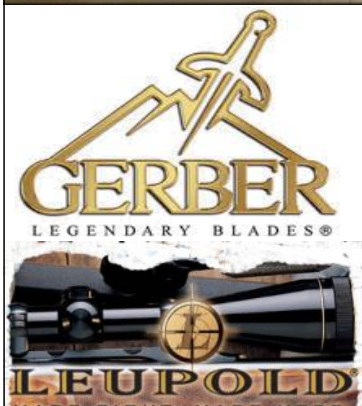


OREGON SHED HUNTERS



If you have a story that you would like to share in our next newsletter, or comments or suggestions feel free to contact us at:
osh@OregonShedHunters.com

2009 OSH MULEY AND SHED HUNT

- ROB TANNER, TROY CAPPS, ROYCE HANCOCK

It all began in June of 2009. We logged onto the computer and looked up the controlled hunt drawing results to find out we were "successful" in drawing our mule deer tags! Whoohoo! We had been hoping for this day and had actually started planning the hunt, being optimistic about the drawing.

With high hopes of bagging big bucks we started to refine our plans, which would put us deep into the backcountry wilderness once we were done planning. Many hours were spent on Google Earth flying over the country we were going to hunt, with hopes of finding that big buck country.

We had hunted this same unit in the past, but we had never been as deep into the wilderness as we were hoping to get this time. The excitement was building month after month when we got an offer from a good friend of ours, Grant, that we just couldn't resist! He wanted to make the trip with us, provide the horses and mules, and pack all of our gear deep into the wilderness! As you can imagine we were ecstatic to let him know we would take him up on his offer.

We departed 3 days prior to opening day, giving us about the right amount of time to get set up and settled in at base camp and get ready to ride into the wilderness on opening day. As you can imagine, nothing ever goes as planned.

The road into base camp is a long, bumpy one, and not designed for 40 foot long vehicles. With eight stock animals in the horse trailer for most of the day, the bumpy road wasn't well received at the end of the day. We had one

horse fall in the trailer and injure his back leg. Meanwhile the others were lathered up and completely worn out once we got to base camp.

At this point we had no idea how long it would take the stock to recover, but we knew they were vital to our trip being successful. So we decided that we would let the stock rest at least two days, which would set us a day behind the planned departure date. This was perfectly fine, as things could have been a lot worse. The extra day would



give us plenty of time to get base camp settled and get the packs organized and equally distributed for the animals.

On opening day, we ventured out around base camp and passed up three bucks including a decent 24-inch four point. He was hard to pass up, but we had high expectations of our pack trip departing on the second day of the season. Royce and Grant also spotted a couple of bucks in the high country that appeared to be shooter bucks (one was a monster for sure), but they were too far out to pursue until we packed in.

Sunday morning came quickly and we found ourselves loaded up and leaving base camp by 10 am. Things were going well until about a quarter of the way into our pack, when we had one mule that decided he wanted to buck a little and add some excitement to our trip. Needless to say we were in a steep area not good for "horse-play." After Grant got ran over twice and after about an hour of picking

up scattered gear, a broken lantern, canned foods, and the rest of our gear that was packed on the mule, John Paul, we were back on the trail. But there was one small problem. John Paul was still shaken up about the whole ordeal and he had broken one of the straps on his pack. John Paul and his pack were pretty much done for the day. Little did we know at this point, but during the hunt we would have 7 of the 8 animals on the ground at some point. Not that they were bad animals, just rugged country with a lot of places where the footing is not good for the animals. Quick lesson learned; it's best to keep your boot that is on the downhill-side out of the stirrup!



So, a change in plans were in order. We were not going to make it to our original location. Instead we had to set up camp in a different location so that we could go back to the rodeo location and get the rest of the gear that was in the broken pack.

The first day of our pack came to an end well into the darkness of the night. Sleep was not hard to find that night. The plan for the next day was to hunt from camp and give the animals a day of rest.

