

## Oconto County 4-H

As you work on your project throughout the year, you may find it helpful to take pictures and keep notes. They can come in handy as you plan for ways to share what you have learned and look back on what you've done.

Suggestions for showcasing your project work:

- Tell about what you've learned at **Speaking Fest**
- Show what you've learned at **Demonstration Fest**
- Take your project to the **Oconto County Fair**
- Enter local contests **outside of 4-H** like essay contests, shows and speech contests
- Look for creative ways to share what you've learned with your **club**, your **school** and your **community**

### *Stay in Touch!*

*Here's how you can contact your key leader(s) this year:*

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*Adult Leader*

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*Developed by Oconto County 4-H Project Development Committee*

*Format by Johnathan M. Kruse*



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# WELCOME TO THE OCONTO COUNTY 4-H

## SHOOTING SPORTS (Wildlife Focus)

### PROJECT!



*There are many options for you in the Shooting Sports Project. You can enroll in any of the following projects: Archery, Air Rifle, Shotgun, Muzzleloading, and Hunting.*

*To get you "on target" in the shooting sports project, we have outlined an activity for each month of the 4-H year. Have fun!*



*Have fun!*

### Beginning of the Year

Here is what I would like to learn this year (my goal) in the Shooting Sports—Hunting project:

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### During the Project Year

Here are the steps I will take to meet my goal:

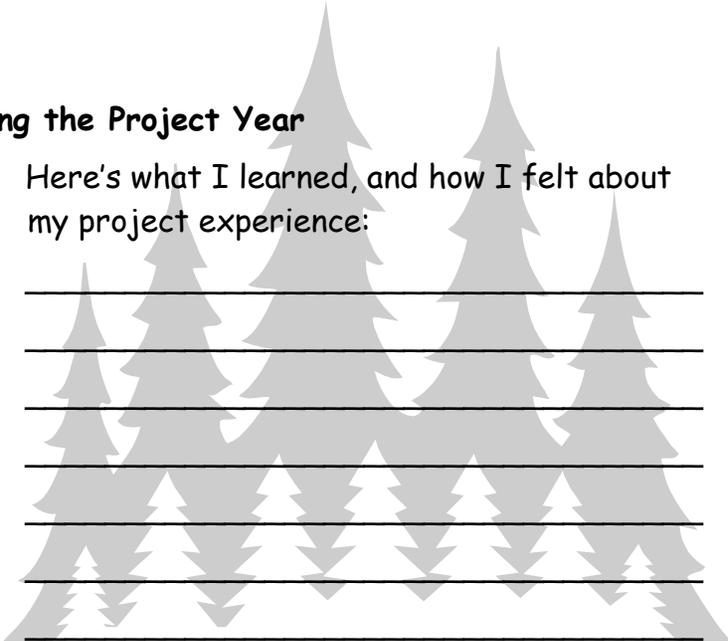
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### During the Project Year

Here's what I learned, and how I felt about my project experience:



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### Did you enjoy the Hunting Project?

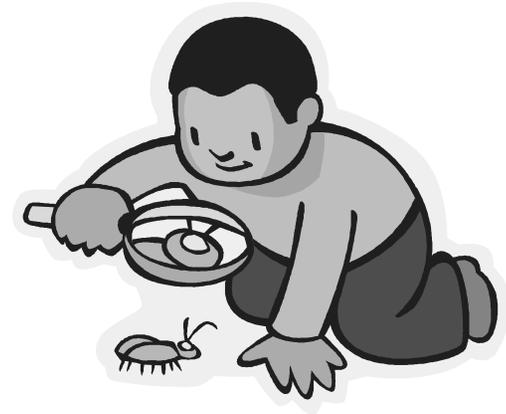
Was this project fun for you? If not, that's okay. It isn't likely that you'll like every project. What's important is that you **tried something new** and that you **learned something**.

What did you learn in this project? What could you have done better? What are you really proud of? These are all good questions to think about when you finish a project.

### Thanks for trying out the SHOOTING SPORTS PROJECT!

*If you liked this project, you should consider signing up for another year! You will get to dig deeper into the project and discover many new and exciting things.*

*It's never too soon to get started on next year's projects!*

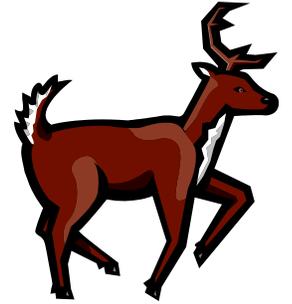


**See you in the next project year!**

# Notes...

## October/November

It's nearly deer season, and hunters are starting to get ready! Many hunters know that getting ready doesn't just mean finding your blaze orange and sighting in your rifle. Getting ready also means finding out where you can expect to see deer.



