

A Hunter's Guide



**To The
ARIZONA BIGHORN SHEEP**

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**Published by
THE ARIZONA DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP SOCIETY, INC.**

THE ARIZONA DESERT BIGHORN SHEEP SOCIETY, INC.

A membership devoted to the advancement and recognition of the Desert Bighorn Sheep, and to support the management and conservation, restoration and utilization of the Desert Bighorn Sheep, and to oppose any action or legislation that would adversely effect the desert bighorn sheep, or its habitat.



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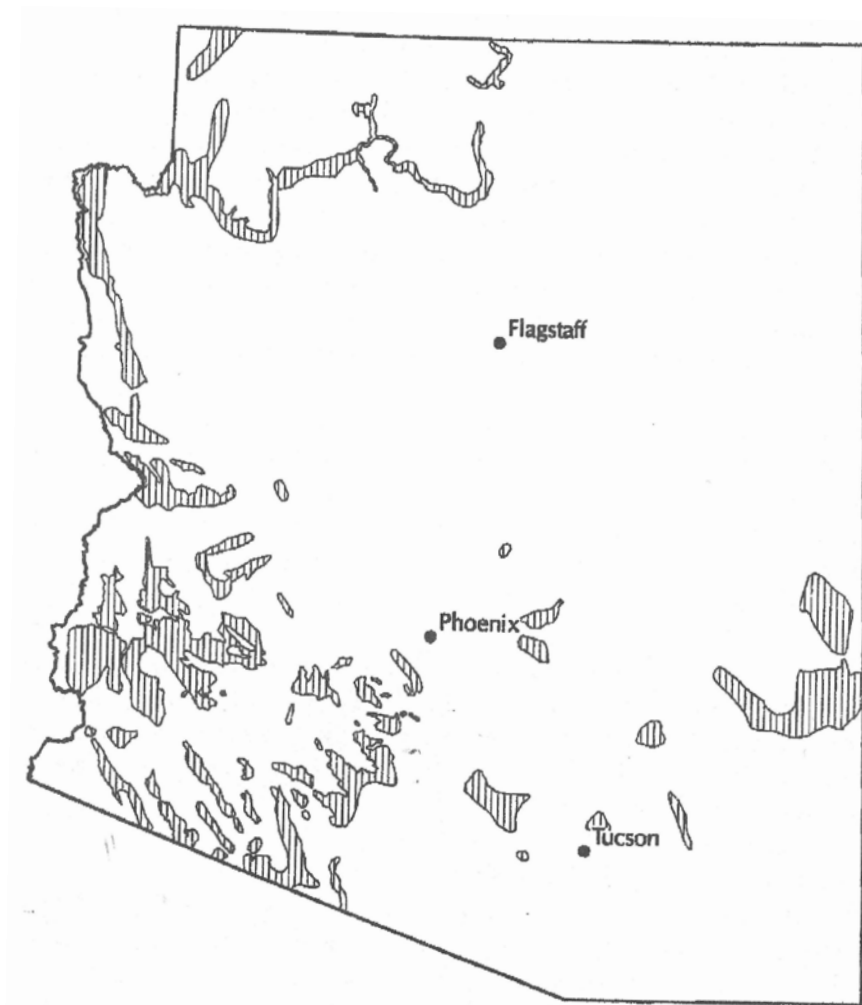
FOREWORD

Why does a conservation organization prepare and publish a booklet on hunting the Arizona desert bighorn sheep? A moment's reflection will provide some answers. Have you ever enthusiastically embarked on an endeavor only to find later that you have not properly prepared yourself? You experience frustration and failure instead of achievement and success. Have you observed your friends returning from unrewarding hunts unaware that their own lack of knowledge contributed to their failure?

The Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society has prepared this book to help the sheep hunter in his quest for a worthy trophy ram. The terms "mature" and "trophy" ram will be emphasized throughout this book. At all times the hunter will be encouraged to harvest the old ram that is past his prime. To take an immature ram would defeat the objective of the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society. The hunter will be encouraged to harvest the old ram in its declining years and leave the young ram to take his place as a vigorous member of the herd. This harvesting of the old, mature ram is sound conservation and game management.

This book is dedicated to all bighorn sheep hunters. The reader will find information compiled by various contributors on the animal, hunting techniques, equipment, and the hunter's preparation. Mental attitude, physical preparation and equipment preparation are stressed. The writers of this book genuinely hope that the contents will contribute to a successful hunt and a memorable experience.

ARIZONA BIGHORN SHEEP RANGE LOCATIONS



HISTORY OF BIGHORN IN ARIZONA

John P. Russo

It is believed that the bighorn sheep reached the North American continent from Asia by crossing the land bridge that at one time spanned the Bering Sea. Remains of sheep have been found in prehistoric deposits in Alaska and the Yukon Territory. Sheep movements into what is now the southwestern deserts may have taken place over a period of thousands of years and remain indefinite as to exact time because of the ice ages of North America, which is complicated by at least four glacial and interglacial periods. The last glacial retreat is believed to have occurred 12,000 to 15,000 years ago. It is possible that Arizona sheep were well established by that time and had evolved into the species as we know it today.

Early accounts of bighorn sheep in Arizona are few. Evidence of sheep were found in excavations that date to about 700 A.D. Travelers in the Southwest recorded bighorn sightings in their diaries. Probably the first mention is in the writings of Private Pedro de Castaneda. Castaneda reported seeing bighorns in 1540, on Coronado's march to Cibola.

Conquistadors of the 16th century encountered sheep in the Eagle Pass between the Pinaleno Mountains and Santa Teresa Mountains. Other accounts were found in translations from the notes of an unknown Jesuit padre who traversed parts of the Southwest in the middle 1700s.

Juan Mateo Mange, official recorder for Father Eusebio Kino's expedition from 1687 to 1710, mentions the use made of bighorn sheep by Papago and Pima Indians. Other records show that bighorn sheep were seen in the San Francisco Mountains, Cataract Creek, Bill Williams Mountain, Verde Basin, Fort Verde, Hardscrabble Mesa, Natural Bridge on Pine Creek, Tombstone, Pajarito Mountains, Santa Rita Mountains, Santa Catalina Mountains, Nariz Mountains and in many of the areas where we find sheep today.

There are no complete historic records of reliable estimates of bighorn sheep. Early recorders had a tendency to overestimate numbers, based on a few observations. In 1913, it was estimated that there were 1,470 desert bighorn and 50 Rocky Mountain bighorn in the state. Then, in 1950 it was estimated there were 1,080 desert bighorn, and in 1954, the estimate was 3,500.

