

MODERN SURVIVAL

Field-book Series

Book 5
Animal Tracking and Traps

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About this booklet

The Modern Survival field-book series has been designed to accompany the on-site course available through the Campcraft Outdoors Field School (campcraftoutdoors.com) and the online Modern Survival course through the Old World Alliance (oldworldalliance.com).

Alone, we believe this booklet series will transmit a great deal of insight regarding modern survival skills and how they will make your outdoor adventures safer, more meaningful and instill and greater confidence in your ability to endure when the worst conditions are against you.

Food to Endure

Food Resources can be a complicated topic to cover when it comes to survival – it's one of the lower priorities when it comes to the Rules of 3's and 5's, as most humans can survive 3 weeks without food and still function. Most of us are totally reliant on the commercial availability of food, and would be helpless if asked to fend for ourselves. So we should at first focus on simple food items that require the least amount of calories and effort to obtain in a survival situation. As our skills, knowledge and resources improve, perhaps through trial and error, we'll arrive at larger and more substantial food options for longer term self reliance.

Survival begins at the water's edge...

The 5 Lower Food Chain Resources

Fish harvested from all fresh water sources may be contaminated from Mercury and other trace contaminants such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs). Most states have issued their own fish consumption advisories noting areas where high contamination have been found or are occurring. While fish is a great food resource, over

consumption or complete reliance upon it could lead to adverse health risks. Most fish however are healthy to eat and are an excellent source of low-fat protein, so do not let this information deter you! Simply eat fish in moderation as with any other food resource.

Risks from eating contaminated fish can be reduced by the following:

- fillet the fish, remove the skin and trim all fat
- do not eat fish eggs
- broil, grill or bake the fillets instead of frying or microwaving
- do not eat or reuse juices or fats that cook out of the fish.

Saltwater fish can be treated in the same manner due to the same reasons, however a most salt water fish can be eaten raw.

Saltwater fish are safer to eat raw because the water temperatures in the oceans actually helps to kill parasites and bacteria.

Frogs in the United States are generally safe to eat. Typically, people eat the back legs of the frog because that is where you will find the most

meat and they discard the rest.

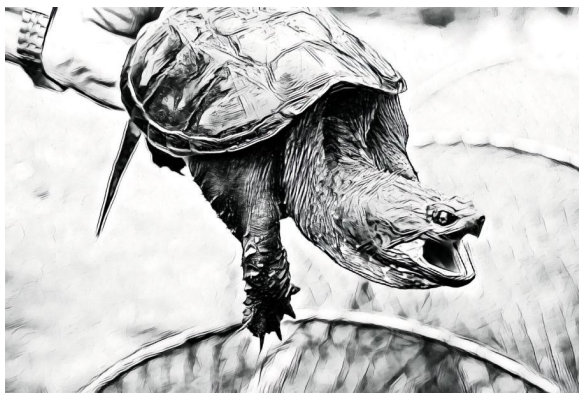
You should be aware of the differences between frogs and toads, since toads can be poisonous without showing indicators that you would see in frogs such as brightly colored skin. In order to tell the difference between frogs and toads, remember that frogs have smooth skin, while toads will have bumps on them. Frogs also have longer, narrower faces while toads have shorter, wider ones. If you watch a frog capturing its prey, you will notice that it has a sticky tongue that extends easily. By contrast, a toad will actually have to capture its prey in its mouth.



Snakes are another food option to be considered. Whether venomous or not, snakes are a viable meat source that must be handled with care. Venomous snakes can of course cause a variety of medical issues should you get bit. Non-venomous snakes have bacteria in their mouths which can also cause infection. Carefully remove the head and bury it, and gut and skin the reptile. Clean your hands after discarding the skin and entrails.

Turtles of several different kinds can be found in fresh-waters which can be used for food. The most popular is the snapping turtle. These can grow to be very large, and care must be taken when harvesting them to avoid their powerful beak. Terrapins are smooth bodied turtles which are generally much smaller than snappers. All are good for the iconic dish, turtle soup, but the snapper is the most highly prized, and is easily found in most ponds or streams in North America. Because turtles spend their times in water among fish parts and are generally dirty and hosts of a variety of bacteria, a hearty scrubbing is required after dispatching one for food. Begin by removing the bottom shell plate, gutting the animal and discarding of the innards or using as later bait for other things.

