Top 5 Survival Animals

It finally happened.

And briefly your mind flashes back to the old original ‘Planet of the Apes’ movie where at the end Charlton Heston is escaping on the beach and looks up in shock to see a half buried Statue of Liberty in the sand!

You now have the same sinking feeling in your gut that Heston portrayed then when he cursed mankind for its hell bent mission of eventually destroying civilization as we knew it.

But you were one of the fortunate ones who somehow knew it was coming sooner or later. You, and perhaps others close to you, prepared and had a small piece of land far enough away from the major human congestion and anarchy to be able to successfully avoid the chaos and carnage so prevalent during the long recovery period with the survival knowledge you accumulated.

You planned and studied carefully and had the foresight to include certain animals that provided valuable benefits for your new off grid self-sustaining lifestyle. But which humble creatures did you choose, and why? Well, although it’s not rocket science there are some considerations for minimalist preppers, as compared to general farming and live-stock ranching for profit.

{adinserter survivalmd}The list here in order of importance may surprise some.

But when you think about it, you’ll see the sense of a pragmatic situational analysis as opposed to one’s personal preference which might not be sustainable—and could even become a liability—in the greater survival schema.

The following represents the basic amount of animals which

would provide the maximum amount of diverse value, while providing a starting point for expansion and support of further food production husbandry if desired and feasible.

1. Chicken and Geese

Spec Op Hens Briefing On "Al-Qoyote Terrorists"

Yes, the cold hard reality in a serious survival situation is that if you could only have one animal, it would be the lowly, pusillanimous, and too often taken for granted, **chicken**. They provide two of the first and foremost essentials in the life of a prepper: food and cost effectiveness.

4 or 5 healthy laying hens each produce an egg almost daily. That's actually enough to keep two people alive almost indefinitely if you don't have much else to eat.

Contrary to what specious agenda based cholesterol medication profiteers say, eggs—especially from free ranged/organic birds—are one of the most wholesome foods available.

Chicks are amazingly cheap to buy—generally less than a couple

inflated dollars—apiece depending on what kind. And adults are low maintenance and don't require a lot of inside space because they prefer to be outside more often than not to do their scratching and pecking and mostly go in their coop only at night to nest.

So a half dozen or so birds in a 50×50 foot chicken wire corral with a small coop would thrive. Throw in a handful of good non-GMO organic feed once a day or so and treat them occasionally with your table scraps and they'll pay for themselves in only a couple weeks of daily fresh organic eggs once they begin laying.

Chickens are much smarter than you think. They communicate and can be trained. They like to be held and petted and are an excellent way to teach kids responsibility, care, and appreciation for the smaller creatures of creation. For the most part they are quiet and peaceful but will certainly 'alert' to danger with a noticeable squawking while they quickly depart from the source of trepidation.

There are volumes written on raising these little 'scratch and peckers' and their usefulness. They'll even agree to donate some real feather fetching if you run out of duct tape for your home made arrows for your DIY PVC bows.

Another bird species that also has potential egg production value but also provides an interesting side benefit are **geese**. Most people don't associate geese with personal or livestock protection but historically that has been a benefit of ownership. The most famous exemplary being in 390BC where Rome was alerted by an astutely observant pair of geese in time to prevent a surprise attack from invading troops from Gaul.

Geese are natural perimeter protectors and a good early warning system for any strange occurrence or intruders. Yes, even better than most dogs comparatively speaking.

Dogs primarily rely on their super sense of smell, then

hearing, and finally vision to be alerted to incoming danger. Geese primarily rely on an acute sense of visual abilities that include high powered focus and ability to detect ultraviolet light. They can spot things and movement even at night that is beyond a dog's, or human's capacity. In parts of China's Xinjiang province the police/military use Geese as night guards at the checkpoints.

Geese are one of the most territorial animals and once they establish that territory, they proactively patrol and protect it as a major daily activity. They move in a group and are usually quiet until they sense something abnormal. Once they hone in on an 'intruder' they 'stand their ground' and act like a motion detecting alarm system making an identifiable loud noise and they can't be distracted even by food bribes.

If the 'intruder' fails to retreat the larger species of geese will often chase and gang up on the invader and attack, including humans they're not familiar with. This is where the expression 'getting goosed' comes from. They tend to peck at the area between the legs!

Geese have been traditionally used in Europe where sheep herding is popular to help protect the flocks from wild dogs, foxes, and human poachers.

2. Goats

Contrary to popular mythology, goats do not eat anything and everything and do not prefer living in Hill Billy junk yards. They actually are quite particular about what they eat, and they are naturally green grass grazers. It's just that many expensive landscaping trees and vegetable plants and prize flower beds happen to be what they're 'particular about' eating when the opportunity presents itself.