The first intensified desert bighorn sheep research and management project was undertaken by the Arizona Game and Fish Department and continued for six years. During this period, the distribution of the desert sheep was studied and surveys were undertaken to determine limiting factors, numbers of sheep and habitat requirements. Limited hunts to remove surplus, mature rams from selected areas were recommended. Watering areas were developed to provide at least one reliable watering point in each mountain range where sheep were found. In the years since 1950, the desert bighorn program in Arizona has become an example of successful management.



Photo courtesy of George Andrejko, Photographer & Arizona Game & Fish Dept.

ARIZONA DESERT BIGHORN MANAGEMENT

Raymond Lee

The primary objective in the management of desert bighorn sheep is to protect and conserve their habitat, to maintain this habitat in its natural condition where possible, and to enhance the habitat where practical. This involves the need to minimize human interference and encroachment. In some cases, habitat enhancements are needed to overcome the impacts of human activities.

An important factor limiting the distribution of desert bighorn sheep, and possibly their numbers, is the lack of water. The development of suitable water sources is of primary importance in providing adequate water to sustain a desert bighorn sheep population. Water developments have been constructed to make water available in each mountain range occupied by desert bighorn sheep. Water developments are constructed in the natural habitat of desert bighorn sheep. These developments are generally located on a northerly slope, where evaporation is minimized and water runs off easily. The construction of additional waters, and especially the maintenance of older water developments, is of the utmost importance.

Control of domestic and feral animals is recommended in desert bighorn sheep ranges. Buffer zones between domestic animals, particularly goats and sheep, and occupied desert bighorn sheep habitat help reduce the transmission of diseases.

Lambs and yearlings, due to their size, are vulnerable to numerous predators. Adult predation is usually limited to mountain lions. However, in some areas mountain lion predation can have adverse impacts on desert bighorn sheep populations.

Transplanting desert bighorn sheep has established populations in previously depleted, but suitable ranges, and has also been done to supplement small bands of sheep in historic ranges. Over 1,000 desert bighorn sheep have been transplanted into numerous sites in Arizona. Some desert bighorn sheep have even been traded to

neighboring states to help enhance the sheep populations in these states. These trades have provided Arizona with pronghorn antelope and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Areas considered for transplants are thoroughly investigated for suitable vegetation, lack of competition with livestock or feral animals, low predator levels, adequate water sources, and little human disturbance.

Desert bighorn sheep in Arizona have provided sport and trophy hunting opportunities since 1952. Since that first hunt, over 2,000 desert bighorn rams have been legally harvested in Arizona. Hunts are designed to remove a very conservative number of mature rams from the population each year and to ensure desert bighorn sheep for future generations to enjoy.

Conservative removal of a number of older, mature rams has offered sportsmen the opportunity to fulfill the ambition of many big game hunters, to take a trophy bighorn ram. More important, these hunting opportunities have created an interest in the research and management problems of the Arizona's bighorn sheep, not only by resident sportsmen, but also by sportsmen and biologists from around the world.

Wildlife biologists conduct annual helicopter surveys to determine the number of available hunting permits each year. Each fall an intensive desert bighorn sheep survey is under taken with helicopters being used to fly mountain-by-mountain coverage of desert bighorn sheep habitat. This survey allows the Department to estimate reproduction rates; to evaluate herd condition, distribution, and numbers; and to determine sex and age classifications. Arizona's bighorn sheep harvest is further controlled through a checking station, where hunters are required to check out their trophy in accordance with hunt regulations. Each ram harvested is inspected by a biologist and an identifying mark is affixed to each animal.

The southwestern desert has a naturally low carrying capacity for wildlife. In the past decades, this capacity has been reduced even further through the relatively uncontrolled use of both surface and

subsurface water, which lowers the water table. Coupled with human invasion of bighorn sheep habitat, this has decreased the available habitat for these animals. Arizona will never regain the “original” numbers of desert bighorn sheep estimated by early biologists and explorers. However, the present management program provides the best use of Arizona’s existing desert bighorn sheep population, while ensuring their future for the enjoyment of subsequent human generations.



Photo courtesy of George Andrejko, Photographer & Arizona Game & Fish Dept.

HUNTING SHEEP IN ARIZONA

By Jack Walters and Pete Cimellaro

Hunting bighorn sheep in Arizona is about the same as hunting sheep anywhere in North America; some areas can be fairly easy, some much more difficult. Most desert ranges have peaks that reach 3500 feet, but will average around 2500 feet. Desert sheep generally favor the lower slopes; very seldom will the hunter be required to make a climb to the top of the mountain to reach his trophy. However, each hunter should be in the best shape possible so that fatigue does not become a determining factor in the success of his or her hunt. Desert Bighorn Sheep permits are the most coveted and difficult to draw of all North American big game animals. Each lucky permit holder should make every effort to use this special opportunity.

Desert sheep are the most difficult of all North American wild sheep to spot. Their ability to blend in with their surroundings is fantastic, sometimes completely disappearing into the landscape right before the hunter's eyes. The most effective way to find sheep is to use good optics, combined with a large dose of patience. Find the vantage points (study maps and scouting trips) in your unit that give you the best look at as much country as possible, then glass, glass, and glass some more. Whenever possible glass with the sun at your back; it's a great advantage. The number one rule of every veteran hunter and guide is to see the ram before he sees you.

As stated above a hunter must have a good optics. This, at the very least, is a pair of binoculars (8 power minimum) and a spotting scope (30 power minimum). Some of us that spend a lot of time looking for sheep like to use an additional, larger magnification (15 power), pair of binoculars on a tripod. Using a tripod with your binoculars reduces eye fatigue when you glass hour after hour. It can also be a great advantage to use one of the variable power spotting scopes (20-60 power). The larger binoculars and variable scope are extra's that may not be in your budget, you can get by without them. Whatever optics you choose should be the best you can afford. They are an investment that should last a lifetime.

In a ten-hour day of sheep hunting, at least six of those hours should be used for glassing. Running from one mountain to another, looking for sign (tracks and beds), during your hunt is not good sheep hunting. Those chores should be done before the hunt starts. You must be extremely careful not to run sheep out of your area during your scouting trips. Stay off the mountains as much as possible. In most desert ranges a hunter can travel parallel to the mountains at distance of half mile and cover many miles during a hunting day. In the high plateau country, this mode of hunting will have to change with the terrain, always remembering never to skyline on a ridge or bench. Staying as close to the desert floor as possible and glassing particularly the low gentle slopes is another good technique. Sheep are very unpredictable animals and may be found anywhere even down on the desert floor. Look on the lower half of the mountain, particularly for rams.

You need to be aware of the weather conditions when you look for sheep. Is it cold or hot, is it windy or calm, is it wet or dry etc.? All of these conditions will affect your hunt. Sheep move to where they are comfortable and feel safe, and you don't want to be looking in an area the sheep have left. Keep in mind what you are looking for may be just around the corner out of the wind or in the sun. You may not need to move a great distance to be in the right place.

