

# The Maine Bowhunter



SUMMER 2018

Official Newsletter of the Maine Bowhunters Association



## Food Plot Time

Progress Update with John Hunt

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**A Memorial Day Hunt**

Dedicated to the

**Preservation of Bowhunting**  
for over **50** years!



## President's Report

with **DEANNA L. PAGE**

As always, we hope you are enjoying your summer and preparing for the upcoming fall hunting seasons! If you have some spare time to lend, we can always use extra

help when it comes to ideas and making decisions within the MBA....Can you lend us some time? Please send me an email or give me a call!

The MBA is having t-shirts and sweatshirts printed with our logo. See design below.

**T-shirts** will have front pocket logo and full back design-Price \$15(S-XL) add \$2 for 2X & 3X.

**Crew neck sweatshirts** will have both front & back logos-Price \$20(S-XL) and \$2 for 2X & 3X.

**Hoodies** (pocket logo only, solid or camo) – Prices will range from \$35-45 depending on style and color.

We will be ordering these in the next few weeks.

To reserve your shirts:

Please call me at **270-3400** or email me at **mainebowhunter68@gmail.com**.

Thank you so much for your membership,

**Deanna L. Page**

*President*

**Maine Bowhunters Association**





## A Memorial Day Hunt

with Brad Magoon

### **Beep-Beep-Beep....The alarm goes off at 3:30am.**

We all know the feeling of the fast pounding of our heart when the alarm sounds. I reach to shut it off. I look at the outside temp on my side table; it reads 44 degrees. I step into the mudroom to see if it is raining - just a light sprinkle - it looks good for a hunt. I wash up, shave and put my hunting clothes on, grab my SQ2 out the door. It is only a short walk to my Double Bull, 3/4 of a mile to my big field that borders the Skowhegan town line.

I have a walking path mowed which is used a travel corridor by turkeys, so I don't use decoys. At 5:00am I could hear two Toms gobbling on my neighbor's land. At 6:15am I gobbled twice, no response. I just kept watching left and right. At 6:35am two Toms gobbled about 20 yards to my right. I grabbed my bow and they were walking in fast. I came to full draw when they were behind some Basswood trees. I held full draw for about a minute, the first Tom came to an opening at ten yards. I put my pin on his wing butt, I let the arrow fly, the Tom ran out into the field 25 yards and did a nose-dive. I knocked another arrow as the other Tom ran out to his dead buddy. I put my pin on him and let an arrow fly but only clipped a few back feathers. He ran west-bound toward Kansas. Maybe I'll see him this fall when I'm deer hunting. I went and got my Tom and arrows, put my transport tag on him and placed him behind the blind. I hunted for another hour, but no more turkeys. I packed up and walked home, and made my way to the tagging station. He weighed in at 17lbs, with a 9.5 in beard 3/4 spurs. I hope all you hunters had good fortune. I thank all the Veterans and MIA's for this Memorial Day hunt.

*Please write some stories because I am running out of them.*

**Brad Magoon**



*Box Scraper with Scarifiers for tilling and leveling.*

## **It's that time of year again.**

I wrote a couple of articles about food plots a few years ago, and am updating the progress. By the way, we have harvested 4 deer from those 2 food plots. I have taken one, and my wife has taken 3. As a review, we cleared two 1/3 acre plots of trees. We then had an excavator come in and stump the areas out. After that we used a box scraper with scarifiers to till up rocks, roots, etc. We continue to do that each year before we plant. We are finding fewer and fewer rocks to pick up as time goes on.