Monday morning rolled around and the weather had turned cold overnight. We huddled in our sleeping bags waiting for each other to get up and start the fire. A quick bite to eat and we were out hiking in the darkness, forging toward a known vantage point to sit and spot at daylight.

At daylight we were in a good glassing spot. We had just sat down when less than a minute later Troy spotted a buck. We sized him up and Troy said he wanted him. Royce stayed put and Troy and I started the stalk. About half way to the buck, Royce radioed and said there was another buck near the first buck, but he couldn't tell how big he was.

We continued to sneak towards Troy's buck and finally got to within 200 yards of him. At this time we saw the other buck and decided to let him go. With one shot Troy's buck hunting was done for the 2009 season. He had harvested a nice 4x3 with a 27-inch outside spread.

The remainder of the day was spent boning out and packing meat back to camp. We managed to pick up a few sheds and spot several others across the canyon on our way out too!

With the success we had on the first day of actual hunting,



we didn't have a big reason to pack up and relocate, or go deeper into the wilderness.

The next couple days found us back hunting the same general area, while Grant packed Troy's buck back to base camp. We found several bucks, but no shooters at this point of the hunt. We managed to pick up quite a few elk sheds and Troy was blessed by the "elk shed Gods" on one day (see article on page 8).

On Wednesday of our hunt we decided to get up an hour earlier and venture our way out to the location where Royce and Grant had seen the two bucks in the high country on opening day. It was a long hike and after a couple hours of glassing we spotted the white muzzle of a buck bedded down about 1,200 yards out. He was in the same location as where Royce and Grant saw the bucks opening morning, and he acted like he knew something "up". He kept laying his head on the ground making his head and antlers almost impossible to see over the surrounding vegetation.

On our stalk to get within size-up and shooting range we had hopes that this buck was the monster buck that Royce and Grant had seen on opening morning, or that he would be close by and we'd both get some shooting in. We got to within 450 yards and peeked up over a ridgeline to find just the one buck. Royce decided he was going to take this buck although we both knew the big buck was probably nearby. The buck stood up and a couple shots later he was rolling down the mountain...and he rolled...and rolled. There was nothing we could do but watch the buck roll.

Upon getting to the buck we discovered that he had gotten the "scar" that many of our other harvested animals from this unit have gotten. He broke off about nine inches of his G2 on his right side as he rolled about 200 yards down the mountain. We never found the broken piece. He was a nice 24-inch 3x3.

The rest of the day was spent boning and packing meat out of some nasty rock- bluff country. Two tags filled, one to go.

The next morning I got up and went out within a couple ridges of where Royce and Grant had seen the big buck on opening day, hoping he would show his face at daylight. To my surprise, he showed up. I caught him right at daylight coming up from a creek bottom to the higher country, before he could get into the bluffs and bed down. I was by myself and hit him with the rangefinder at 415 yards. Long shot, but we have practiced shooting quite a bit at this distance prior to going on this hunt. And lets face it, this yardage is typical for this area.

I had a hard time finding a spot to shoot from and had to reposition and move uphill several times. By the time I got situated he was uphill from me, still about 415 yards away. His rack was wide and tall with deep forks...a dream buck in the 190 range. I had to lay down to get a shot off. My first shot rang out and the buck jumped and ran uphill. I jacked in another shell and waited for him to stop. He did so about an-



other 30 yards uphill, and I let another round fly. It appeared that I missed again and he went out of sight.

By this time I was excited and breathing hard, and it was going to take me quite a while to get to where he was standing to check for blood, not to mention where I last saw him. And it was all uphill.

It took me about a half-hour to get over to where I shot at him. I found his tracks and looked around for blood, but found none. I followed his tracks and got to where I last saw him. I lost his tracks for awhile and then found them again going up a narrow rock slide between two bluffs. I almost got to the top of the slide and I jumped him out of his bed at 30 feet! Again, he took off uphill and out of sight, running hard. I looked in his bed and, again, there was no blood. I continued to hunt him for the rest of the day but never saw him. I did manage to find a few elk sheds which made the day a little better, but I was hugely disappointed on my missed effort for a trophy buck.