Skin the turtle meat you wish to use, then parboil to soften it before cooking. It can be fried or made into a soup relatively easy.



Common snapping turtle, Credit Jodie Owen

Worms are the lowest of our waters edge resources because they're generally considered to be bait for the critters preceding them. That said, a single worm can provide 1 calorie over 50% of which comes from protein. Not much one at a time, but by the handful worms can provide some short term nutrition.

The 5 Mid-Chain Resources

Insects- the estimates of numbers of edible insect species consumed globally range from 1,000 to 2,000. These species include 235 butterflies and moths, 344 beetles, 313 ants, bees and wasps, 239 grasshoppers, crickets and cockroaches, 39 termites, and 20 dragonflies, as well as cicadas. While most insects are safe raw, they are more palatable after being cooked. Boiling or roasting in leave kills any bacteria, as well as renders the proteins more digestible. Remove beady heads, hard carapaces, wings, barbed legs, and antennae to reduce the “crunch factor,” ease swallowing, and eliminate any parasites. With a grasshopper, twist off the head—the guts should come with it—before swallowing the abdomen. Don't eat bugs that are covered in fuzz. (Bees and wasps are safe to eat if you remove their stingers.) Beware of brightly colored insects, they're usually poisonous and avoid disease carrying species including flies, mosquitoes, and ticks. Any bug that emits a strong odor should also be avoided.

Lizards meat is full of microorganisms, including a number of parasites and bacteria that can cause food-borne illnesses. Improperly

handling the carcasses or raw meat can lead to cross contamination. So, safely-prepare the meat and cook it thoroughly, otherwise the potential risks will outweigh many of the rewards that you hope to enjoy. Most species are not poisonous, and they also tend to have lean, nutrient-rich meat.

Rabbits have long been a staple of the survivalists diet. Not only are they fairly easy to harvest with a throwing stick, but they are also easy to snare and trap. Rabbits are generally safe and healthy. In rare instances they can be infected with Tularemia as with other mammals such as ticks, dogs and rodents. According to the Mayo Clinic Tularemia is a rare infectious disease that typically attacks the skin, eyes, lymph nodes and lungs. Symptoms of infection in humans can include fever, chills, headaches, exhaustion, swollen or painful lymph glands within 5-14 days after contraction. It can be treated with anti-biotics if diagnosed early.

Whenever harvesting rabbits or any animal for food for that matter, check for signs of illness, ulcers, spots on the liver and other abnormalities. If anything is off, dispose of the animal, wash your hands well and try again.

Rodents are eaten in much of the world and even raised for food in still developing countries. From guinea pigs and nutria to rats and mice, rodents provide a solid source of food that's easily attainable. Traps are generally the best means of capturing rodents, including simple sticky traps and the standard mouse trap.

Rat Traps can be easily modded to work well for not just rodents, but rabbits and squirrels too.

Squirrels are essentially the rodent of the trees and as such, traps and snare poles work well for harvesting. Projectile weapons such as arrows, spears and atlatl darts are also very effective at reaching them higher off the ground, but require constant practice to maintain proficiency. Cane and bamboo blow guns can also be utilized to great effect. Regardless of the method, take the same precautions as previous animals when checking for illness or abnormality before consuming.

And remember, the larger the animal, the more preparation, skill and resources that is required to trap it!

The 5 Tracking Signs

Paths of Travel (Game Trails)



Game Trails are the highways and sidewalks of the woodlands. These are the best areas to gather information on the type, size, quantity of animals and frequency and directions of travel. So much information is available along a game trail that resting alongside one when in pursuit of game will almost guarantee a meeting should you be paying attention to the sign you are looking at.

Prints



Paw and Hoof Prints will tell you the type and variety of animals you have in your area. Look for a track trap such as soft dirt, sand or gravel to get a good print indicator, then make your trapping and hunting assessment based upon what animals are active in the area. Like game trails, the prints or tracks themselves can give a wealth of information such as how many, how big, where from, where to. It's important to know common track identifiers so you don't think your tracking a wolf when it's really the neighbors dog.

