

Hunting vs. Trapping vs. Fishing: Why Hunters Will Starve In The Next Food Crisis

2018-02-11 08:59:37 By Bill White

Finding enough food to live on in the wild is one of those things that's often overlooked. Perhaps that's because water, heat and shelter are all more important survival priorities.

Yet with the average bug out bag only containing three days worth of food, this isn't exactly something we can ignore. Yes, we can live for 30 days or more without food, but eventually we have to eat.

Typically, people talk about living off the land as if it is something easy to do. But let me ask you, how many hunters do you know, who go hunting every year, but rarely come back with anything?

That might be okay if you're just hunting for sport, but it won't be acceptable if you're trying to feed your family.

The truth is, it's much harder to live off the land than it used to be. Back in the pioneering days, the country was teeming with game, making it easy for people to hunt for their food. But much of that game has been killed off through the years, and not as much land is left in a pristine state for wildlife to live in.

Cities, farms, ranches, recreational areas and roads have taken much of the land once roamed by wildlife.

Nevertheless, the day may come where your only chance of eating is through hunting, fishing or trapping. There are even fewer of us today who know what plants are edible, than there are who know what sorts of animal life are edible. So, for most, it will be easier to be a hunter, than a gatherer.

Granted, we'd be better off knowing both; how to hunt, fish or trap for animal protein, and how to gather edible plants for food as well. That would give us the biggest possibility of finding food that we can eat. But for now, I just want to focus on the hunting aspect of this. Hunting actually breaks down into three basic categories:

- Hunting (usually referring to big game, although you can hunt small game as well)
- Trapping (small game only)
- Fishing (I think you know what this is)

Which one of these will work the best for you will depend a lot on where you are and what is available there. If you are in arid country, it's going to be hard to go fishing. On the other hand, if you are in an urban area, it's unlikely that you'll be able to go hunting for more than cats and dogs.

Hunting

Survival hunting is considerably different than what most people know as hunting today. You can forget about the idea of using seed corn to lure deer in, as you probably won't have any seed corn available.

For that matter, you won't have a deer blind or anything else to make it easier to hunt. Hunting would mean going back to the basics, tracking game to find their habits, then staking out a place and waiting for the game to come to you.

The big problem here is that hunting big game require the investment of a lot of time. With all the survival tasks that need to be done, finding time to do much hunting would be difficult.

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Until you learned the habits of the animals, you would probably not manage to catch much.

For this reason, hunting is probably not the best bet for finding food in a survival situation. While you would get a lot more meat out of a deer or elk, than you would out of a squirrel, you would also have to invest more time in the process.

Ultimately, you would probably invest more time in hunting, than the food you got out of it would be worth.
















However, there is a way to make this more effective, especially if you stay in the same area for a prolonged period of time. As you worked around the area, you could keep your eyes open, learning the habits of the wildlife in the area.

That way, once you knew the animals' habits, you would be able to go out just at dusk and hunt, investing very little time for the catch.

Of course, there is always the chance of happening upon wildlife while you are involved in other survival activities, such as gathering wood. So you should always keep a weapon at hand, ready to use if you need it.

That would allow you to take advantage of those opportunities that chance offers you.

Keep in mind that if you are going to hunt, you're going to need to be able to preserve the meat as well. That either means smoking it or drying it. Of the two, drying meat and making it into jerky is easier and provides for better protection of the meat against decay.

<div> <div>EXTENDED</div> <div>WILD GAME</div> <div>NUTRITIONAL GUIDE</div> </div>				
UPDATED WITH YOUR REQUESTS!				
<div> <div>LARGE GAME</div> <div>SMALL GAME</div> <div>FISH</div> <div>FOWL</div> </div>				
GAME	CALORIES (kcal)	PROTEIN (g)	FAT (g)	CHOLEST. (mg)
 ANTELOPE	97	19	1.7	81
 BLACK BEAR	132	17.8	7	N/A
 BOAR, WILD	104	18.3	2.8	N/A
 DEER	120	23	2.4	85
 ELK	94	19.5	1.2	47
 MOOSE	87	18.9	0.6	50
 OPOSSUM	188	25.7	8.7	110
 RABBIT	97	18.5	2	69
 SQUIRREL	102	18.1	2.7	71
 SALMON	170	17	11.5	41
 BASS	97	16	.66	51
 WALLEYE	79	16.3	1	73
 DUCK	105	16.9	3.6	65
 PHEASANT	113	20	3	66
 GROUSE	156	26.4	5.5	N/A
<div> <div>INFORMATION BASED ON 3oz PORTIONS</div> <div>SOURCE: WILD GOURMET, A BOONE AND CROCKETT PUBLICATION</div> <div>wide open spaces</div> </div>				

Smoked meats are only effective until they are cut, at which time the cut surface needs to be smoked to prevent decay.