We looked for that buck that evening and the next day, but he was history. We never saw him again, although I bet he saw us. We did see several other bucks in the area, one of which was an old revert forked-horn that was a neat looking buck.



The week of hunting was coming to an end, and I knew I was going to have to pull the trigger on a buck at some point. On the seventh day of the hunt, and tenth day of the trip, we went to a canyon where we had seen some bucks. Right at daylight we spotted a 4x4 about 100 yards below where we were sitting. We had seen this buck several times during the hunt and let him go. This time he was being considered. We continued to glass and we spotted the big forked-horn revert buck again and another smaller buck way out.

With my tag being the last to get filled, the ease of the shot before me, and the close proximity of this buck to camp I decided to take the 4x4. One shot and he was mine. He was a young buck, maybe three years old. For deer management purposes I probably should have pursued the big forked-horn buck. However, my buck was a nice buck and I was happy to have him!



What a great trip it was! Three bucks, a pile of elk sheds and a bear that Troy shot on his way to camp. We would like to thank Grant for his generosity in helping us pack and our sponsors for helping us make this trip successful.



RECENT CHANGES WITH OSH

New as of January of 2010, OSH will be posting it's Quarterly Newsletters on the OSH Homepage. As OSH continues to grow year after year, there may be some necessary adjustments to continue to provide our members with a quality membership.

With a large number of OSH members, the biggest consumption of our time is with the quarterly newsletters. We enjoy writing them, but there is a huge time commitment with printing, stapling, stuffing envelopes, addressing envelopes, sending, etc. Consequently, there is a need to switch all of our newsletters to electronic newsletters.

So there is now a link on the OSH Homepage to our newsletters (in PDF format). We know that some folks do not have computers and upon request we will continue to send these folks hardcopies. In the next couple weeks all OSH members will be receiving a letter in the mail with the notification of this, at which time they can request hardcopies.

Membership packages will remain the same, however the Basic membership package will now include an OSH decal along with the entry into all contests, shed hunts, etc.

There will also be a few changes to the Biggest Shed Contest. All specifics have not been worked out at this time, but we are discussing a drawing for the top five prizes. It would work like this. The top entry from each of the five categories (mule deer, blacktail deer, whitetail deer, roosevelt elk, rocky mtn elk) would go into a drawing for the top five prizes. This would eliminate the need to rotate the Big Prize (typically from Leupold, like the \$1000 Switch-Power binoculars in 2009) from category to category each year. The top entry from each of the five categories would have an equal 20% chance of winning the Big Prize. We hope these changes work for you. Thanks for all the support.



2009 OSH BIGGEST SHED CONTEST WINNERS!

The results of the 2009 Biggest Shed Contest have been finalized! It was another great year for big sheds, with a record number of entries in the Blacktail category alone; 34 to be exact! Check out the final standings below, with photos on page 5.

In the Mule deer category we had three non-typicals land in the 90's, with one just shy of the 100 inch mark!

Leupold made the Blacktail deer category very competitive this year, as everybody wanted to win the Leupold Gold Ring Switch Power Binoculars, valued at \$1000. We had one Typical Columbia Blacktail shed almost break the 70-inch mark and a Non-Typical Cascade Blacktail almost hit the 90-inch mark!

Whitetail entries were fewer in number than blacktails, but some nice Eastern Whitetails in the 40's and 50's were submitted.

Roosevelt and Rocky Mountain elk categories produced some very respectable sheds in 2009! Interestingly, the top

scoring Roosevelt sheds that were submitted were, for the most part, larger than the Rocky Mountain sheds.