Natural goat's milk is molecularly 'different' from any other milk and is the healthiest of dairy products, even if you are

lactose intolerant. One milking goat added to your corral to compliment your 'egg ladies' would emergency sustain you through the worst of times. Not to mention that goat cheese is easy to make and nutritionally regarded.

Goats also are very curious and intelligent. They like to think and plot sometimes for hours before stealing food you forgot to put back in the shelter, or making a break for the hills to nibble on that white birch tree bark that's starting to peel. They are trainable and will stick with the pack and usually don't wander far from camp even if allowed to free range.

While not destructive or aggressive or combative by nature, domestic goats have good vision and hearing and although normally very quiet they will definitely wake up your snoring protection dog beast from his afternoon beauty nap with an loud 'rasperry' snorting sound if a mountain lion or coyote or even an unfamiliar human is sneaking up on the compound.

The larger goats like Nubians have the extra utility of being a light pack animal or small cart puller in a temporary emergency if required.

You just have to watch the abuse on their hooves as they can't go for duration on hard surfaces because they can't wear horse shoes.

They are gentle and quiet and make good pets and don't stink like regular cattle unless you maintain a non-castrated buck for breeding. Goats are fairly low maintenance, requiring mainly the occasional hoof trimming which is an easy DIY with the right tool.

In an emergency they can live completely off the surrounding land without anything additional as long as they have a water source and a basic wind and rain shelter in the winter. That's why they were the primary animal of choice for the Viking expeditions of old. Who knows, maybe they even ate fish on those long ocean voyages?

3. Donkeys

Among the smaller varieties of equestrian animals, donkeys are one of if not the best territorial oriented animals for perimeter and livestock security alert awareness AND actual confrontational predator protection.

They mostly go about their day in a quiet state of peaceful meditation appearing oblivious to their surroundings, but they possess an extreme natural animosity for wild canine, wolves and coyotes and other unsavory critters sneaking up on their more timid livestock corral companions.

Unlike horses, which prefer to bolt for the hills when they sense danger is coming, a donkey will make a loud 'braying' HEE HAW sound at the sight of intruder(s) and situate itself between the enemy and the livestock.

If the invaders don't back down, the donkey will stand its ground and go into counterattack mode. They will bravely rear up on their hind legs like you see in the movies, and coming down hard enough with their front hooves to hold off even a small pack of wolves until you can get to the corral with your AR-15 to 'even up the odds a bit'.

Donkeys are also known for being good cart, and riding animals throughout history, but unfortunately the victim of mythological denigration because of their supposedly irascible tendency toward obstinacy, that can be irritating at the worst possible time.

Mythology often devolves into absurdity when it comes to animal stories and legend. In fact quite the opposite is true otherwise they would never be ‘good’ utility animals in the first place.

The reality is that once you prove your ‘worthiness’ as benevolent master of the ‘good inhabitants’ of the survival compound and your creatures respect and trust you, your ‘Dutiful Donk’ will gladly pull the wood wagon, or drag a stump, or carry you to your neighbor’s farm or just about anything else you want with nary a complaint nor hesitation as a grateful and loyal friend for life.

A donkey will politely stand there and perk up their rather ‘obvious’ ears and listen to all your troubles and cry-baby complaints about human life, and your gold and silver stash not worth the weight it was propagandized to be worth, with a patient, knowing smirk on his/her face. Then when you’re finished ranting, they’ll ‘hee haw’ in profound comprehension and empathy at the terrible responsibility of your woeful humanity.

4. Dogs

They don’t call them ‘man’s best friend’ for naught. Dogs are an integrated part of humanity and provide more benefits in terms of companionship and responsibility than my inferior mentality can delineate.

Possessed of unconditional loyalty and devotion we often take them for granted but would severely regret the day we would be without them. I won't get into moot subjective issues on which breed is best because with many such personal relationships, beauty and utility…is mostly in the eyes of the 'beer holder'.

In a purely objective and strict 'survival mode' analysis, more preppers than you think will opt out of dog ownership in minimalist survival scenario. The main consideration being that a dog—especially a large one—amounts to another mouth to feed since they are not herbivores like the above animal choices which can live off the land. Over time this can be a considerable expense in a minimalist environment, especially when you factor in the utility trade off.

In the actual reality, the perimeter security value of a dog is not better than a hardened mechanical perimeter anti-intrusion system which would cost about the same as a good protection size dog but without the 'cons' of being deactivated immediately with one gunshot or arrow.

The electronic/mechanical perimeter protection systems also don't have to 'sleep' like a dog does which then is marginalizing their 'alert' mode and limiting active perimeter protection.

The other liability is the fact that unless they are specifically 'trained', most dogs will bark incessantly at any other critters merely minding their own business in the area and thus provide a means for roving human predators to hone in on your location.

This would be how the Zombies would ‘hunt’ for their ‘supplies’, especially in rural areas. They’d simply sit quietly and ‘listen’ for any human habitat activity. Sound carries vast distances in certain atmospheric conditions in remote areas, and a randomly barking dog in the distance will be like a GPS guidance system for them.