Be in position to glass, or hunt at the first break of day. Sheep feed early and are easily spotted before the sun is up. They will bed down around 9 a.m. but are frequently up and down at intervals all day. At about 3 p.m., they will end their siestas and feed until dark. Many hunters make the mistake of going into camp too early. The last two hours of daylight are some of the best to be glassing for sheep. If a hunter becomes tired during a long day of glassing and hunting, it would be wise to take a siesta just after lunch. Most sheep will be bedded down at that time. This is also a good time to change your glassing location, stay low and be as quiet as possible.

Get in the habit of whispering when you leave your vehicle. Sheep hear well, and human voices are not a natural sound.

In our dry and open desert voices travel for miles, don't tip off your quarry. Once spotted, how you stalk a desert sheep, depends on several factors. Wind direction and cover are the main considerations. Nothing spooks sheep worse than when they smell humans. Stay completely out of sight of the sheep, making sure that the route chosen for the stalk will afford complete cover until close enough to shoot. If possible, use a spotter to help you get close to the sheep. You can stay concealed during the stalk while someone watches the sheep and gives you signals to assist you in getting close. It also is good advice to try your stalk while the sheep is in his bed. It is very difficult to be successful when the sheep is moving and you are moving to catch him.

Arizona's desert mountains are often rugged, remote and sometimes quite desolate. They can also be unparalleled in natural beauty. Some of the most spectacular country on this earth is found here. There are valleys and canyons so lush with vegetation that they are almost jungle-like in appearance. Go on your hunt with the intention of enjoying one of the world's most coveted hunts, in a wonderland of cactus, rocks and bighorns.

THE VALUE OF PRE-SEASON SCOUTING

by Ignacio Beltram

At last your once-in-a-lifetime opportunity has arrived - the opportunity to take one of North America's most treasured trophies, a bighorn sheep.

The contest is often won or lost before the season ever begins. Success depends on knowledge of the area and the ability to locate sheep within that area. Plan to spend 10 to 15 days in the area pre-season scouting. This will be your best assurance of taking a trophy ram.

Initial scouting trips should begin as early as September or October when the average temperature is 90 degrees or below. Fortunately, scouting trips during the hotter months are not recommended. During the hottest part of the year, sheep are in their summer ranges, close to water. As the temperature drops below 90 degrees, sheep will start their winter range migration where they'll remain throughout the hunt. So, while you're waiting for the weather to cool off, begin your pre-scouting from home. The first step is to acquire maps of the area in which you'll be hunting. Study them carefully for access roads, trails, washes and hidden basins. Most sheep units have wilderness areas. These areas may have roads through them, or just cherry stem roads that go part way through. Knowing the roads is important as a lot of your scouting can be done from your vehicle.

After you're familiar with the maps, consider contacting persons who have hunted the unit previously. The Game and Fish Department can provide this information, and most hunters will be willing to share information with you. Attend the ADBSS Hunter's Clinic. Take along your maps. Gather as much information as possible from those persons familiar with the unit. The more, the better!

Pre-season scouting can be a great outing for family and/or friends. Family members or friends can help with glassing - the more eyes, the better. Remember, a mountain has more than one side. Assigning helpers to different areas improves the odds of locating sheep.

Pre-season scouting is a good time to develop proficiency using optical equipment. Good binoculars and a spotting scope are an absolute must. Being proficient requires patience and concentration. Be prepared to go long periods without seeing mature rams. There is a lot of country and relatively few rams.

Now that you are familiar with the maps and have collected information about the unit, you are ready to go scouting. Scout sheep the same way you would hunt them. Stay off the tops of ridges and mountains. Do more glassing than you do walking; sheep hunting is conducted from the seat of your pants glassing, not walking. Seeing them before they see you is the object.

Start by dividing the unit into different areas from one end to the other on your map. Go to one area, then glass as much of the area as possible from your vehicle. Glass from a distance far enough away to provide a good view of the lower 2/3 of the mountain, as this is where you'll find most of the sheep. The closer you get to the mountain, the more restricted your view.

Glass each area thoroughly before moving to the next by picking it apart rock by rock, tree by tree. There are rocks that look like sheep and sheep that look like rocks. Continue glassing each area until you have covered the entire unit. Not all areas have sheep in them; it's a process of elimination.

When you locate a ram, move closer to get a better look and mark his location on your map for later reference.

If you are going to make a mistake, the time to do so is while scouting, not on your hunt. Before walking onto the mountain, glass to be reasonably sure there are not sheep within view. You don't want to spook them.

Having knowledge of the lay of the land and knowing good vantage points to glass from is critical. This knowledge will give you the advantage, regardless of your technique.

After you have located rams, find a good campsite a couple of miles away. Try to keep activity in the area where sheep are traveling, bedding or foraging to a minimum.

Remember, a successful hunt comes from good planning and hard work.

GOOD LUCK!



Photo courtesy of Dave Pence, ADBSS Past President

MATURE VS IMMATURE

Jim Stephenson

The two extremes of rams, the mature and the immature, give little trouble because they can be immediately recognized. Admittedly, rams do not stand still or show the most convenient profile to have their heads measured and judged. Figures 2, 3 and 4 should be studied for further clarification. This must be done at odd angles and sometimes at a considerable distance. There are some clues that render judgment easier.

Look for the following:

1. Wide sweep of horn away from head.
2. Horns thick and massive at mid-point.
3. Ears barely noticeable, appear small in comparison with horn dimension.
4. Thickness and heavy brooming at tips.
5. Horn hides jaw and sweeps upward.

Get the image of a mature trophy ram firmly implanted in your mind so you won't make a mistake that you'll regret.

It is an axiom among desert sheep hunters and an excellent one to adopt, "If it is necessary to take time to determine if he's "the right one," pass him up!"

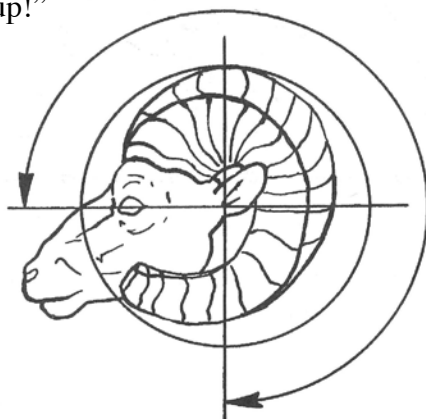


Figure 1. This illustration shows the massiveness and the bulk of the horn and how it continues down and around the curve up to where it hides the ram's jaw. Most mature rams will have brooming or blunt-ended horns.



Figure 2. A mature ram has a massive set of horns which looking head-on usually present a square or box like appearance. One should note that the fullness of the horns continue well past the center line into the curve and even the ends of the horns appear thick. Mostly the horn ends of a trophy ram are broomed or broken.

