



THE HOWLER

The official PPHA Newsletter

July 2008



I would like to start out this edition by introducing myself. My name is Shawn Musser and I am 36 years old. I am married to my wife Deb and I have 3 children all boys. My oldest son Tyler is 13. My middle son, Austin, is 11 and my youngest son Dalton is 1. I am new not only to the PPHA but also new to predator hunting and have already received great tutelage from some great PPHA members. I encourage everyone to help make this newsletter outstanding by submitting some great stories and articles for all of our members to enjoy. Let's all work together and push this club forward into the club I know it can be.

Thank you and enjoy. Shawn Musser

President's Message

Greetings Members,

Well, here we are in July and we have a little over 3 months till the '08-'09 Furtaker Season starts. I hope that all of the PPHA members had a safe and successful season in '07 & '08. I also hope that everyone is enjoying their summer and that you're out there doing your homework for the upcoming season.

This is our first Howler edition in some time; we ask if there is any member out there wanting to contribute an article to future editions to please contact your district officer. This edition we have Tim Deckard from D3 Game Calls submitting one of many more articles he has taken the time to write for our newsletter. If you have a story of a successful or eventful hunt or even an article on a tactic that works well for you that you're willing to share with your fellow PPHA members, please submit it along with any pictures for an upcoming edition.

Last summer we got some wording changed in the PGC Hunting Digest book concerning the legal use of *all* types of decoys for predator hunting. The correct wording was in the Title 58 Pennsylvania Code but was not reflected in the Digest. So, you are now legal to use all types of decoys to include electronic for all furbearers, not just coyotes as it was worded prior.

This past winter and spring we were pretty busy getting our current bylaws revised from our original set from years ago. Important changes have been made and some of the content out of the original has been dropped as they no longer pertain to how the PPHA functions. It is important for our bylaws to accurately reflect how this Association should be run. You should have received a copy of our current bylaws along with a copy of the proposed changes. District meetings were held across the state to receive input and a vote from all the members. The proposed bylaws passed with a majority vote of 5 to 1 from all 6 districts. I want to thank all those who took the time to attend these meetings and made your voice heard. Another time consuming project this spring and summer has been the organizing of our upcoming 1st Annual PPHA Predator Expo & Calling Competition to be held in Lewistown Pennsylvania at the FoxPro Inc. facility on July 12th. This expo is currently one week away as I write this, and I'm excited to meet a lot of members during this event. This will be an all day event including 7 seminars on subjects such as red fox, gray fox, and coyote hunting/calling, furbearer biology and hunting regulations. Great food, great raffle items and great company will be had by all who attend. After the day's events wrap up we will be holding a calling competition which should be a lot of fun. Again, I look forward to meeting all of our newest members and having a great time. Hope to see you there!

Lastly, the officers are currently in the beginning stages of organizing the '08 PPHA Statewide Hunt for this fall or winter. Dates and locations are being hammered out and once details are nailed down we will let you know. Also, nominations or officer positions are coming up soon. We currently have a vacancy in District 2 Coordinators position, if you reside within District 2 and would like to help out please contact myself or any other officer.

Enjoy the rest of your summer and I hope to see a lot of you at the Expo and the Family Picnic this year. A big thank you goes out to George Rue & Paul Sible (new PPHA dist. 6 coordinators), Eric Lilly (new PPHA webmaster), Ryan Lehman, Hern Blett, Ben Smyser & Tom Purves (PPHA expo committee) and Shawn Musser (new PPHA Howler organizer) for

stepping up this past year and helping out beyond the call of duty. Big round of applause for them please! Thank you guys!!!!!!!!!!
Best regards and happy hunting!

Ben "Woody" Woods - PPHA President

Predator Patterns

By
Tim Deckard

Finally! I was a predator hunter. Unlike a caveman who gets hit with a club, the light came on in my head. I had figured out the pattern to the fox I was hunting. Or did the fox figure out my pattern? The latter of the two was more likely.

The fox came in down wind of me, caught my scent and disappeared as quickly as it appeared. I decided to throw the fox a curve ball and do the unexpected, circling 100 yards downwind of my current position after being winded not one minute before. I tried to convince myself that my plan would never work but had nothing to loose by trying.

I knew I had to move quickly because, I wasn't sure how far the fox ran. You don't often get another chance at a spooked fox, especially if that fox is already in the next county. It was about 5:00 in the evening with plenty of light left, so I decided to sit against a multi-flora rose bush to break up my outline. My hope was to catch a glimpse of the fox as I peeked through an opening in the brush. I began to scream the most pitiful rendition of the rabbit blues I could muster up with my closed reed call.

