



Troubling News about Smallmouth Bass, Plastics in Susquehanna River...Ron Steffe

Now that the results of a 2019 study are known — research that looked into the contents of the stomachs of 89 smallmouth bass sampled from the Susquehanna River's mainstream as it flows through Pennsylvania — it may finally be time for people here to come to the realization that we humans are rapidly inflicting harm beyond repair to our only home, the Earth.

In the stomachs of those dissected smallmouths, an average of 29 pieces of micro plastics were discovered to be part of the digested contents of the foods the fish were consuming as part of their daily diet.

Plastics flow freely through this huge freshwater system. The material offers no nutritional benefit, add the feeling of a fuller stomach which in turn decreases the needed intake of natural food sources and lessened growth rate, and most likely harms the fish in yet undiscovered ways such as fry production and survival rate,

Studies of ocean life have already indicated plastics are found in tiny zooplankton all the way up to whales, and are present from Antarctica all the way to the Arctic, and everywhere else in between.

Plastics have also been determined to be a part of human makeup, found in organs like our kidneys, lungs and livers.

As plastics decompose — a process that may take hundreds and even thousands of years — it finds its way into every corner of the Earth's living systems. Through avenues such as sewage treatment facilities that empty into streams and rivers, through the air and often returning to earth by rain, and stormwater runoff that dredges plastic wastes from land that eventually end up in rivers like the Susquehanna.

It is hard to believe but the evidence on micro-plastics in our aquatic ecosystems is indisputable. The real shame is that as human kind raved about the creation of plastic and its many uses, it now becomes a part of every food chain, including ours.



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Now you know how dandelions get spread around

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There is gear that can aid in your search to recover a wounded deer. One company makes a blood-trailing flashlight that illuminates blood and makes it visible to the human eye. There also are spray products that do the same thing.

Once you find the deer, don't just walk up to it. Take your gun. Many hunters have walked up to a "dead" deer only to have it jump up and run away. Look at the eye. If it's open, it's probably dead. If it's closed, use caution. Gently touch the deer's eye to see if it blinks. Tracking deer is often a judgment call. Approaching weather or a healthy coyote population may require that you start tracking sooner than you'd like. Use patience, be quiet and methodical, and it should turn out for the best.

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Musings from Our President

As we reach the end of the year, I am reflecting on all that has happened.

So many life-altering events have occurred in so little time that it can be overwhelming and coupled with emotional fatigue leaves one saying "goodbye 2020, I am out of here!"

Dealing with the unknown, civil unrest and assault on our personal freedoms have left us tired and fearful for the future. Yet through it all, it gives us clarity on the things that really matter.

So as we cast this year behind us and brace ourselves for the New Year – let's meet it head on and face the trials and joys that come with it!

Hope that you had a very Merry Christmas and wish you all the best in the New Year.

Joyce

ISA Info

- All Times, No Dumping on Property
- Gate open whenever anyone is on property
Gate closed if you are the last one to leave
- Go to our webpage for a calendar and more information on events.
- If you unlock the Clubhouse door, please lock it before leaving.

"The only thing that stops a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun." And, for those that carry or have a defense weapon available, practice at the club makes for that perfect shot when required.

Tips for Tracking Deer After the Shot...Mike Gnatkowski

Some of the most memorable deer I've shot were not deer I harvested. There haven't been many, but there have been a couple of deer I have shot and not recovered. That fact weighs on me to this day. I've relived my shot placement, questioned if I should have taken more time and waited for a better shot or whether we could have done a better job of tracking. No sportsman wants to lose a deer, but unfortunately it happens on occasion.

Ideally, we make the perfect shot and the deer drops in its tracks. But that doesn't happen all the time, especially with archery gear. More often, the deer takes off at the shot and the tracking process begins. By following a few simple rules, the tracking process can end successfully 99 percent of the time.

The first thing to do after the shot is settle your nerves and do nothing for 20 to 30 minutes. Calm down, shed clothes if you expect to be walking and tracking, and ready the things you need for recovering the deer. Visualize the shot and how the deer reacted. It will give you an idea of where the deer was hit.

A high jump and kick followed by a high-speed run usually indicate a shot in the vitals. You can expect to find the deer within 100 yards. The deer that runs off and stands hunched up is likely shot low in the stomach or guts. Get another shot in the deer if you can. Otherwise, expect to wait a considerable amount of time before beginning tracking. Deer wounded this way want to bed down. Most will die in the bed if you let them, but it might be a minimum of several hours before you can go after them. What you don't want to do is push the deer. Deer shot with a gun may be harder to track than those shot with an arrow. It's common to hear deer shot with archery equipment crash within hearing distance. Listen after the shot to get an idea of the direction the deer is heading and possibly the results of the shot. Deer shot with archery gear are intended to bleed out, making it easier to follow blood trails. Deer shot with a firearm die from shock and tissue damage, but there is often less blood to follow.

Identify a visual landmark to give you an idea of where the deer was standing the last time you saw it. It might be a rock, a tree, or an opening in the forest. After waiting, go directly to the spot where you last saw the deer and determine if you indeed hit the deer. Place a marker for a point of reference. It can be a strip of surveyor's tape or a piece of tissue.

If you can't find a blood trail, go back to where the deer was standing when you shot and look for blood there. Once you find blood, blood color will help determine where you hit the deer and provide a visible trail for recovering the animal.

Bright, pink, frothy blood with bubbles indicates a lung shot. The deer shouldn't go far and your chances for recovery are good. Rich, vivid, red blood indicates a shot close to the heart or an area supplied by multiple blood vessels. Major blood sign indicates that the deer will not be far. A marginally hit or nicked organ is usually fatal, but it may take a while for the animal to die. Best to be patient, wait, and prepare yourself for some difficult tracking.

Dark, crimson-colored blood suggests a liver or kidney shot. A shot like this is fatal, but will take time. Wait two to three hours before you begin tracking. Blood sign may be minimal so be observant, patient, and use your best tracking skills.

Blood with plant matter or food mixed in it, or a yellowish-green tint to it, is not good. The clues indicate a stomach hit. The deer eventually will die, but it may be a while. Wait at least half a day before tracking, taking into account weather conditions and the coyote population.

How the blood is dispersed can give an indication on how good the hit was. Blood from a walking deer will be right in its tracks in the trail with little splatter and uniformly sized drops. If the blood trail moves side to side, weaving on the trail, the deer is about to expire. Blood from a running deer will spray or splatter. Major blood indicates a pass-through shot and a hit of a major artery or heart shot. Look for blood sign not only on the ground, but also on vegetation and trees.

Many times you won't find blood immediately at the point where you hit the deer. Pass-through shots with an arrow or bullet will produce plenty of blood sign, but an arrow that doesn't pass through or a deer shot with a slug or buckshot may not bleed profusely until the body cavity fills with blood and begins draining from the entrance wound. Even then, blood will clot or fat or hair may plug the hole.

That's why it's important to stay to the side of the trail in order to not disturb sign. Tie pieces of surveyor's tape or tissue to branches at the last sign of blood. This gives you an idea of the direction the deer is heading and a reference point to return to should you lose the trail. One or two trackers works better than a whole group.

Hair can give you an indication of where the deer was hit. You often find it where the deer was shot, where it lay down, or where it crossed a fence. Dark, coarse, hollow hair indicates a high hit. Hair on the side of the deer will be thinner, brown, and not as coarse and should signal a good hit. White hair is not good. It means a low shot, but it could indicate an exit wound from a high-angle shot. Silky, white hair and bone fragments suggest a brisket shot. Such a deer may or may not die.

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