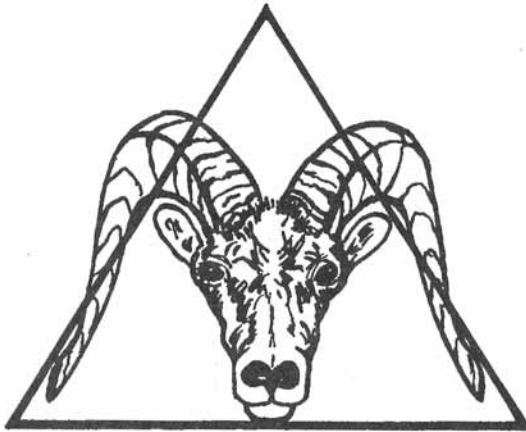


Figure 3. An immature ram lacks the massiveness around the curve and the horns terminate appearance-wise in knife-edge sharp ends. This type of ram is commonly referred to as a sickle-horn ram and its horn structure very well could fit an imaginary triangle as shown above.



Figure 4. This photograph shows a typical band of rams that could be encountered during the hunt. Photo by John Kulberg.

SO YOU DREW A TAG - WHAT NEXT?

by Gary Barcom

So, you have a sheep tag - congratulations! You have received a permit for one of the most coveted trophies in North America. The hard part is over; hunting sheep will probably be easier than getting the permit! Drawing an Arizona sheep tag rates almost as exciting as the actual hunt.

Now that you have the tag, here are a few suggestions to help with planning your hunt. Hunting sheep may prove the most varied of all Arizona hunting. Depending on the particular terrain, you may hunt using a variety of techniques. Many will hunt out of a base camp, driving to glassing points within the hunting area. In some areas, it will be necessary to hike or ride into the hunting area. Some hunters may prefer to backpack into their hunting areas; access and regulations will help determine the most suitable method.

While nothing replaces experience, there are ways of improving your knowledge about sheep hunting. Each year, the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society conducts a hunter's clinic. Be sure to attend. You're given the opportunity to learn from wildlife managers, biologists, land management agencies, guides, taxidermists and ADBSS members as they share their knowledge and experience with tag holders. They will provide information on judging, aging, scoring, scouting, glassing, trophy care, photographing and more. Attendees are encouraged to ask questions regarding habitat, equipment, campsites and any other subjects of interest concerning sheep in Arizona. This is a great opportunity to improve your sheep knowledge and gather information about the unit in which you'll be hunting.

Good physical condition makes for a more enjoyable hunt. Sheep habitat is harsh. Bighorns typically occupy rough, broken mountains characterized by steep, rocky slopes. While a sheep hunt shouldn't be an endurance test, it probably won't be a walk in the park either. You should be prepared to walk several miles over rough, rocky terrain and ascend and descend steep slopes. Endurance and stamina are important. Poor physical condition could tempt a hunter

to settle for a lesser trophy. See your doctor for a physical, then start an exercise program to get yourself in shape.

A positive mental attitude is one of the most important things to have on a sheep hunt. Patience rates high on the list. Rams blend in well with their habitat; be prepared to spend long hours, day after day, glassing for that special ram. Success could come in a couple of days or a couple of weeks. Schedule the maximum days possible for a hunt. Communicate with family, employer, employees and friends early on. You hold one of the most precious big game tags in the world. Allow them to share the enthusiasm and encourage them to respect the time and effort required for a successful sheep hunt. After all, this is not just another hunt, but a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for most. Remember, several holidays - Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, and Christmas - could be competing for your time during the pre-hunt and hunt. There may be other important dates that could conflict, so consider early on how to accommodate these. The less stress, the more enjoyable the hunt.

Sight in your rifle and practice from different positions and at various distances. Remember, only horizontal distance counts, whether it's uphill or downhill, and always get a rest before shooting.

Sheep hunting requires little special equipment, but does require a few pieces of good equipment - binoculars, spotting scope and tripod. Be sure you have what you need in optics for sheep hunting; they are just as important as your firearm. Binocular and scope work is much more valuable than legwork. What about other equipment? Many hunters lean toward camouflage clothing as outerwear. Avoid shiny coats and materials as outerwear. Prepare for those really cold mornings or long stints of sitting behind the spotting scope by using layers rather than bulk. A set of lightweight rain gear can protect you from the chilling wind as well as from the rain and is easy to carry. Gloves are a must, not only as protection from cold, but also from rocks and thorns. Sheep mountain ranges are largely cliffs, plates, slabs, up-thrusts, ledges, stratas, boulders and gravel in the washes, and rotten granite on the slopes. It's all there and you've got to traverse it, so good boots are critical. Select a stout boot with a good traction sole and make sure they are well broken in.

Of course, you'll need a knife, flashlight, maps, compass, matches, rope, camera, ammunition, water and food. Today, the hunter has a wide choice of packs and frames, so select a good backpack, preferably one that can be fitted to your needs without discomfort. Remember to pack the spotting scope, tripod, and photo equipment.

Hunting is hunting, but you may want to approach sheep hunting a little differently from other hunts. Will you hire a guide, hunt alone, or hunt with a partner or a group of assistants? A guide is no guarantee of harvesting a record book ram, but can increase your odds of getting a sheep considerably, and make up for lack of experience and knowledge of the area.

A partner? Make sure you're well acquainted and can tolerate each other under sheep hunting conditions, which oftentimes can be quite trying. Also make sure each of you knows what the other expects.

Hunt alone? Safety should be the primary concern of hunting alone. Rugged sheep habitat could pose a life-threatening situation to a lone hunter. Besides, who will smooth over those morale-shattering days?

Hunting with assistants? Having assistants along has advantages, providing they are all experienced and knowledgeable about sheep hunting. A sheep hunt can be a difficult place to begin one's hunting career. Assistants can provide knowledge and experience, help locate rams, keep your spirits up during the hunt, and keep an eye on the ram while you stalk within range. After the harvest, assistants can help skin and dress the trophy, as well as pack it off the mountain.

The campsite should be priority consideration. In general, sheep camps are more deluxe because of the ability to drive the campsite. Be sure to check with the land management agency for dos and don'ts in the area. Winds can sometimes be an annoying problem, so locate your camp where it will be protected from the wind. Select a site far enough away that camp smells and noises will not carry to the hunting area.

It's probable that you'll need wood for a cheerful, warming evening fire. Nights around the campfire offer an opportunity to review

past hunts, today's events and tomorrow's plans. It's also possible that you will need to bring wood with you. Be sure to check on policies and availability. Bring or gather enough for the whole stay, if possible. You can't afford to take daylight time gathering wood. Don't forget to establish your sanitary facilities as soon as you set up camp.

It's important to be out glassing at the break of day. Select a site that will reduce your travel time and allow the easiest access to glassing points. When breaking camp, consider how you found it and leave it cleaner, if possible.