What a great year of shed hunting it was! From all over the state of Oregon, and other states as well, we saw some tremendous sheds found and/or submitted to OSH. OSH is very pleased with the response we have seen over the past several years and we couldn't have made it happen without our members and sponsors. A special thank you goes out to our sponsors Nosler, Danner, Leupold, Sportsman's Warehouse, Cabela's, Cent-Wise Sporting Goods, Out West Taxidermy, and Boone and Crockett. We would also like to thank our webmaster and his support group for their continued support in making OSH successful. And last but not least, a big thank you to those who submitted sheds into the contest. We couldn't have been successful without you folks. We hope the 2010 season is bigger and better!

Mule Deer

1. John Milleson - Ontario, OR - 99 2/8 Non-Typical - Won a Deer European Mount courtesy of Out West Taxidermy (\$200 value)
2. Kevin Keown - Bend, OR - 94 3/8 Non-Typical - Won \$100 Nosler Gift Card
3. John Milleson - Ontario, OR - 92 2/8 Non-Typical - Won \$50 Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Card
4. Kevin Keown - Bend, OR - 76 2/8 Typical - Won an OSH Custom Hitch Plug
5. William Rogers - Vancouver, WA - 73 7/8 Typical - Won a set of Vanguard Binoculars from Cent-Wise Sporting Goods

Blacktail Deer

1. Curt Brace - Springfield, OR - 69 2/8 Typical Columbia Blacktail - Won a set of Leupold Gold Ring Switch Power 7-12x32 Binoculars (\$1000 value)
2. Stephen Price - White City, OR - 89 7/8 Non-Typical Cascade Blacktail - Won \$100 Nosler Gift Card
3. Justin Hoffman - Albany, OR - 64 0/8 Typical Columbia Blacktail - Won \$50 Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Card
4. Patrick McGanty - Sheridan, OR - 63 7/8 Typical Western Blacktail - Won an OSH Custom Hitch Plug
5. Ashley Price - White City, OR - 70 6/8 Typical Cascade Blacktail - Won a Danner Package

Whitetail Deer

1. Julie Williams - Bend, OR - 54 1/8 Typical Eastern Whitetail - Won a Cabela's Day Pack and Knife (\$150 value)
2. Ryan Nossaman - Springfield, OR - 52 3/8 Typical Eastern Whitetail - Won Gerber Knife, Hat and Travel Mug (\$75 value)
3. Gayle Dixon - Burns, OR - 52 2/8 Typical Eastern Whitetail - Won a \$50 Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Card
4. Jeff Dixon - Burns, OR - 45 5/8 Typical Eastern Whitetail - Won an OSH Custom Hitch Plug
5. Will Jensen - Eugene, OR - 44 2/8 Typical Eastern Whitetail - Won a Danner Package (T-shirt, socks, boot grease, decal)

Roosevelt Elk

1. Howard Church - Eugene, OR - 157 3/8 Typical Cascade Roosevelt - Won a Deer Shoulder Mount courtesy of Out West Taxidermy (\$450)
2. Ashley Price - White City, OR - 156 4/8 Typical Cascade Roosevelt - Won a Gerber Multi-Tool, Hat and Travel Mug (\$100)
3. Eric Risdal - Creswell, OR - 133 3/8 Typical Cascade Roosevelt - Won a \$50 Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Card
4. Ron Evans - Roseburg, OR - 128 3/8 Typical Cascade Roosevelt - Won an OSH Custom Hitch Plug
5. Todd Edwards - Springfield, OR - 125 5/8 Typical Cascade Roosevelt - Won a Danner Package