The successful hunters are the ones who are skilled at finding deer "sign." Locating deer sign takes **lots of practice**, and now is a great time to do it. The deer leave lots of sign in the fall. **NOTE:** Make sure you follow all safety rules if you are in the woods during deer hunting season.

Begin by choosing a wooded area where you think there might be deer. Look carefully for **deer trails**. Deer like to use the same trails, day after day, year after year. Along the trail, you'll likely find other sign. Walk slowly and look carefully! Here are some things to look for:



### Tracks

Tracks can tell you a lot about where the deer has been and where it's is going. The pointed end of the track points to the direction in which the deer is going. When you find a track, stop and examine both it and the surrounding area carefully. Think about what the deer might have been doing here. Was it going to feed? Coming from a bedding area? By following the tracks, you may find more deer sign (deer bed, feeding area).

### Pellets

Did you know that in the winter, the average deer leaves behind almost 12 piles of pellets **EACH DAY**? So if there are deer in the area, you are probably going to find some deer pellets. Keep in mind that feeding stimulates defecation.

## Buck Rubs and Scrapes

A buck in rut leaves lots of sign. Look for **scrapes** - areas where the buck has pawed at the ground. Often times the buck will urinate in the area of the scrape. **Buck rubs** are sign that a buck may have been polishing his antlers. Look for areas on trees that have their bark rubbed off at "deer height." In the picture on the right, there is evidence of a buck rub on the small tree in the foreground.



### Deer beds

Deer bed down in tall grass. They leave large oval-shaped depressions behind. Deer often lie down after feeding to digest their food.

### Feeding sign

When you get a chance, look in a deer's mouth. You'll notice that it doesn't have any top teeth in the front of its mouth. So when a deer bites off grass or twigs, it leaves a raggedy edge behind.

NOTE: A rabbit has both top and bottom front teeth and it neatly clips off grass and twigs.

NOTE: Finding and recognizing deer sign is a good first step. The next part is the thing that some fail to do: **PUT IT ALL TOGETHER**. Think of the deer signs as **clues** to a mystery. What story can you put together from the clues? You can use that story to position yourself where that deer will likely be tomorrow, and increase your chances of being a successful hunter.

## Camera and/or Notebook

Wildlife observation is great all by itself, but it is also a great time to record the moment with a picture. Or, if inspiration strikes, a creative writing venture!

## Backpack

I don't know about you, but I NEVER go in the woods without a **compass and food**...And take a compass reading BEFORE you go in the woods, so you know how to get back!

And now that you are ready, let's sneak into the woods as quietly as you can. Remember those deer trails that you learned about in November? If you can find one, follow it! You'll move much more quietly.

Keep your eye out for a comfortable spot where you will be somewhat concealed. The base of a tree is an ideal spot, and the tree makes a great back rest!

If you are very quiet (this is where the patience comes in!), you will be rewarded by activity. You'll notice that birds begin singing, the leaves rustling, and the squirrels will start moving through the trees again.

Sit back, enjoy yourself, and be part of nature! Patience!



## July

One of my favorite pictures is of a hunter in his stand, with a chickadee on the barrel of his gun. If you sit VERY QUIETLY in the woods and don't move, you can get chickadees to come close to you also.



Sitting quietly enough to observe wildlife up close is great skill for outdoor enthusiasts. It requires planning and patience. Let's work on the planning — the patience you have to come up with yourself!

### Clothing

- Camouflage isn't necessary but it's smart to choose colors that blend into the background.  
Deer see things in shades of gray, but squirrels, like other mammals that are active during the day, can see color. And birds? Those brightly colored feathers are to impress other birds, so....it makes sense that they can see colors WELL.
- Choose **comfortable clothing**, layered for the weather. In July, you won't have to worry too much about getting cold, unless it rains.
- Avoid zippers and Velcro. Picture this....a deer is moving closer and closer to you and you unzip your jacket to get to your camera, and.....just like that — he's **GONE!**

### Shoes

**Soft-soled shoes** make the least noise, but **all** feet no matter what they kind of shoe, are capable of making LOTS of noise. Practice walking slowly and quietly. The best hint is this: Watch your path and place your feet carefully in areas without twigs (or crackly leaves).