How will you get there? In some cases a two-wheel drive can take you to ram country. But, in many cases, there are obstacles, bad roads, sand, lava and rock, and steep washes for which you'll need a four-wheel drive.

Scout the area, becoming as familiar with the unit as possible. Locate glassing points, travel routes, landmarks, etc., during scouting. Mark on your map the date, location, sex and class of each sheep spotted. Do this each time you're in the unit. This information will prove valuable during the hunt. Look at as many bighorn sheep heads, from all angles, as possible before the hunt. Viewing photos, books and magazines can also help familiarize you with judging and aging rams.

During the time you're scouting and securing equipment, pick up as much sheep hunting information as possible. There are fellow members of the Society who will be glad to give you tips on setting up a comfortable camp, hints on scouting the unit, suggestions on equipment and ideas about preparing for the hunt. Some may be willing to assist on the hunt. Don't be afraid to ask for help from the Society.

"As golden sunrises and purple sunsets coat the mountainside, let the wind brush your face with eyes focused upward, as you stare with awe and wonderment at the huge curling horns that crown the bighorn sheep - king of the mountain."

Good Hunting!

SHEEP HUNT FIRST AID

H.E. Wilcox, D.O.

When hunting bighorn sheep in Arizona your quest will take you into rugged mountains, very often very dry, very steep, grown over with the usual desert plants, most of which are spiny. You can be moving in the territory for long periods of time where minor inconveniences will be overlooked and where disabling inconveniences will ruin your hunt.

The desert survival booklet put out by the State of Arizona is a wonderful guide for conduct on the desert and should be studied by all hunters before they take to the hills. This gives usual and ordinary precaution in first aid that might be needed.

However, there are some things that will be a help to the sheep hunter. He will be plagued with cactus spines, blisters, possible constipation or diarrhea, perhaps toothache, or crippling rectal pain from either hemorrhoids or lack of complete bath facilities.

Here are a few things that will come in very handy for the sheep hunter in addition to standard first aid kits and materials. The hemostat, such as the doctor uses to clamp blood vessels, the small size, can be grasped firmly and withdrawn rapidly in a straight line with the direction of penetration.

Other handy items from the doctor's office are disposable needles in about an 18 gauge 1 inch dimension. They are in sterile plastic containers and can be used to open up small blisters, expose splinters or cactus spine tips, or drain boils. Merthiolate in a small plastic container is ideal for antiseptic purposes.

Foot blisters should be drained with a sterile needle and then tape applied widely with no wrinkles, to support the area and the surrounding tissue.

Toothache gum is small, convenient, does not deteriorate, and can save an otherwise ruined hunt when minor toothache or a lost filling arises.

Two of the other things that can ruin a hunt, and cut down a hunter's energy are constipation and diarrhea. Dulcolax tablets, to be used as labeled, are ideal for quick relief from constipation. Do not overlook the fact that much constipation is caused by dehydration, therefore, make sure that you take in a much water as needed to keep you well hydrated. Entero Vioform tablets are an additional handy medication. This requires a prescription from your doctor and is one of the good general, all-around antidiarrhea compounds. It is in tablet form and will not deteriorate.

Very often minor rectal irritation becomes a major deterrent to hiking and climbing, due to lack of bath facilities on an extended hunt. Rectal Medicone ointment is ideal for minor galling and can be used on other blisters and abraded areas as an antiseptic. Another good item to have is called Tucks and comes in separate small foil packets. These are used for cleansing the rectal area from any irritation.

Do not forget to go over any required medicine that your doctor has prescribed for you. The hunter can get into difficulty quickly if he leaves behind his blood pressure medicine, antihistamines, diabetic control medication, and any other regularly used medication. See your doctor concerning these.

Cactus spines, constipation, diarrhea, and blisters, and aggravating pain can all lead to a spoiled sheep hunt for the hunter and those around him. Look ahead, plan ahead, prepare ahead.

FIELD CARE OF YOUR BIGHORN SHEEP TROPHY

by Henry Aguilar

Field Care

Proper field care is one of the most important parts of a hunt but often times neglected. The information in this section is designed to help everyone from the novice to the more experienced hunter.

You have invested a tremendous amount of time and energy into your hunt. You simply owe it to yourself and the animal you harvest to give it the best field care possible. Bighorn sheep meat is one of the finest game meats you will ever have on your dinner table. The quality of the meat and the mount you see hanging on your wall will directly reflect the care you gave your trophy in the field.

Proper Equipment

A knife that sharpens easily and keeps an edge is an absolute must. A sharpening steel, game bags, pack saw, paper towels, tarp, and rope should all be standard equipment in your pack. If you would like assistance on what type of knife to use, talk to a taxidermist or a meat cutter. They use knives on a daily basis and can help you select the best knife for our specific needs.

Taking Great Pictures

Take as many photographs of your trophy as possible. Good pictures will help your taxidermist reproduce your mount accurately. They also give you something you can share with your family and friends while your mount is being worked on. Take close-ups of the face from different angles and profiles. The face of the animal should fill the viewfinder, using a depth of field that will not distort the facial detail.

Photograph your sheep before you field dress the animal. All blood should be wiped off with paper towels. Cold water will help remove the blood on the white hair around the muzzle, rump, and legs. The tongue should be put back in the mouth. The upper and bottom lips can be sewn together or held together with a safety pin. Large exit wounds can also be sewn together.

Field Dressing and Skinning

Animals like sheep and antelope should be skinned before they are field dressed. You will get a much cleaner job where the hide and meat are concerned. You should never drag any animal at any time while you are handling it. The hollow hair is extremely brittle and damages easily.

You should know ahead of time what type of mount you plan on getting. This will determine how you need to skin the animal. If you plan on getting a life-sized mount, you should first check with the taxidermist who will be mounting your trophy. Some taxidermists want the animal flat skinned (cut up the belly and down the back side of each leg), while many prefer a dorsal incision (a single cut that starts at the rump patch and stops at the back of the skull - see Illustration A).

CUT ALONG CENTER OF BACKBONE

MAKE CUT, STARTING BETWEEN EARS TO WHITE RUMP

PATCH. ANIMAL SHOULD BE SKINNED FIRST, THEN GUTTED.

DO NOT SKIN THE HEAD OUT, NO OTHER CUTS WILL BE NEEDED.