I tend to think out loud sometimes and said to myself, "This fox has to be stupid to fall for this". No sooner did I mumble the last word and there he stood, perfectly broadside, staring right at me.

I was so convinced my plan would not work; my shotgun was resting across my legs. Not being able to raise the shotgun and shoot, the fox wandered away.

Can you believe I blew two chances at this fox? He was not going to catch me off guard again. I raised my shotgun, and sang another tune. To my surprise, the fox turned and came back, allowing me to finish the job at twenty yards with my 12-gauge shotgun. My first Gray Fox. I was hunting the big woods of Tioga County in northern Pennsylvania. I hunted that fox and many others the same way all the time and that's how the fox patterned me. Never shooting anything until I changed my patterns.

Because of our limited geography in Pennsylvania, we tend to hunt our areas too frequently. We also tend to enter our hunting spots at the exact same location, use the same sounds and even use the same brand of call. It's no wonder some people think predator hunting is difficult.

A successful predator hunter carries multiple calls afield. Whether it's electronic, hand or mouth calls, there is always a need to change volume and sounds to adjust to the situation.

Predators live in the woods. They survive by knowing their territory. Every fallen tree, rock, and stream is noted. Sounds are pinpointed to amazing accuracy. If you get busted one day and return to hunt the same spot one, two, or five days later, how successful do you think your going to be? By walking in the same way and using the same sounds, with the same cadence we only educate the Predators to our patterns.

Predator hunters need to gain access to as many hunting spots as possible. There are never enough places to hunt! Make a list of your hunting spots, what calls and sounds you use and, the date/time you hunted them. You will be very surprised at what the information reveals.

Unless I am hunting all night, referred to as an "all-nighter", I usually hunt four to six different areas in an evening. Each area hunted is considered a "stand". If I hunt once a week, I like to have 16 to 24 hunting stands secured so that each set of four to six stands, gets a one-month rest. Of course the more you hunt in one week, the more areas you will need to secure.

When I do go back to those rested stands, I try to enter that stand with a different approach and use different sounds. You can also change the time of day that you enter those stands.

Night hunters may want to switch it up and hunt early evening or morning and vice versa.

I have found that my fur take has increased with this philosophy. Some stands dictate the way we enter and set up. A good predator hunter does their homework and uses the terrain and wind to their advantage or they do not hunt that area until they can.

Predators are smart! Their senses are better than we can understand, and we are educating them by using the same patterns over and over. Don't be afraid to try something different. You will become less predictable and the predators will not pattern you.

Hunt hard, be safe and keep'em in the light.....Tim

District Officers Reports:

District 1: no report

District 2: no report (vacant)

District 3: no report

District 4: Hello fellow predator hunters. It is nice to have a newsletter running again and I would like to thanks Shawn Musser (Lifes2fun) for stepping up and helping out. We have a lot going on this summer. In one week we are having the predator expo and calling competition. Hopefully we will be seeing a few of your faces that get around on the boards. If not then I think you will miss the show of the year.

District 4 had decided to do meeting by-monthly which is 6 meetings a year. We had our last meeting a few weekends ago at Colonel Denning State Park, and also did a g-hog hunt. The winner of that hunt was George Rue (Longhair) and Dist 6 co coordinator. In the end though I felt I won because of all the great friends and good times that were at that hunt. Two members stayed the weekend. Ben Woods and Ernie Wilson. I believe all had as good a time as I did. I would also like to thank Joe Bizub (Dist-1 coordinator/treasurer), Tom Purves (Dist-3 coordinator), along with Ben Woods(President) for helping out at the PPHA state booth at the PA Trappers Rony. This was a fun event and I tell ya I definitely will be heading to the next one this coming year. Thanks to Dist 7 and 8 for a job well done on this year's rony. There is only one upcoming event scheduled and that is the third annual dist4 predator hunt. This year's hunt is going to be the 14th - 16th of November. Traditionally we held this hunt the weekend bear season started. Members wanted to move this hunt forward a bit to help boost attendance. There is supposed to be a meeting for the month of August. I will schedule this meeting then within the month and we are probably going to have it at the York county Gander Mountain. September is going to be a pretty busy month for the PPHA. September 6th is the Marysville Sportsman flea market that the Pa Trappers association puts on every year. Alan Eppleman PPHA member and PTA