Scat



Scat or poop is another great sign to look for that can tell you not only the general health of an animal, but what they are eating which may key you in to other resources in the area to exploit. Steaming scat is obviously fresh. Soft, moist scat is recent, and firm scat is a day or more old. The drier and more weathered, obviously the longer the duration since the animal passed through. Check scat carefully when you find it for resource indicators and to get an idea of how often animals are passing by.

Fur or Feathers



Fur or Feathers will often show you locations that an animal is nesting, frequents or crosses often. These are good spots to often set traps. Fence lines are great spots to find fur as it often gets trapped in the wire as various animals climb over and under the fencing. Look for holes or drops in the wire top and bottom to see where larger game such as deer or hogs may be crossing.

Chewings (Food Stores or Remnants)

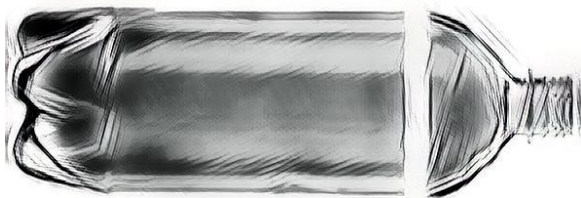


Chewings show us where the animals are eating. Good spots to look for these are along fallen trees and logs, on stumps and other elevated flat surfaces. Animals like flat tables just as we do, so when nature provides one, they often take advantage of it by eating on it. You can see what they're eating and how often they frequent the area to eat.

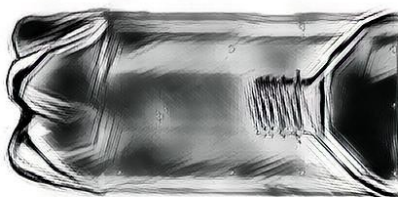
This again may key you in to other resources available you have not yet realized while also giving you another indicator of animal type and frequency of visit to an area.

The 5 Survival Traps

Minnow Trap



Cut Bottle Top Off



Push Bottle Top Into Bottom Section

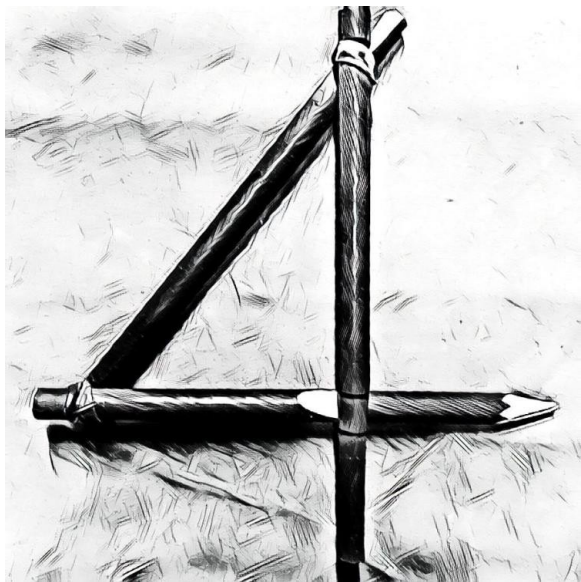
The minnow trap can be easily made from a variety of trash bottles you may come across in the woods. Cut off the end with the cap, remove the cap, invert it so the cap now faces inside the bottle and then secure it by cutting slits and tying, with barbs of wire or from thorns or just cut two holes, one on top and one on bottom that

goes through both plastic pieces and run a 3ft long stick through it.

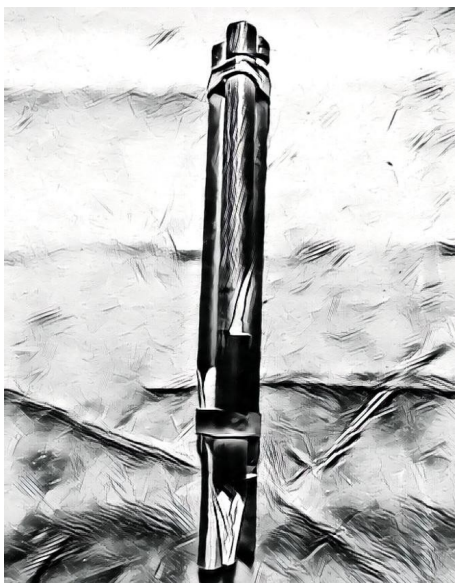


Not only will the stick keep it secure in a current, but it will also make it easier to place in deeper pools of water. Bread, pet food, chewed nuts and corn and even entrails work as baits.