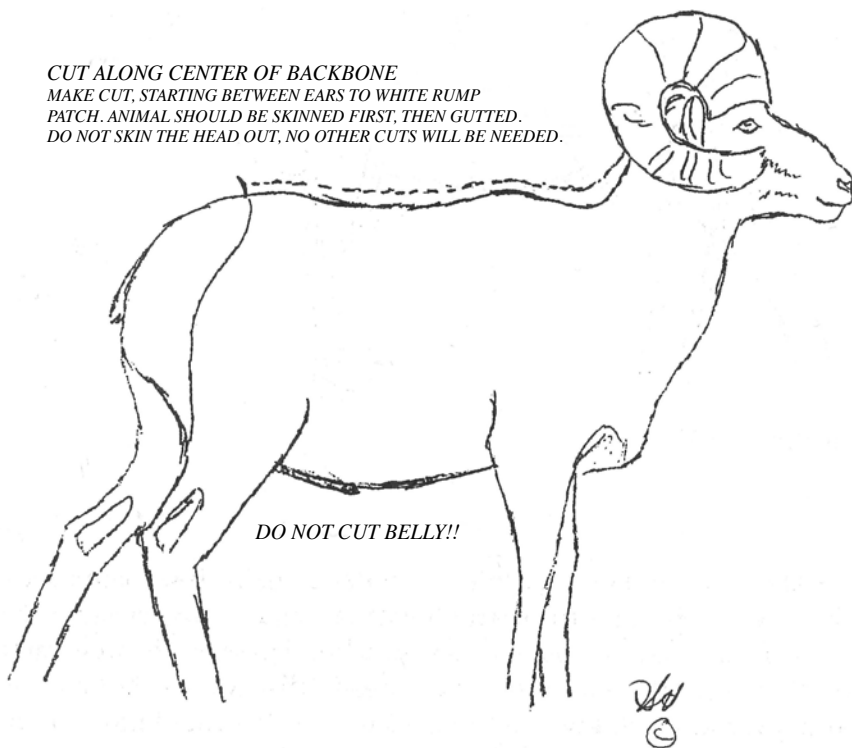


Illustration A

If you plan on a shoulder mount, be sure to leave plenty of hide behind the front shoulder (see Illustration B). Do not attempt to skin the head out. Most taxidermists would prefer to skin the head themselves. There are several measurements that need to be taken and recorded so that your trophy can be accurately reproduced. Make every effort to get your trophy to your taxidermist as soon as you possibly can. Do not apply salt to the skin.

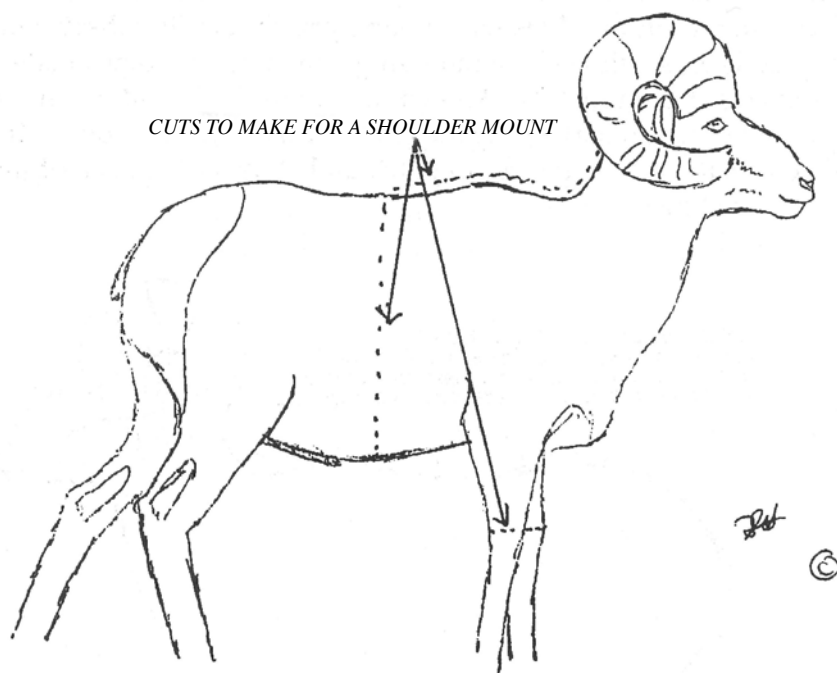


Illustration B

The skin of a sheep is very thin and will cut easily. Take your time. The head with the skin intact should be removed as close to the back of the head as possible. The junction between the atlas and axis is the ideal place to sever the head. This can easily be done with your knife. A saw could accidentally catch the hide or hair. The skin should be folded flesh to flesh, rolled up and kept in a cool, shady spot. This will also keep the thin skin from air drying and help keep dirt and rocks off the hide.

The carcass can now be field dressed (see Illustration C). Once the animal has been field dressed, you can use your knife to cut between the second and third rib to the backbone. Use your knife blade to go between the vertebrae to separate the halves or you can use a saw. Packing the animal out will be much easier with the smaller, lighter pieces.

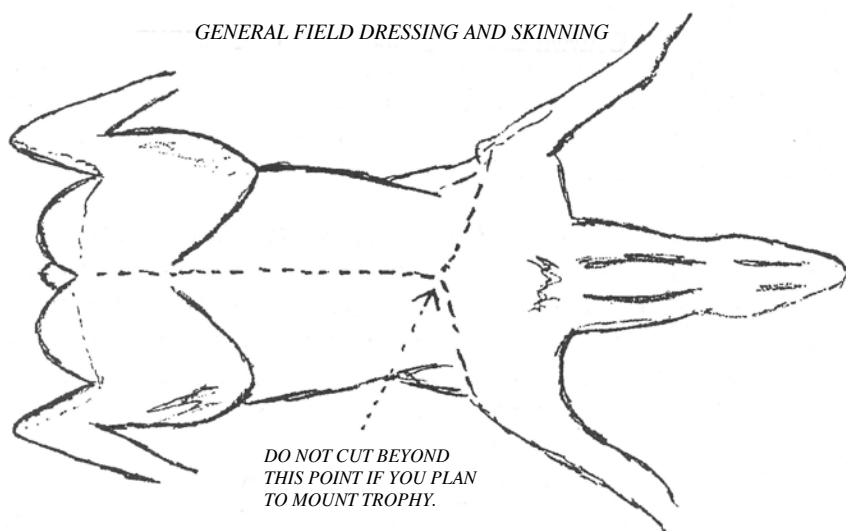


Illustration C

Transporting Your Meat and Cape

Keep the meat and cape as cool as possible. Once the meat has been chilled at camp, it can be transported in an ice chest or wrapped in a manner that will keep it insulated until you get home. Some hunters prefer to cut their own meat, while others prefer to have a professional prepare the meat. As mentioned earlier, when properly cared for, bighorn sheep is one of the finer meats that you will ever have.

Finding a Sheep Taxidermist

There are many things about sheep that make sheep taxidermy rather unique. Many rams will have battle scars on the bridge of their noses. This is part of the character that makes your ram so unique. Good photos will help your taxidermist recreate this.

