatures, moisture is robbed from our skin, and to protect it, put a layer of scentless hunting lotion on after a shower and again on your hands and face before/after a particularly harsh weather hunt. Skin is actually an organ, and just like all of our other organs, it has needs to properly function. Just like a coat, skin is our body's way of having an outer shield of protection to keep us healthy and dry, and cracked skin allows foreign things to get into our body. When overly exposed, hands can especially dry out, crack and bleed as well as your face can become windburn and inflamed. Having these problems in the field and avoiding to prevent or take care of them will only make your skin even more sensitive to cold and windburn. This season, I used *Southern Racks' Scentless Huntress Moisturizing Lotion for hand and body*, and found it to be the best I've tried so far.

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## PROBLEM SOLVING

Sewing might not seem like a crucial skill for hunters, but I actually think it's something every hunter should know how to do. I modify my hunting clothes and gear quite often to better fit my needs. If you have a trouble spot for cold, sew an extra layer of fleece there. After taking care of all the normal problem areas, as weird as it may seem, while sitting in the stand my knees are the next thing to get cold. If I have to stand up for deer, my cold knees really get to shaking and then it's hard to stop. So I sewed in an extra layer of fleece at my knees on the inside of my bibs. In the past, I've also sewed in fleece pockets to place hand warmers.



<< Having a good seat pad is another way to stay more comfortable during long sits and warmer during cold weather. I've used the same **Hunt Comfort Scout** seat pad for the last five years. It has a combination of gel and foam for cushioning.

With all my layers, a problem arose with my binocular harness and rangefinder strap going over my clothing and around my shoulders. Not only did they like to bunch up my top layers, these took too much noise and movement to put on and take off anytime

I needed to add a layer. I conquered this problem by sewing a string loop near each armpit area of my jackets. I then created my own binocular straps of thick string that I feed through my jacket loops and clip on my **Burris** binoculars with small carabiners. I'm very happy with how this has worked, and it's very quick and quiet when changing layers. You can also buy binocular straps with clips to clamp on any clothing, just make sure the clips aren't sticking out in the way of your bowstring when at full draw.

For my rangefinder strap, I replaced it with a retractable rangefinder tether that I can attach to a belt loop. This keeps my rangefinder out of the way, but even handier than my previous shoulder strap. Don't be afraid to adjust and create your own solutions for any hunting gear problems you may have.

## TRY SOMETHING NEW

While my system of staying warm is something I developed over years from hours upon hours of hunting, I think it's important to mention I am also still always trying to improve it. Today's technology and hunting gear is outstanding and continuously improving, so each year, I try to buy one new piece of gear that can help me even more. For example, in the past, I upgraded my seat pad and found that helpful with keeping warm and, of course, more comfortable in the stand. Last year, I decided to try a battery hand warmer, and loved it so much, I soon bought a second so I have a pair for my hands! I have **Celestron Elements Thermocharge Power Pack/Hand Warmers**. This year, I hope to upgrade my bibs, and maybe next year be able to try those merino layers.

While I've always been a treestand-only



hunter for deer, I have also realized over the years that no matter how prepared you are for the cold, when it comes to bowhunting, there are some limits with extreme temperatures. I've found once you get below around a 10-degree wind chill or so, things start to get tougher with pulling back a bow, but also the treestand starts creaking. So new for me this year, I've set up a ground blind that I plan to give a try for late season bowhunting.

Ground blinds and tower blinds are definitely a concept that is currently booming in the deer hunting industry - Tiffany Lakosky especially comes to mind as she's used ground blinds in corn stalks for many of her aired TV hunts, and you see the Kisky's, Drury's, Shockey's - most any professional hunter on TV using them nowadays. So don't forget these can especially be great for a cold hunt!

Dressing for the cold is definitely a lot of work. It takes planning ahead, extra time and more effort. Taking these steps and finding what works best for you will make these cold hunts more pleasant and worth your while. A warm hunter is quieter, more mentally focused, on the hunt longer and more likely to be successful. I do what it takes to be out in the field, and believe me, sometime guys tease me about how many hand warmers I am using or how many layers I have on, but the truth is I'm usually out there even longer than they are. I'm the first to head afield and the last one out.

<< I was skeptical about battery hand warmers at first, but am very impressed with them as I've found they have a better, longer heat than chemical hand warmers. They are also perfect to use once cool evening air sets in because I can quietly start these hand warmers when normally I would not make noise opening a chemical hand warmer package.

For chemical hand warmers, the adhesive toe and body warmers are my favorite because I can stick them to any trouble areas, such as those cold knees, lower back, arms, even between my stocking hats when it's really nasty out.

I always keep extras in my backpack in case they're needed. For chemical warmers, I've found the Hot Hands brand to be the best.



However, also know your body's limits. Don't forget about safety while hunting, especially in extreme conditions, and always let someone know where you are. Depending on what stage of life and what stage of hunting you are, don't be afraid to set limits for yourself either.