Trapping

Compared to hunting, trapping is actually considerably more efficient. A lot of that is due to the ability to create the traps or snares and then leave them, checking back daily to see if you have caught anything.

This allows you to do other necessary tasks, while your traps are hunting for you.

There are a number of disadvantages to trapping over hunting though. First of all, you're not going to get a whole lot of meat out of one animal. We're talking small game here, and unless you are fortunate enough to be able to trap rabbits, you're not going to get a lot of meat off of one animal.

Squirrels, which are the most common small game available in most parts of the country, don't really provide enough meat for one person; you need two per person to make a meal.

The other big disadvantage of trapping is that it requires a lot of special knowledge to build traps and snares. Few people really know how to build snares, and building snares from a diagram that you might be carrying in your bug out bag isn't as easy as some people would have you believe.

If you are going to trap small game for food, you should practice making snares at home or on camping trips, so that when the time comes, you will be ready to make them. Concentrate on just a few simple styles, becoming competent in building those. Then forget about everything else, as you won't need all those more complicated styles.

The other thing you have to know for trapping is how to find where the animals are. This involves part track identification and part knowing where they live. A trap that isn't located in a path that animals use isn't going to do you the least bit of good.

One of the easiest snares to make is one which is ideal for catching squirrels. All you need is a loop (or several loops) of thin, stiff wire and a pole. For a pole, you can use a 3 to 4 inch diameter branch off of the ground.

Lean this at an angle against the trunk or lower limb of any convenient tree, preferably one which you have seen squirrels in. They will naturally take this path, rather than going up the trunk, because it is easier.

I like to use steel guitar strings for this snare, as they already have a small loop at one end. Sticking the end through this loop allows you to make a noose, large enough for the head of a squirrel to fit through, but too small for the shoulders to go through.

Locate the loop on the top side of the branch and anchor the loose end to the branch. Several can be attached to one branch, allowing you to catch several squirrels. When squirrels go up the branch, they will hang themselves in the loops.

Fishing

Of all the ways of harvesting animal protein from nature, fishing is the most efficient, especially if you use traps or automatic reels. The fish population in most lakes and rivers is higher than the population of animals on land.

So there is literally more food available in the water.

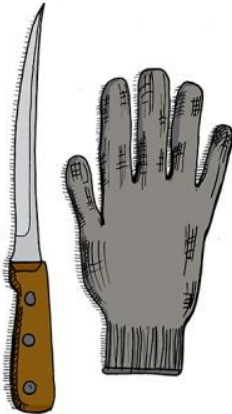
Like trapping, you can fish without having to be there, watching your fishing pole all the time. This is most commonly accomplished by using traps of some sort. I've seen some amazingly creative fish traps, most of which were made of garbage.

The basic idea behind any fish trap is to have a narrow opening that the fish can swim through to enter, with a larger holding area behind that opening. Fish will find the opening and swim through it, entering the trap, especially if there is something inside the trap to act as bait.

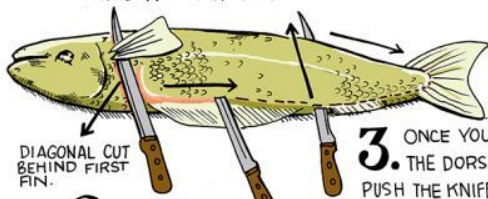
But once inside, it is much harder for the fish to find the entrance they just came in, so they remain trapped.

HOW-TO fillet a fish

USE THE RIGHT TOOLS FOR FILLETING A FISH. A FILLET KNIFE HAS A LONG NARROW BLADE, THAT THINLY CUTS & FLEXES FOR CONTROL. FILLET GLOVES PROTECT YOUR HANDS WHILE DEALING WITH A SHARP KNIFE & A SLIPPERY FISH.