## December

Hunters have a **legal** responsibility to retrieve game that they have killed. They also have an **ethical** responsibility to use that game. One of the ways that we use game is to eat it.



There are lots of delicious recipes for wild game.

*Wisconsin's Wild Game: Enjoying the Harvest* by Mary E. Mennes and Scott R. Craven is available from the Extension office or on-line (<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/>)

One of my favorite recipes of all time is included in this publication. It works well with pheasant or grouse, and, just in case your freezer is empty, you can substitute chicken.

**CAUTION:** Have an adult help you with this and use care near the hot oil.

### **Dipper's Nuggets**

Yield: 4 servings

2 whole pheasant breast, skinned and boned

1 egg, beaten

1/3 cup water

1/3 cup flour

2 tsp sesame seeds

1/2 tsp salt

2 cups corn oil

Cut breasts into 1 x 1 x 1/2-inch nuggets. Mix egg and water. Add flour, sesame seeds and salt to make batter. Pour corn oil into heavy saucepan or deep fryer, filling no more than one-third full. Dip nuggets into batter and drain off excess. Carefully add nuggets, a few at a time. Fry 3 to 5 minutes, or until golden brown and fork inserts easily. Drain on paper towels. Serve with Nippy Pineapple Sauce.

### **Nippy Pineapple Sauce**

1/2 cup pineapple preserves

2 tblsp prepared mustard

2 tblsp prepared horseradish

Stir ingredients together in a small saucepan. Heat slowly over low heat.

## January

It's usually pretty cold in Wisconsin in January. But even in warmer temperatures, we can get "cold" depending on the conditions. Some people have experienced **hypothermia** (drop of body temperature) at temperatures as warm as 50 degrees.



There are five ways we lose our body heat. Think of what you would you take along (or wear) on a hunting trip to avoid losing heat in each of the following areas.

1. **Radiation** — Guess where most of our heat escapes our bodies? Through your head! *What could you do to prevent losing heat through your head?*
1. **Conduction** — Sitting on metal or just the ground takes heat from us and gives it to whatever we were sitting on). *Can you think of something to stick in your pocket that you could use if you wanted to sit on the ground?*
2. **Convection** — When cold air travels over our body, we lose heat to the air. It's why a fan feels good in summer, and wind "goes right through" us in winter. *How could you protect your body from convection loss?*
3. **Evaporation** — Sweating causes us to cool down. It can be a problem in winter if you sweat and you and/or your clothing becomes damp. *What kind of cloth "wicks" moisture away from your body?*
4. **Respiration** — You breathe out nice WARM air and take in COLD air. *What could you wear to prevent losing your warm air while avoiding breathing in cold air?*

**Challenge:** Put together a cold weather kit that has something to protect you against heat loss in **each** of the above areas. The kit should be able to fit in your backpack!

## June



Knowing your "**pace**" can help you learn how to calculate distance, and it also helps you become better at estimating how far you are away from objects. This, like most everything else, takes practice.

Here's how to determine your pace:

- Set out two stakes or markers in your yard. Start with 150 feet (50 yards) between the two stakes. Measure the distance with a steel tape.
- Walk at a **comfortable** rate, counting the number of times your **left** foot hits the ground (if you start with your right foot. If you start with your left, count each time your right foot hits the ground.) Start at one stake, and stop at the other. Do this several times until you keep getting the same number.

Now for the math: Take the number of paces and divide it into 150. For example, if it took you 30 paces to cover 150 feet, you would divide  $150 \div 30 = 5$ . Your pace would be 5 feet. Then you would know, that whenever you are "pacing", each pace you cover is 5 feet.

Pacing is a good estimate of distance, if you have accurately set your pace. As you grow, you will need to re-calculate your pace.

**HINT:** Regularly pace out shooting distances until you can predict the distance of objects. For example, if you know that you can accurately hit a target at 150 feet, practice identifying things that are 150 feet away.

## May

What do you **NEED** to live? Would it surprise you to find out that animals **NEED** just about the same things that you do in order to live? The list of **NEEDS** are: food, water, shelter, and space. And when they are located in just the right way, we call them **HABITAT**.