Whatever you do to stay out in the field, one last, but very important tip, is to make sure you practice shooting in your gear. Extra layers can all throw off your shooting for both bows and guns. Practice so you can make adjustments long before that moment of truth. And don't forget these ideas can be used for other types of hunting and ice fishing too - or really any outdoor activity! Good luck out there, and stay warm!

*Jennifer Pudenz is the owner and editor of ADVENTURESS magazine.*





# EUROPEAN MOUNTS

*Steps for DIY skull mounts*

**By Courtney Schnitzler**



## HUNTRESS VIEW HIGHLIGHT

**W**hile taxidermy mounts definitely have their place for preserving trophies and memories, your normal whitetail shoulder mount typically runs more than \$500, takes months or even more than a year to get back, and may need redone after years of aging. European mounts offer another alternative with a classic, rustic look that lasts a lifetime without any touch-ups, professionally done with much less cost of around \$100 and may only take a week or so to get back from your taxidermist. However, the average person can also do this option themselves - having a gorgeous rack to display within just days, for only about \$15 and a little elbow grease. This is especially fitting for those 'tweener' racks and saving space on the wall.

There are a few different ways to get your skull or bones clean, such as boiling, beetles and pure nature. The fastest and easiest, in my opinion, is the boiling method.

### BOILING

**STEP 1:** As early as possible after your hunt (waiting usually causes a darker, grayer coloring instead of a nice, white rack), remove as much flesh and soft tissue as possible from whatever bone you are wanting to keep. This includes the hide, brain, tongue, easily accessible sinus tissue, etc. The more you can remove, the easier the other steps will be.

**STEP 2:** Using a turkey frying burner and a pot you never plan on bringing into your house again, boil the bones with some degreaser (something like Oxi-Clean or Dawn dish soap). You're going to want to do this outside, also depending on how long it's been since the animal died and how much tissue



remains, this could be pretty stinky! Cover the bones with water in the pot and bring it to a boil for about an hour. Wear work gloves when pulling your bones from the pot because they WILL BE HOT!

**STEP 3:** Put on some safety glasses and pressure wash! You may want to place your bones in some kind of wire basket or tie them down to something so they don't get away. Also, be mindful of any loose teeth that may become dislodged during this process. During this step, you may also need needle-nose pliers, a flathead screwdriver or small wire brushes to help dislodge or remove fleshy pieces or sinus tissue.





Repeat steps 2 & 3 with more degreaser, if you have remaining tissue or if the bones still have a strong odor.

**STEP 4:** Let the bones dry (away from where animals can steal them) and glue back in any loose teeth.

**STEP 5:** (Optional): If you want your bones whiter, I recommend using a creamy peroxide mixture. Liquid bleach can damage the bone and make them brittle, so beware of bleaching. I combined Clairol BW2 Lightener Powder and L'Oréal 40 Volume Developer (\$15 total) into a paste and brushed it onto all visible areas of my whitetail deer skull. The length of time you should leave it on depends on how white you want the item to be.

I suggest washing it off after 8 or so hours and if you want it brighter, apply another coat. If you have loose teeth, whiten everything completely before glueing.

## BEETLES

Another method involves using dermestid (flesh-eating) beetles. These beetles are remarkably efficient and can pick bones clean in a matter of days. The only downside is that getting enough beetles to efficiently clean your future mount could cost \$100 or more. They also must be maintained in a controlled environment with proper food, moisture and temperature. Unless you have many items you want to clean, this option may be more





time consuming than desired. However, some taxidermists offer this option as well.

## THE GREAT OUTDOORS

The most basic method of cleaning bones that requires little to no effort on your part is to simply let nature take its course. Some people leave the item outside; however, you risk the chance of antlers being chewed by rodents, or a dog or coyote packing the entire thing away. By tying down a plastic bin over the item, you can let insects get to it without larger animals having access. Others simply bury the item whole. If you do this, I recommend leaving the antlers out of the dirt, but still covering the item with a plastic bin so animals cannot destroy or dig it up.

## MACERATION

Maceration is just a process of skinning the

item and leaving it to soak in water to soften the flesh and allow bacteria to consume it. Depending on the temperature, this process could take anywhere from weeks to several months to complete. In colder temperatures, a heat lamp could be used to keep the water warm so you can promote bacteria growth. Check the item periodically - when the meat can easily be peeled off or is falling off, it's ready. Scrub the item with a wire brush and allow it to dry for several days. This method is the least likely to potential damage the item but creates HORRENDOUS odors for a pretty good length of time.

Tip: You can use the whitening method listed as Step 5 following any form of cleaning.

*Follow Courtney Schnitzler on Instagram at @courtney\_schnitzler. View more Huntress View blog articles at [huntressview.com](http://huntressview.com).*



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## LOYAL FRIEND

*A below-zero retrieve for one determined duck dog on a southern Idaho hunt.*

STEPHANIE TSUNEKO

**Stephanie Tsuneko Photography**