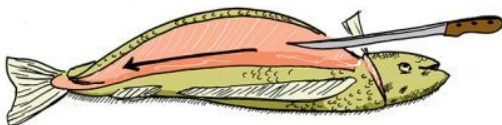
1. MAKE A SINGLE CUT WHERE THE HEAD ENDS & THE MEAT BEGINS, ALL THE WAY THROUGH.



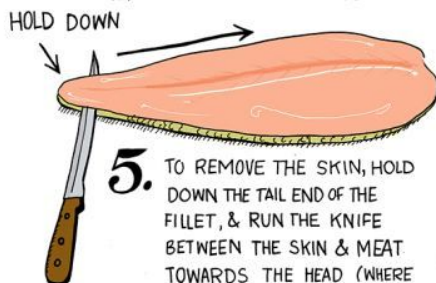
2. INSERT THE KNIFE IN ABOUT AN INCH, & RUN THE KNIFE DOWN THE SIDE OF THE DORSAL FIN.

3. ONCE YOU PASS THE DORSAL FIN, PUSH THE KNIFE ALL THE WAY THROUGH. USE DOWNWARD PRESSURE & CUT ALL THE WAY OUT TO THE TAIL.

REPEAT STEPS 1-3 ON THE OTHER SIDE



4. MAKE SEVERAL STRAIGHT & SHALLOW CUTS TOWARDS THE TAIL, TO SEPARATE THE FILLET FROM THE CARCASS. DON'T USE MUCH PRESSURE OR YOU WILL GET BONES IN YOUR FILLET. REPEAT ON THE OTHER SIDE.



5. TO REMOVE THE SKIN, HOLD DOWN THE TAIL END OF THE FILLET, & RUN THE KNIFE BETWEEN THE SKIN & MEAT TOWARDS THE HEAD (WHERE IT WAS, AT LEAST.)

NOW YOUR FISH IS READY FOR THE FRYING PAN!

BY HEATHER DIANE HARDISON
WWW.HEATHERDIANE.COM

The variety of fish traps you can make is limited only by your imagination. One way is to make a loosely woven basket out of grass, with an inverted funnel shaped lid. Another is to pound sticks into the river bottom, in such a way as to make the funnel and holding area.

In any case, the trap must be made in such a way as to ensure that the fish can't swim back out, once they've swum in. So pay attention to the size of the fish available where you plan on fishing. Then build your trap, ensuring that there aren't any holes big enough for the fish to swim through, except for the entrance.

You can also buy automatic reels for survival fishing. These are lightweight, spring loaded reels, pre-loaded with about ten feet of line. You attach them to the branches of a bush or tree, with the hook and bait hanging in the water.

They are sensitive enough, that any fish grabbing the bait is sure to trip the reel, pulling the fish in and seating the hook. While they are not strong enough to pull the fish out of the water, they will hold a fish until you get back, as long as the reel is firmly anchored.

So, What Should You Do?

In reality, you should use a combination of all these techniques to provide yourself with food in a wilderness survival situation, assuming you are in an area where you can use all of them. None of these methods are secure enough that you can depend on them alone to keep you fed.

But by using a combination of them, you can probably harvest enough animal protein to keep you going. Add some edible plant life that you find in the area, and you'll be living pretty well.

I'd start with fishing, then add trapping and finally hunting as I moved into a new area. That will allow me to get the most possible food, in the least amount of time. The addition of trapping and later hunting will increase the variety of my diet, as well as providing me with food to store up for later.

Remember that you're going to have to think forward to winter. Throughout history, mankind has had to hunt, fish, gather and grow enough food to keep them going through the cold winter months, when animal life is moving the least and plants are dormant and buried under the snow.

The whole idea of food preservation came about from the need to keep ourselves fed through the cold months.

This means that you need to catch about twice what you need to have for your current needs. That way, you can preserve half of your catch, setting it aside for winter. That may seem excessive, as winter isn't really six months long, but you have to give yourself a reserve as well, as you don't know how soon it will be after spring breaks, that you'll be able to find food to harvest.

The other thing your reserve does for you is ensure that you have food to eat if you get sick or injured. There is no leeway for error in a wilderness survival situation, especially one in which you are living off the land. You've got to make sure you have reserves to count on.



FOOD IS WEAPON

LEARN TO PRESERVE!

BUY WISELY | CAN&PRESERVE | FIGHT CRISIS

SEE RECIPES

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