Dog utility can be broken down into pets/companionship, working dogs, and protection dogs. Most of the time the utility can overlap in other areas and the most serious of attack dogs can also be a great companion pet for you also. Some breeds, of course, are better than others for the specific task like when it comes to herding livestock or hunting, or a ‘service dog’ for handicapped persons.

In a retreat scenario, the prepper would probably opt more for a protection guard dog than anything else.

Remember this is a different and specialized area that often requires extensive training for optimal performance. Almost any dog can be a decent ‘watch dog’ which is usually more bark than bite, but a loud mouth miniature poodle won’t scare a crazed zomb breaching your perimeter and it could be seriously injured or killed with a hard kick even though it would be a good ‘alert’ alarm giving you notice to grab your ‘go-gun’.

On the other hand, even a large violent determined intruder won’t make it very far after a protection trained 165 pound Bullmastiff slams into him and decides to give him a ‘JAWS’ type smack down he’ll likely not live through. Certain breeds are simply much more effective for anti-intrusion/protection work. The larger breeds, of course, like Rottweiler, Staffordshire Terriers, German Shepherds, Great Danes, and large Wolf Hounds are usually preferred.

A couple of smaller pit bulls also are quite ‘good’ at CQB protection and if you have a larger perimeter a Doberman is very fast and an intruder will never outrun them even if they

have a good head start.

There is a growing trend for Wolf/Shepherd hybrids these days because of their larger size, speed, and…TEETH, and their ability to handle more hostile environments. But there are some issues with these concerning a certain ‘wildness’ behavior that could be a problem.

In any event, dog ownership is a serious responsibility. There is no such thing as a ‘bad dog’, only bad stupid people who shouldn’t have dogs.

5. Horses

Last, but not least, the Old West never could have been ‘won’ without the ubiquitous and faithful Steed. In an end time’s scenario, especially the coming great Black Out,where it’s possible that not many cars will be usable guess what you will be seeing instead.

Many people also love horses as pets and companions. Back in the days, a cowboy’s horse was often the only ‘person’ they talked to for months at a time on the lonely cattle trails across the country.

They do require a bit more maintenance, food, and room than the aforementioned four legged utility animals but they would make up for it if you seriously had to travel regularly and didn’t want to walk, especially if you had to carry/pull stuff. Getting from one place to another will be a very important issue in a long lasting bad scenario absent of the old gas station standby.

You probably wouldn’t have to even build a wagon with all the dead cars that would be laying around because of no fuel or an EMP? Just harness up a couple horses to a minivan or pick-up truck and duct tape a seat on the hood and voila, instant Stage Coach!

Other Honorable Mentions

The above here is a bare basics example of useful animals for a post break-down scenario.

Except for a horse, I've got all of the above critters just because after trying many varieties over the years these are the ones that stuck by me when times got rough. They didn't eat much or complain and always provided the natural wonders of life's simplicity and are more part of the family than anything else.

But there are many viable animals that would provide a benefit of good cause in a survival scenario if you also wanted to provide your own protein source. Here are a few examples.

Pigs

They can be relatively easily managed as a small herd for food and trade as they are prolific breeders and 'worth their weight' in bad times.

They are pretty smart and natural survivors in their own way.

Monkeys

Yes, monkeys. Many primates are now reaching retirement age.

Oh, you didn't know that most monkeys in human custody are—unlike a lot of lazy humans—gainfully employed? And some are highly educated if they were part of scientific experiments. But unfortunately they worked for peanuts, and

likely never invested properly. So most are impoverished possessing only the ‘hair on their backs’ and don’t even have shoes.

These poor cousins of ours are then forced to resort to living in despicable roach infested slums known as Zoos, aka the FEMA camps for critters, as a last resort. If they were employed by NASA, some may have a pension so a sponsoring family would be subsidized with banana coupons redeemable at their local Walmart.

If you’re lucky you might find one who plays a good game of chess or poker. Some can even be trained to delete all your excess junk emails for you, allowing you more time to drink your home made moonshine while sitting on your porch, and cleaning your survival weapons or watching for Zombies trying to penetrate your outside perimeter.

Whatever you do, don’t ever let your monkey play with loaded guns or get too close to your hand grenades.

We made a bad mistake one time at the remote base camp in ‘68 and thought it was amusing to teach an indigenous pet monkey we had hanging around how to shoot an M-16. He liked it so much that he then decided to impress us by trying to fling hand grenades, and we thought this was equally hilarious in our deranged combat sense of humor until our smiling monkey actually figured out he had to pull the pin to make it work! Suddenly it wasn’t so funny anymore.

Just remember to always be careful with all animals and treat them with dignity and respect.

Because after all…people are animals, too.

Survival Things That The Pioneers Took With Them When They Traveled For Months

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