director for dist 8 asked me if we were going to be having a booth their. I told him as far as I knew and I am looking for help at the booth. These events are very enjoyable, we get to meet other predator hunters and normally sign up a few new members. The week after Sept 6th is the PPHA state picnic. It is being held at the same location as last year. We are having it at Black Moshannon State Park. Last years picnic went well and I believe this year will be better. The new officers also take office at this event. With that I would like to throw something out there. I have been the Dist-4 Coordinator for two years now and I feel it is time to maybe give someone else a try at it. I will help out the new coordinator and stay on as Dist 4's coordinator until we get a new one. It is time for me to move on. I would like to thank everyone that has helped me out and taught me about predator hunting. The friends I have gained, have been phenomenal. I look forward to the future and hope that this will be a good year coming. There is also talk of a state wide hunt based out of the north central region of the state. Look for upcoming info.

Takereasy Ben Smyser AKA Bigben.

District 5: District #5's meeting/bylaws vote was held 5/10/08, 3:00PM at Wilson Park in Kennerdell. It was a short poorly attended meeting and vote. District #5 voted against the new proposed bylaws as written. Nothing is currently on the slate for future district #5 activities. Let yourself be heard if you have any thoughts or ideas. See you at the EXPO!

District 6: District 6 is hosting a groundhog / crow hunt on Saturday August 2, 2008. This hunt is a get together, not a contest, so come on out for a fun day of hunting and lunch. Meeting time and place to be determined once we establish who is participating, so please let George or Paul know in advance if you plan to attend

Another Great Step In The Right Direction

BOARD TAKES STEP TO EXPANDED MENTORED YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Taking a step forward to grow the agency's popular Mentored Youth Hunting Program (MYHP), the Pennsylvania Board of Game Commissioners today gave preliminary approval to add coyotes to the list of species that may be hunted by youths under the age of 12 while under the supervision of a mentor. To take effect, the Board must approve the proposal at its next meeting, which is scheduled for Oct. 24.

The proposed regulatory change was recommended by the Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation and the Pennsylvania Fox and Coyote Hunters Association.

ADOPTED 2008-09 FURBEARER HUNTING SEASONS

COYOTES: No closed season. Unlimited. Outside of any deer or bear season, coyotes may be taken with a hunting license or a furtaker license, and without wearing orange. During any archery deer season, coyotes may be taken while lawfully hunting deer or with a furtaker license. During the regular firearms deer and any bear seasons, coyotes may be taken while lawfully hunting deer or bear, or with a furtaker license while wearing 250 square inches of fluorescent orange. During the spring gobbler season, may be taken by those with a valid tag and meet fluorescent orange and shot size requirements.

RACCOON & FOXES: Oct. 25–Feb. 21, unlimited.

OPOSSUM, SKUNKS & WEASELS: No closed season, except Sundays and prior to noon during the spring gobbler season. No limits.

BOBCAT (WMUs 2A, 2C, 2E, 2F, 2G, 3A, 3B, 3C, 3D and 4D): Oct. 25-Feb. 21. One per permit. (Bobcats may only be taken by furtakers in possession of a Bobcat Hunting-Trapping permit.)

Upcoming Events:

July 12, 2008 – 1st Annual PPHA Predator Expo and Calling Contest ----- this will be held at Foxpro in Lewistown, Pa

Aug 2, 2008 - Upcoming District 6 Hunt- District 6 is hosting a groundhog / crow hunt on Saturday August 2, 2008. This hunt is a get together, not a contest, so come on out for a fun day of hunting and lunch. Meeting time and place to be determined once we establish who is participating, so please let George or Paul know in advance if you plan to attend

Sept 13, 2008 - PPHA Family Picnic --- this will be held at The Black Moshannon State Park.

NEW PPHA T-SHIRTS AND HATS ARE IN!!!!!!

T-shirt prices are \$15-S-XXL and \$17- 3XL

There are 2 colors. Longhorn Orange and Dark Gray.

Hats are \$15 and you have 2 camo choices- Realtree Hardwoods or Mossy Oak or a Florescent Orange for the groundhog hunters.

Contact your District coordinator and order yours today!!!!

Remember to renew your membership!!!!

Invite a friend to join us. Our club is only what we make of it. Take a little time and attend the district meetings, your voice counts.

Join in the District and Statewide hunts, and bring the kids along especially to the picnic, they are the future of our sport.

Have fun, be safe and get out and hunt.

PPHA working together to protect our interest in Predator hunting.

Thank you for your support!!!!!!