



Dinner for Two



Enclosed is a picture taken on our back deck. I never saw a turkey and a squirrel share a meal at a bird feeder before! Is this common?

Mr. Bill Franklin
Monticello, Sullivan County

This certainly is an unusual photograph. Wild turkeys and gray squirrels share similar food preferences. In natural habitats, they both prefer “hard mast,” such as the nuts of oak trees (acorns) and beech trees (beechnuts). When New York’s forests produce hard mast in abundance, it is not unusual to see signs of turkey, deer, bear, grouse, and squirrels in the same small area, as these species forage and compete for acorns and beechnuts. Seed in bird feeders provides similar high energy foods, and may attract unusual numbers or assemblages of wildlife, such as the pairing pictured here.

—Gordon Batcheller, DEC Wildlife Biologist

Piebald Deer

Conservationist intern Erika Hooker shared this picture of her 16-year-old brother Mitchell with his first white-tailed deer.



The six-point piebald (technically, “skewbald” is the correct term here) buck was taken on the family farm in Richfield Springs during bow season last November. An avid outdoorsman, Mitch was named the Young Hunter of the Year by the Adirondack-Catskill Chapter of Safari Club International. The chapter sent him to a week-long leadership camp in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

Congratulations to Mitch on his distinctive buck. Piebaldism is an uncommon genetic variation in white-tailed deer that causes the normally uniform brown parts of a deer’s coat to be mottled with white, similar to a pinto pony. Though often used interchangeably, the term piebald usually refers to black and white coloration; skewbald refers to white and non-black colorations.

—Eileen Stegemann, Assistant Editor

Friendly Chickadees



The October 2008 article, “Back Trails, Nature’s Irony,” struck a chord with me. I have been a bow hunter for more than fifty years, and a few years ago I got the idea of feeding the birds while I wait for deer to show up.

As far as the birds are concerned, I am part of the tree, especially with the friendly chickadees. They land on my head, shoulders, bow, arrow, pant leg or any other handy perch. I feed them out of my hand sometimes just for the thrill.

One year I had a strange chickadee that appeared all season. It had several extra tail feathers growing above and left of the regular tail. One of the feathers was even growing upside down!

Kenneth G. Furness
Aurora, Cayuga County

Thanks for sharing. It’s nice to hear from a fellow hunter who has enjoyed a similar experience.

—Dave Nelson, Editor

✉ LETTERS

Dish Network

Here is a photo my uncle Doug took. The beaver lodge was in the south inlet of Raquette Lake. We're wondering if it's Direct TV or Dish Network and if they have HD.

Jennifer Peyser
Troy, Rensselaer County

Thanks for the amusing photograph. Obviously, whoever placed the dish out there had a sense of humor.

—Jenna DuChene, Staff Writer



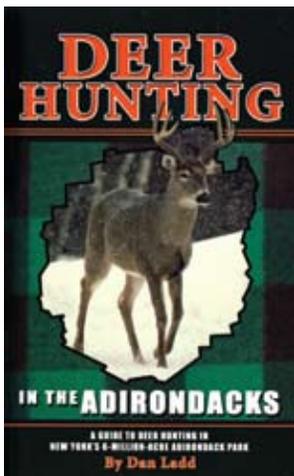
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📖 REVIEW by Leo Maloney

Deer Hunting In the Adirondacks: A Guide to Deer Hunting in New York's 6-Million-Acre Adirondack Park

By Dan Ladd
168 pages; soft cover \$17
North Country Books, Inc.
www.northcountrybooks.com; (315)735-4877



Visit any bookstore or sport shop and you will see lots of books on deer hunting. However, if you are interested in hunting in the Adirondacks, *Deer Hunting in the Adirondacks* belongs on your shelf. Written by Adirondack resident and deer hunter Dan Ladd, this book is easy to read and flows nicely. It is designed primarily as a guide for those who want to experience the challenge of

Adirondack deer hunting, which means that even experienced hunters will find it enjoyable and useful.

Ladd gives realistic ideas of what is involved in hunting, how to hunt, and suggestions on where to go. Some hunters may be overwhelmed by the vastness of the Adirondacks, but this

book makes it easy by providing sections on hunting locations, including descriptions of the terrain and the area's habitat. Like any hunting guide, there are chapters on techniques, weather and weapons, as well as sections on equipment, ethics, safety and other hunting concerns. One chapter in particular focuses on how Adirondack hunters get their bucks.

While some books on deer hunting are either too basic or too technical, Ladd's book contains an interesting and manageable combination of aesthetics and practical advice. On top of that, Ladd spices up *Deer Hunting in the Adirondacks* with his own love of the Adirondacks and deer hunting, which you can grasp through his descriptions and personal anecdotes.

What was most enjoyable in *Deer Hunting in the Adirondacks* was that amid the advice and guidelines came the spirit of a hunter who spends all day in the woods without seeing a deer but still says what a great day it was. It is something that everyone should experience. This spirit and the spirit of the Adirondacks are very apparent in Ladd's book. *Deer Hunting in the Adirondacks* will actually make you want to get up and go hunting.

Oneida County resident and outdoor writer **Leo Maloney** is past president, and current secretary of the New York State Outdoor Writers Association.