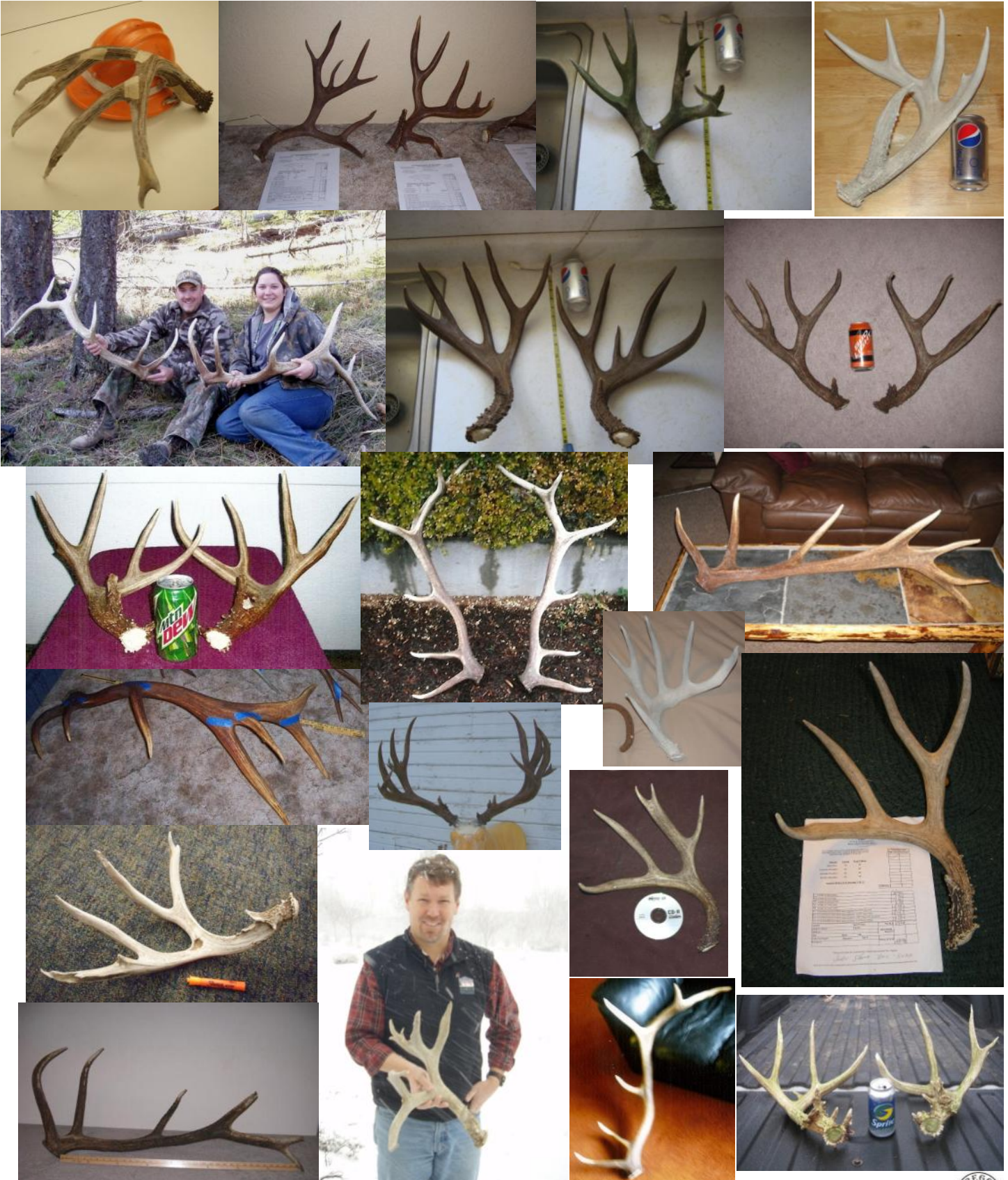
Rocky Mountain Elk

1. Francis Johnson - Boise, ID - 145 3/8 Typical - Won an Elk European Mount courtesy of Out West Taxidermy (\$250 value)
2. Lisa Busch - Sandy, OR - 135 4/8 Typical - Won a Gerber Flashlight, Hat and Travel Mug (\$100 value)
3. Ron Smith - Portland, OR - 135 0/8 Typical - Won a \$50 Sportsman's Warehouse Gift Card
4. Lisa Busch - Sandy, OR - 132 4/8 Typical - Won an OSH Custom Hitch Plug
5. Randy Konnell - Astoria, OR - 125 4/8 Typical - Won a Danner Package



2009 OSH BIGGEST SHED CONTEST PHOTOS!

Here are a few of the sheds submitted into the 2009 Biggest Shed Contest, of which not all won prizes.