Habitat needs are different for different animals. The habitat that an American Robin needs is not the same as that of a Bald Eagle. Let's take a look outside and see who's using the habitat in your backyard! No backyard? Find a green space near your home — like a park. Start by taking a walk—early in the morning or at dusk—through your backyard. If it's a small space, try sitting quietly and observing the wildlife. **Make a list** of the species you see. You will probably see many different kinds of birds, insects, and mammals, even if you don't know their names.

Now comes the tricky part. Pick out one or two of the animals and figure out why they are there in the middle of your backyard. Watch them closely. What are they eating? Where are they getting water? Where do they hide? You are identifying that animal's **HABITAT!**

Does your backyard seem to be a good place for lots of different kinds of animals to live? Are you interested in making your backyard a better place for wildlife? National Wildlife Federation has resources to create a backyard that will attract wildlife. Check out their website at: <http://www.nwf.org/backyard/>

????Would it surprise you to know that most **WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT** of hunting species is really **HABITAT MANAGEMENT**?

## February



Have you ever gotten "turned around" in the woods, and not known which way to go? It's easy to get lost in an unfamiliar setting. Sometimes people even get lost in places they know well.

It's good to have something to depend on besides your own sense of direction. Compasses are probably the **BEST** option for getting you out of the woods. GPS units are fun and accurate, except when their batteries die!

You can get a little more understanding of how a compass works by making your own simple magnetic compass. A compass uses a magnetic needle to direct it to the earth's magnetic field. The needle of a compass always points **NORTH**.

You'll need the following things to get started:

- Needle or metal paper clip
- Magnet (refrigerator magnets usually work ok)
- Flat piece of cork (or Styrofoam)
- Dish of water

### Directions:

Magnetize your needle by running the magnet slowly over half of the needle, from the center to the tip. Always move the magnet in the same direction over the needle.

Place the piece of cork (or Styrofoam) in a dish of water.

Carefully place the needle on the cork.

Watch as the needle slowly turns toward the north.

You have learned the most important thing about a compass. The needle **ALWAYS** points **North!**

## March

Are you right-handed or left-handed? How about your eyes? Is your dominant eye your right or your left?



Just like we have a dominant hand, we also have a dominant eye. And when it comes to shooting, it's best to learn to shoot using your dominant eye. That is true **EVEN** if your dominant eye isn't on the same side as your dominant hand. Shooting is about your **EYES** more than it is about your **HANDS**.

Here's how to find your dominant eye:

1. Lay one of your thumbs on top of the other.
2. Bring your pointer fingers toward each other until you have a triangle between your fingers and thumbs. Fold your other fingers down to your pointers.
3. Make that triangle smaller, until it is about the size of a 50 cent piece.
4. Look at an object in the distance. It can be a picture on the wall, or a person's face.
5. Raise your triangle to your face and look through it at the object.
6. Close your left eye. Did the object disappear or do you see it clearly?
7. Close your right eye. Did the object disappear?

Your dominant eye is the one out of which you saw the object. If you saw the object when you closed your left eye, you are right eye dominant. And if you saw it when you closed your right, you are left eye dominant.

**NOTE:** You should hold your gun or bow on the same side of your body as your dominant eye.

## April

Most turkey hunters in Wisconsin rely on a "call" to bring the turkey to them, especially in the spring. A tube call works well and you can make one at home.

### Materials needed:

- \* Pill bottle or 35mm film canister with lid
- \* A powderless latex glove
- \* A sharp knife (**use only with adult supervision**)
- \* A pair of scissors



### Directions:

- \* Cut off the bottom of the canister or bottle.
- \* Cut a half circle in the lid.
- \* From the glove, cut a three-inch by two-inch strip of latex.
- \* Place the latex over the top of the canister so that it lines up with the hole in the cap, creating a thin gap across the lid hole.
- \* The cap will hold the latex in place.
- \* Stretch or loosen the latex to get the desired sounds.
- \* Practice, Practice, Practice.



Once the call is made, exhale air across the stretched latex, which vibrates and makes the turkey sounds. By moving your lips over the latex and moving your jaw up and down, you can change the pitch and tone of the sounds.

**HINT:** To get an idea of what a turkey sounds like (and the different sounds they can make), check out the National Turkey Foundations "call page" at [http://www.nwtf.org/calling\\_tips.html](http://www.nwtf.org/calling_tips.html)

[http://www.nwtf.org/tips\\_adventures/tips.php?id=10012](http://www.nwtf.org/tips_adventures/tips.php?id=10012) Pictures and text used with permission from the National Wild Turkey Foundation