The horn sheaths must be separated from the cores and the cores must be cleaned and treated in a manner so that they will not attract insects. The horn sheaths of rams that have been infected with sinusitis can be very difficult to remove from their cores. The cores must be cleaned as thoroughly as possible since there is already bacteria and infection inside.

Make sure that the person you choose to mount your trophy ram is familiar with sheep and can make your ram look like it did when it was alive. Sheep are like people - each one has its own character and facial expressions.

It would be a good idea to talk to as many taxidermists as you possibly can. Find out as much as you can about their experiences mounting bighorn sheep. Study pictures of live sheep that show good facial detail, such as the nose and mouth area. The eye expression of live sheep is rather unique. Make sure you notice these details when you are looking at different mounts.

Tagging and Plugging Your Ram

Arizona law requires that you tag your animal immediately after killing it. Your sheep can be tagged on the horns or the gambrel. The best way to tag the animal through the gambrel is to make a short incision on top of the tendon. You can make your cut right in the center of the white strip of hair. This will expose the tendon. You can pull the tendon out of this incision and apply your tag directly to the tendon. When you skin the leg, the tag will stay with the carcass.

Your taxidermist will not accept your trophy until you have checked out your ram through a Game and Fish Department checking station. A representative from the department will insert a metal plug in one of the horns. This plug has the year you took your ram, along with your permit and hunt number. The ram will be aged, photographed, and green-scored.

Legalities

The Arizona Game and Fish Department conducts bighorn sheep inspections at the Department's Phoenix and regional offices.

These offices are open 8:00 am-5:00 pm, Monday through Friday, except on legal state holidays.

All bighorn sheep hunters must personally checkout within three days following the close of the season. Each hunter who takes a bighorn ram must submit the intact horns and skull for inspection and photographing. The department representative will affix a seal (plug) to one horn. The seal cannot be lawfully removed, altered or obliterated.

Now comes the long wait while your taxidermist works on your trophy. This could be anywhere from eight to ten months. If you are getting a life-sized mount or custom mount, you might have to wait a little longer. Be patient; after all, if you're like most hunters, it has probably taken you several years to get drawn. Enjoy the entire experience of your hunt!

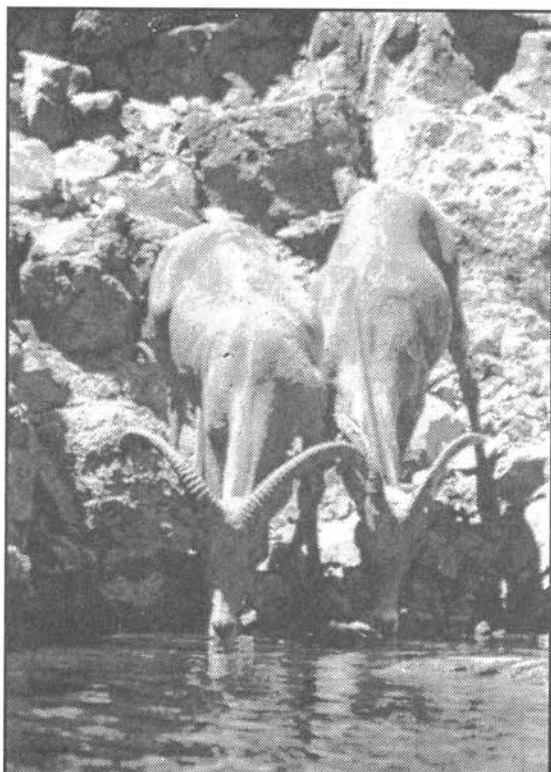


Photo courtesy of George Andrejko, Photographer & Arizona Game & Fish Dept.

EQUIPMENT CHECK LIST

Jim Stephenson

Since there are no grocery, hardware or drugstores close to the sheep hunt areas, a check list is a good reminder to see that you have those items necessary for comfort and efficiency of the hunt. This is a list, vary it to suit your needs and purposes.

TRANSPORTATION

Engine Oil
Gasoline
Spare Tires
Tow Chain or Rope
Jack
Water
Shovel
Boards (for under jack or wheels in sand)
Hammer
Pliers
Lug Wrench
Screw Driver
Wrench or Wrenches
Wire
Asst. Nuts & Bolts
Slave Cable
Axe
Tire Chains
Electricians Tape
RTV or equivalent

PACK & SLEEPING

Pack Frame & Bag
Sleeping Bag
Ground Cloth
Tent or Tarp
Air Mattress or Pad
Air Mattress Repair Kit
Cot
Rope

HUNTING EQUIPMENT

Rifle & Sling
Ammunition
Binoculars
Spotting Scope & Tripod
Maps
Compass
Knife
License & Tag
Rope & Cord

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT

Dish Towels
Paper Towels
Pot Scrubber
Pot Tongs
Grill
Coffee Pot
Spatula
Extra Mantles
Aluminum Foil
Lunch Bags
Water Cans
Sharpening Stone
Dutch Oven
Gasoline or Propane Stove
Lantern
Fuel
Matches
Kettles
Fry Pan
Knife, Fork, Spoons

Cups
Can Opener
Bowls and Plates
Condiment Kit
Dish Pan & Soap
Cooler

TOILET KIT

Tooth Brush & Paste
Soap & Container
Wash Pan
Towel
Shaving Gear
Toilet Paper
Sewing Kit
Mirror

GENERAL EQUIPMENT

Canteen
Flashlight (extra batteries)
Eye Glasses (extra pair)
Sun Glasses
Matches (waterproof container)
Camera & Film
Notebook, pencil or pen
Book (for long evenings)
Watch
Alarm Clock
Candle
Oil, Rod, Patches
Gun Case
Whistle

FIRST AID

Band-aids
Adhesive Tape
Aspirin or equivalent
Tube Vaseline
Bandages
Gauze Pads
Moleskin
Safety Pins
Chapstick or equivalent
Scissors
Tweezers
Longnosed Pliers
Magnifying Glass
Snake Bite Kit
Antiseptic (iodine or your own choice)
See Dr. Wilcox's article for additions

CLOTHING

Hat or Cap
Jacket (windproof)
Sweater or Sweatshirt
Shirts & Trousers
Wool Socks (heavy)
Wool Socks (light)
Spare Shoe Laces
Underwear
Handkerchiefs
Bandanna
Gloves
Boots (2 pair)
Camp Shoes or Moccasins
Rain Gear

PHOTOGRAPHY TIPS & ETHICS FOR HUNTERS

By Bruce Sitko

Arizona Game & Fish Department

Whenever there's a gathering of sportsmen or women, invariably photos of the latest hunt are produced to depict factual proof of the outing. The old saying that "one picture is worth a thousand words" is often true. Photos bring reality to our stories, and are often used to capture the interest of an unsuspecting audience.