FIELD GEAR REVIEW:

DANNER PRONGHORN GTX® INSULATED (200G) BOOTS

- BY ROB TANNER

Over the past several years Danner has been a very generous sponsor to OSH. In addition to sponsoring prizes for our Biggest Shed Contests, Danner has let us field test several of their products including socks, boot grease, and hats. The 2009 Rifle Deer Season was no exception, as Troy, Royce and I were able to field test the legendary Danner Pronghorn GTX® Insulated (200G) Hunting Boots.

All of us have been long time believers in Danner boots, and we have actually worn the Pronghorns before. This hunt, however, was going to test these boots well beyond any other activity we had done while wearing Pronghorns. We were going deep into the rugged backcountry of the deepest river gorge in North America to hunt mule deer.

We were excited to try out the new Pronghorns, so about a month prior to our departure we gave each pair a couple weeks of break-in time. One thing that we were quickly reminded of was that there was little to no break-in time needed. The boots seemed to meld to our feet upon the first or second wearing, and this was the case for all three of us. Right out of the gate, these boots offered an athletic shoe fit and comfort level, with the big boot support.

Once the departure date rolled around we were ready to put these boots to the true test. With 11 days of planned hunting, these boots were the only footwear that got loaded on the mule train headed into the backcountry. It was Pronghorns or bare feet!

Throughout various weather condi-

tions and landscape types during the hunt, these boots never failed us. From wading across shallow water to crawling up rugged basalt cliffs these boots continued to yield high marks. With a 100% waterproof guarantee and breathable GORE-TEX® lining we never had to worry about wet feet. In addition, the TERRA FORCE® technology provided exceptional boot support and stability without adding additional weight. The Predator™ outsoles provided sure grip on steep, unstable terrain, which we encountered pretty much everywhere we went. The leather around the outsoles had a tendency to scuff after several trips through steep, rocky terrain, however the integrity of the boot was never jeopardized.



Thinsulate Ultra
INSULATION



After 11 days of intense hunting, we found the Pronghorns to be a great all-around boot. With 200 grams of Thinsulate these boots weigh a total of 3.8 pounds. For the active hunter, this is one of the lighter boots on the market with this level of insulation. However if you are doing a lot of still hunting you may want to try the Pronghorns with a higher level of Thinsulate. Danner also offers the uninsulated Pronghorn and Pronghorn Snakebite if you plan to pursue warmer climate activities.

If you are in the market for a pair of boots we would highly recommend these. They can be found for around \$180, which is an exceptional price for an exceptional boot.

NEXT FIELD GEAR REVIEW: Leupold Gold Ring Switch Power 7-12x32 Binoculars



OSH WEBPAGE QUICK STATS

- **136,340**—total hits on the webpage since January of 2006 (as of Jan 10, 2010)
- **Alaska, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, California, Wyoming, Washington**—states with OSH members
- **38**—most users on the chat forum at one time
- **13,119**—number of posts on the forum
- **9.17**—average posts per day on the forum
- **335**—number of registered users on the forum
- **Top five forum posters (excluding OSH):**
 1. Tree Killer—876 posts
 2. Hornhunter—779 posts
 3. OSUlogger— 622
 4. Cameraguy—617 posts
 5. Hornhog—554 posts



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2009 PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

OSH would like to congratulate our winners for the 2009 Photo Contest. We had more photo entries this year than in the past years with some very unique and outstanding photos to choose from.

Votes were received from those of you who frequent the OSH Forum as well as from some of our sponsors and people from the local community. The results were pretty much unanimous for four photos. Congratulations to Scott Tibbs, Ron French, and Donn Walgamuth on their outstanding photos! Each will receive one year memberships to OSH. This was Scott's third year (in a row) as one of the photo contest winners. This was also Ron's second year as a winner of this contest. Congratulations again to all of our winners and be sure to enter your shed hunting photos for the 2010 season!



