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**Take Your Children Hunting**

**By John Cook**

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Few things can bring you more joy than to pursue two of your passions at the same time. This is easy to do by taking your children hunting with you. The first time I took my son with me he was only about 4 years old. We walked a couple hundred yards behind the house and sat down on a log. It was only a few minutes later he said that he needed to go back to the house to go to the bathroom. There was no talking him into relieving himself out in the woods, so back to the house we went. Our first hunting experience together wasn't very satisfying or very long. After this first trip I wasn't looking forward to taking him again for a while but in the years since it was I who had some learning to do about hunting with children.

After that experience I realized that I did want my children to hunt with me so I decided that we would keep trying. Since they had showed an interest I didn't want to stifle it by telling them that they were too young. I wanted them there with me when they were old enough but I thought that if I stopped them when they were young that they may not want to hunt when they get older.

In the few years since, we have had some great times together in the woods. Stories about having young children with you usually do not conclude with the description of the trophy buck that you shoot, but the memories of being there with them are better trophies. I'll never forget watching my son jump out of his skin when a grouse took off and scared him or of the first buck that he shot.

It is hard for us serious hunters to accept that sometimes we will go to the woods and not realistically have an opportunity of shooting a deer or that the chances could be lessened because there is someone else with you that likes to move a lot and is a little noisy. Once you accept this and just watch them enjoy being there with you, you can have the time of your life.

Over the years I have found some ways to make the hunt more enjoyable for everyone. Quiet woods will only hold a child's attention for a little while and then they will look for something to do. One of the first things that I do is to make sure that I have plenty to eat. A couple of apples and some candy can

## Take Your Children Hunting

usually get another half an hour or so. Not that I eat any of the candy myself, it's just for the kids.

I also take something for them to do. Word search books and crossword puzzles will deter them from moving around a lot and keep them interested for a while longer.

The hunt will be very short lived if they get cold. Make sure that they are dressed warm. On one hunt I took a sleeping bag for my son and he stayed nice and warm while the snow was falling on us. It also helps if you can keep them sheltered from the wind and rain. We used to get into an old building and sit, but we now have a camouflage hunting blind that we use. Last season we spent several hours in it staying out of the wind and rain. On one hunt my 8 year old daughter was the first to spot a group of does that came from behind us. She was real proud of her accomplishment.

The best way to keep them interested and coming back is to see game. I take them no matter what time of the day it is even during the non peak activity hours. It's often hard to get them to go with you

at dawn or dusk when activity is at its peak but it is usually colder during these hours anyway. They don't have to see something to have a good time, but they will tell everyone about the animals that they saw.

Last year I had watched a group of young bucks that would come to a food plot and feeder. At the end of the season I took my son and a video camera and we climbed into two treestands side-by-side. After being there for about thirty minutes there was a shower of rain and he wanted to pack it in. I convinced him that if we could stick it out another thirty minutes we would probably get to see some deer. He decided to stay and the deer showed up and we had a great time watching and videotaping them. I used the opportunity to try to teach him that it's not always easy and that the effort can pay off in the end. At eleven years old he is now learning more about hunting and is becoming a good tracker. I'm hoping that I have two hunting partners for life.

If you would like to read more about my families hunting experiences you can go to our website at

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I have been deer hunting in West Virginia for close to 30 years. Now I am teaching my children to hunt and enjoy it more each year.

### **The Pleasure Of Hunting In Canada**

**By Joe Goertz**

Hunting has moved past the origins where it was the search for food only, as today it is a major sport and the competition can be fierce. There are few places on the planet to hunt that are better than Canada. The proof positive of this is the number of trophies and world records that are broken in this land every year. There is truly some great hunting to be found in this wonderful country.

## Take Your Children Hunting

The best thing about Canada is that there are still massive amounts of untouched acreage to be used as prime hunting grounds. Primitive cabins located deep in the woods with a lake and so on are very popular with the hunting parties from the US. In these cabins you can find solace in the fact that just outside there is prime hunting to be found right outside the door. No more do you have to spend long hours driving to reach the site for the hunt. Some of the finest trophies have been taken at these secluded areas making them highly sought after.

The game is the best thing about Canada. Because of the climate Canada features many species of game that are not found in other parts of North America. The larger species, such as moose and elk are found all over the country, which makes for some prime hunts. The danger factor when seeking out the moose is part of the excitement and the larger the specimen the better it is.

There is also the hunting laws that should be considered. Unlike other parts of the world, the Canadian hunting laws are rather laid back and much more relaxed than that of the US. The Canadian government is tapped in too the fact that hunting is an effective method of population control when it comes to the species that are actively hunted. When the population of a certain species gets out of control it can then pose a serious threat to human life. So the government in Canada allows for more animals to be taken in order to protect the people that live in certain areas.

There is a definite pleasure to hunting in Canada. The bears that live in Canada are by far larger than that of the other areas in the world. This is why so many people are flocking to the country to hunt some of the bears that are living there. The bear population exploded in the last few decades and the number of bear attacks increased many times over. When this started happening, the government opened hunting on many of the species that were at one time protected from being hunted.

If you are looking for some of the best hunting in the world you should certainly take the time to go to Canada. There is nothing that you can not do when it comes to hunting for all of your favorite species. The hunting in Canada is among the best in the world. Just be sure to take the time to get all of the license and permits that you will need. There are stiff penalties for those that try to poach.

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