Sometimes though, if viewers rapidly skim through pictures or you hear an occasional "Ugh!" something may not be quite right. We often assume that others will share both our interests and viewpoints, but this is not always the case. Just as we give thought and planning to our outdoor trips, we should give equal consideration to ethical photographs of these ventures. The following photography tips have been selected with the intention of giving you a quality, ethical record of any hunts you may have now or in the future.

■ To begin, you may wish to consider keeping a photo record of your entire hunt, from start to finish. Some hunters begin their photo story by including their hunt permit, as well as accumulated unsuccessful drawing cards, on the first page of their album. Take photos of all aspects of your hunt, whether it be scouting time, companionship around the evening campfire, special weather conditions, whatever. If your significant others are accompanying you, this is a special time to include them in photos of all the hunt activities. These pictures will provide you with a lifetime of memories.

Time, energy, thought, and lots of film go into good photographs. Try to "make" rather than "take" pictures. To get the picture you envision, you will have to make several choices before you let the camera take over. Think about the image that you hope to capture on film.

■ Take plenty of film, and shoot lots of pictures. It might also be of help to take different speeds of film to be prepared for different lighting conditions. Generally speaking, when using negative film,

which is used for prints, 200 film is the best all-around speed. A 100 film is better for bright, sunny situations found during the middle of the day, and a 400 film is preferred for low light conditions. If you're using transparency film for slides, either Kodachrome 64 or Fujichrome 100 will give you a high quality slide. The Fuji film will offer more color saturation, with deeper blues and greens.

■ The composition of a photograph is also an important consideration. The first tendency of many photographers is to place the subject in the center of the photo. This is usually not good composition, and often yields a rather uninteresting picture. Off-center subject placement is a secret of successful composition. To accomplish this, use a simple trick called the "rule of thirds." Place an imaginary grid over the image in the viewfinder, dividing it evenly into thirds, both horizontally and vertically. The four points where the lines intersect mark the best places to locate the center of interest. When subjects are positioned at these points rather than in the center, pictures look less static and more interesting.

■ Many subjects lend themselves more readily to a vertical rather than horizontal format. While it won't break your arm to turn the camera 90 degrees, few photos are taken that way. Also, the horizon line shouldn't be in the center of the photo. It tends to cut the picture in half. If the horizon line is above or below the center, the resulting photo will look better.

■ The best types of photos of the hunter and the animal are those that are close-ups. When you take close-ups, fill the viewfinder. Also, take your photos from a variety of angles, varying the position of the hunter and the animal, to obtain the best results. And don't forget to turn the camera to the vertical position.

■ An important technique to use when taking close-ups is to hold the camera at the same height as the central focus of the picture. This may require lying belly-down on the ground.

■ Take some pictures of just the animal from different angles, and provide an extra copy to your taxidermist. It will help immensely

in duplicating the bumps, scars, and proper horn setting when he creates your mount.

■ When taking pictures, most amateur photographers make a common mistake that puts a blemish on their hunt photos. They fail to consider the shadow effect that a hat or ballcap has on the subject's face, resulting in photos where some or all of the face shows up completely black in the final product. Do one of three things. Either take the hat off, tilt it back, or use your camera's built-in flash to produce what's called a fill-in flash to reduce the effect of the shadow on the face. You could actually take photos using each of those three compensations. The cap is a biggy; don't overlook it.

■ Although close-ups are usually the best types of photos in these situations, they're not the only shots to consider. Wide-angle photos that include a background of habitat and terrain can also be very effective.

■ A little fancier, yet still simple technique that is also effective is called framing. Include some type of natural object in your photo that would show up along one or more of the edges in your viewfinder. This technique adds depth and dimension to pictures. Use tree branches, rocks, and wood piles as frames.

■ Also, don't be afraid of taking photos with the light source behind the subject. This technique is called backlighting, and can produce some outstanding effects, including silhouettes. If you try this technique, again use your flash for fill-in on at least a few of the exposures to lighten up the shadow, even on a bright, sunny day.

■ Perhaps the most important consideration in taking photos of your hunt is the following: This magnificent animal, as does all wildlife, deserves to be treated and displayed with the utmost dignity and respect. If you remember nothing else from this information, please remember this. There are not many things more repulsive to someone than viewing a picture of big game that includes the animal's gut pile, blood on various places of the animal's body (including the hunter's hands), and having the mouth agape with the tongue hanging out. Photos like this help reinforce public opinion

of so called “hunter brutality.” The whole concept of hunting in today’s society is in a tenuous state. Many individuals strongly believe that it is a thing of the past, and would just as soon vote at the polls to make it that way. Look at what happened to trapping in this state. Each one of you is highly encouraged to make a personal difference when it comes to dealing with this issue. One way you can honor your animal in your photos is by doing the following:

While setting up your photos, take a minute to tuck in the animal’s tongue and close the mouth with whatever means are available. Many hunters carry a safety pin that they use to secure the upper and lower lips together from the inside. A cactus spine also does the trick.

If there are bloodstains on the hide, wipe them off with a moist rag and dress the animal hair to its natural appearance. In addition, remove all blood that may be seen in the picture, whether it’s on the animal or on the ground. This may mean moving the animal a short distance. You can use existing vegetation, rocks, or dirt to hide undesirable portions. And don’t forget about your appearance either. Wash the blood from your hands and clothes.

■ My last point also deals with the image that hunters project to their audiences, whether it’s to the hunting community or the public in general. You are encouraged not to have any type of alcohol container present in any of your hunt photos. True, the conclusion of a successful hunt is a time for celebration, but what is being advocated here is for the hunter to consciously think of the impression that may be conveyed at some point in the future. Right now you may think that your only audience will be other sportsmen who understand, but you really don’t know.

An article that went out on the AP wire on a recent dove hunt in the Yuma area reinforces this. The reporter did some extensive research on the article. The story headline read “As Hunters Prepare for Dove Season, Residents Take Cover,” and in the bold, highlighted font in the article, it quoted one resident as stating, “Many hunters get drunk while out shooting. They leave their beer cans; you never see Coke cans, it’s always beer cans.” Just remember that you can

make a conscious choice in regards to improving the image of sportsmen with the subject content of your hunt photos. Some might think that this is a very trivial thing. But just like habitat loss for wildlife, even though it may only be a little here and a little there, over time it adds up to a large amount.

■ Last suggestion; if you have someone helping you on your hunt, whether it's a friend or guide, one of the nicest "thank you's" you can give is a hunt photo, one that includes the hunter and those who helped, with a personalized message written across the bottom.

The list of measures that can be taken to obtain quality photos of your outdoor experiences goes on and on. The bottom line is to give forethought to the process and what the results may look like. And whether your photos are to be shown to different audiences or just to companions who share equal interests, give thought to the impression they will convey to your viewer.

Good hunting... And when telling those campfire stories about the one that *didn't* get away, do it with good pictures.

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Jim Stephenson

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