Figure 4 Deadfall with Ranger Bands



This trap configuration has been around for ages, but it was Jamie Burleigh who figured out how to use Ranger Bands (Heavy Rubber Bands) on one instead of carving a lot of notches. After all, in a survival scenario carving and other fine motor skills diminish in a true emergency. There are only two carve points on this trap, a 7 notch and a squared edge, these are



macro carving techniques easily accomplished.

All you need are three sticks of about finger diameter and sized according to the prey you wish to trap. On the center stick, which is the upright, create a sharp corner. On the bait stick, the pointed one, create a number 7 notch that will rest on the sharp corner. Then the fulcrum, which holds the deadfall, you can carve a flat if desired so it rests better under the fall, but it's

optional. Band them together tightly and you're all set.

Snare



Snares were used during Biblical times primarily for catching birds- *Psalm 124:7 We escaped like a bird from a hunter's trap. The trap is*

broken, and we are free!- snares can be set to capture around the foot or leg, the body or around the neck. This will largely depend upon your target animal, more often than not you'll get a neck or body snare as you'll often be forced to rely upon string based cordage in a survival scenario unless you're able to procure some thin wire. Be sure to check photo and mirror frames when in a suburban area as they often are hung with wire and this is perfect for survival snaring!

In the Ojibway Bird Snare shown here, you drill a hole through a stick and run your snare line through the hole to a weight. Place a small branch perch into the hole just enough to keep the snare from being pulled through the hole by the weight. Once a bird lands on the perch, it triggers the snare and it catches the feet. Be careful though, if your weight is too heavy as my first few were, you'll just break legs off birds. Use a small stone, tree nuts or stick as the counter weight.

Shepherds Sling



The Shepherds Sling is a projectile hunting weapon that can also be removed from the staff and be used by hand. This weapon takes quite a bit of practice, but once you figure it out it is quite devastating. Choose a straight staff that's no taller than chin height. Sharpen a blunt tip on one end and 1" below the taper, carve a V notch circumferential to the staff.



Now create a leather or heavy canvas pouch that will hold the projectiles. This should be the length and width of your hand, fingers together. Now attach it to the staff with cordage. On the blunt taper, place a loop which will attach to one side of the pouch. On the opposite side of the pouch, the cordage will attach to the V notch.

Once attached, the pouch should hang no lower than one hand-span from the bottom of the staff to somewhere in the middle, this will be determined by personal preference over time. Test the throw to make certain the loop comes

off the blunted tip easily with each throw.

Projectiles should be about small potato to fist sized, they can be stones like David threw at Goliath (1 Sam. 17) or golf balls, blocks of wood or whatever you can find. Rounded stones throw amazing! This weapon can easily take out small game and if a head shot were possible, it could likely kill a larger animal such as a deer.

Slingshots are another great sling option and a more accurate, light weight and great for small game.



Hunting Gig



The hunting gig is a great tool for frogs and waters edge game and fish. All you need is a stick that's taller than you. At the heavier end of the stick, split it into 4 sections, then sharpen

each barb you have created. Put some spacer sticks between the barbs to keep them spread apart, then tie them into place so that when the spear is used, it stays together.

When deploying this tool, you do not throw it, you stab and maintain pressure on the animal you hit to pin it to the ground. Animals will often wiggle out of or off the barbs if it wasn't a direct hit, so follow the shaft down to dispatch the live animal with your free hand, hopefully you'll have a knife or stone in it to make it quick. This tool is great for spearing rays and lobsters along coastal regions as well.

You could attach sling shot banding to create a Hawaiian sling spear, but this is best used while swimming in open water with larger fish.



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