Ron French



Donn Walgamuth



Ron French



Scott Tibbs

SHED TIP- DRAWING A MAP

Finding too many sheds is typically not a problem. Sometimes, however, the Shed Gods bless you with a hillside that has several sheds. We have had this blessing a few times over the years, and in all cases it was when we were glassing an opposing hillside. More times than not, we got excited and hiked over to the location only to struggle to find a few of the sheds. So if you are ever in this scenario, spend the time making a physical map (using pencil and paper) of each sheds location so that you can find them when you get over there. Or at least make a mental map. Let's face it, the terrain always looks different from the other side, and a shed that looks like an obvious find from the other side of the canyon is often hidden quite well once you get near it.

GLASSING FOR SHEDS...JACKPOT!

-BY TROY CAPPS

After a morning of hunting and climbing the steep hills and canyons looking for Mule deer I kept a mental note in my head of where I had spotted some sheds on distant hillsides. When it was time to head back towards camp I spotted two elk sheds that I *had* to go after. While Rob and Royce continued to hunt back towards camp I headed in the opposite direction. Knowing I had a hard hike ahead of me and it was already early afternoon I needed lots of water to make sure I would make it back to camp at the end of the day. Memories flashed through my mind of a similar venture several years prior where I ran out of water and almost died, or I felt like I was going to die. Rob and Royce both gave what water they could spare and off I went.

I had to cut over to another ridge and then go down the ridge for about an hour to get near where I saw the sheds. I always get excited when I get close to the area I know they are at. I started to recognize the surroundings near the sheds, so I decided to get up on a rock outcropping and glass to make sure I was in the right spot. I sat down on the rocks and glassed with my Leupold binoculars and right away I saw one of the elk sheds laying on the grassy hillside. I took off my backpack and got my favorite spam sandwich out and started glassing around in hopes of spotting the other one. In seconds I found the other one lying about 50 yards down from the first. I made a mental note where they were so I could walk right to them. With such luck, I decided to glass around the huge hill side in front of me. It was a south sloping, grassy hillside with some rock ledges and small trees and shrubs scattered. I made one sweep across the top of the slope and "BINGO" there was a nice elk shed laying in the open. Wow three sheds in one drainage, I was feeling lucky!



Now this next part is unbelievable. Those that know me know I am an honest guy and I live by the code. The OSH code, "Never tell a bad story, never lie to your hunting buddies, always point in the wrong direction when you know the right one, and never, ever tell where you find sheds, but always tell the truth." As I glassed the hill side I started seeing more elk sheds. First, I spotted a small 5 point and then a big 6 point. Then another, and another, at least 15. They were laying all over the slope. I could not believe what I was seeing. Jackpot! I was doing the Shed Dance celebrating the moment and I think I lost all control, as I found myself doing some dance moves I would never do in front of my buddies or around deer camp. The Shed Gods were smiling on me today.



After settling down and coming to reality, I realized I had a problem now. I was a few miles from camp, low on water and had at least 15 elk sheds to pack straight uphill for at least a couple of hours. It took me about an hour to collect most of the sheds and get them in a single pile. In the meantime I found a few more sheds. Finally, it hit me that I could not pack all of these elk sheds out of this drainage. I would have to leave a few behind. I did not have a pack-board and had no twine or rope, as I was only prepared to pick up a couple sheds. But I could not leave these behind! After a lot of rearranging and stacking them in different ways I finally found if I made a cradle around my waist and locked my hands together I could carry some of them, with the remainder on my back. The real problem now was I could only walk with small steps up hill as they would hit my legs on every step. That is what I did for the next couple hours, slowly walking out of the canyon heading back to camp. As I moved up the canyon I ended up spotting 8 more sheds on distant hill sides, which were reluctantly left behind.



As I came slowly into camp, I could feel my energy was almost depleted. Once I saw Rob and Royce smiling all aches and pains left and a big grin came over my face. Wow what a great day! The only thing I could think about now was how many I left back on the slopes.