We have tried many types of crops in our food plots. We started off with clover (a perennial), and had pretty good success with it. After talking with a number of different people we started experimenting with annuals, like brassicas, a winter pea mix, and some other crops. We have had very mixed success with these crops. We have found the biggest problem with annuals to be "timing." The deer loved some of the crops, and wiped them out a couple weeks before archery season, and never came back. (Clover grows back after being browsed.) For some of the other crops, like the brassicas, the deer don't tend to favor them until a solid frost hits (after archery season). We have now decided to go back to clover. Note: All 4 of our deer were harvested over clover. Clover lasts for up to 3 years, preventing the need to till and replant every year, and we have learned how to care and maintain it. I will explain what we do:

As soon as we can reasonable do so, we till the earth with our box scraper. This breaks up the ground, and levels it out some. Note: If there is a lot of grass and weeds, I may decide to spray with glyphosate to kill of the grass and weeds, making tilling easier and limiting the weeds in the future. If you do this, you need to wait a couple weeks before tilling for it to take effect. After the ground is tilled up, I like to break the clumps of soil up more by going over it with a York rake. This not only breaks the clumps of earth up more, it also helps level out the ground and makes the soil kind of "fluffy." Fluffy is important for the next step, and leveling the ground out is important for later in the summer. I try to do all of this ground preparation and subsequent planting just prior to a forecast of rain, so as to help with germination.

Immediately after I use the York rake, I plant the seed into that “fluffy” soil. My plots are small enough, that I can do this with a hand seed spreader. Clover seed should not be planted any deeper than ¼ inch. Really, all it needs is good soil contact. To achieve this I get the soil fluffed up with the York rake, immediately plant the seed, and then immediately roll over the seed bed with a lawn roller, pulled by my 4 wheeler. This pushes the seed nicely into the fluffy soil, without burying it too deep.

After planting, I need to fertilize. The seed doesn’t really need fertilizer to germinate, so I don’t have to do this immediately, but I try to get it done within a few days after planting. I use a 0-20-20 fertilizer. This is important. You don’t need nitrogen for clover, because it takes nitrogen right out of the atmosphere. Using nitrogen is actually detrimental to clover, as it encourages the growth of competitive grasses and weeds. I use about 100lbs of this fertilizer mixture on each of my plots. I may decide later in the summer to add another 50lbs.

Lyme is an important component in a quality food plot. In most of Maine the soil is very acidic. Lyme can be applied just about any time. The problem with lyme is that it takes a while to become available in the soil. I tend to think of the lyme I apply this year as being available next year, and the year after. I recommend using a soil test to determine your lyme requirements. It’s hard to over lyme and area, but it can be done. I put about ½ ton on each of my plots.



*Food plot shortly after being rolled.*

If all goes as planned there will come a time when your food plot looks lush and green with clover. At this time you are going to have to overcome a resistance to leave well enough alone, and you are going to have to cut it. Oh no!!!! It’s OK. Put the mower on a high setting and just do it. Oh, this is where having a level food plot pays off. Cutting the clover will not only cause it to burst with growth, it will also help eliminate some of the competitive grass and weeds that are poking up in your clover. The clover will now start shading that out. If the grass starts to get out of control there are some products out there that kill the grass without harming the clover. Clethodim is quite effective. Early detection and remediation of this problem will help a lot.

If you’re adding the dimension of food plots, I hope this information helps.

Have fun, and shoot straight.

**John Hunt**



## **First Trophy**

with **Randy Gaetano**

### **They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder.**

Words cannot describe the feelings I had on the morning I held my first 8-point buck last fall. I haven't been at this my whole life, but it has completely consumed me since I started chasing deer with a bow about 7 or 8 years ago. I can, with great clarity, remember almost every deer I have seen from my stand since I started. From the first group of does eating beechnuts about 20 yards behind me and thinking "wow, I made my first right move..." to the 15 minute encounter I had watching the buck pictured above rubbing off his velvet on the taught roots of a fallen tree while scouting. So many close calls, a few successes, and a lot of quiet, contemplative time 20 feet up a tree.

All of these little milestones inch you closer and closer to one day wrapping your hands around a set of those mesmerizing antlers. Then there are all of the other experiences, like owls flying quietly, right under your stand, or a redbtail hawk dive-bombing a pair of mallards, or a kinglet landing on your arrow, all of those other amazing experiences that remind us of the full spectrum and why we are really out there. Those are, just as much, the trophies I seek.

And now, holding one of those mesmerizers, gazing at a supreme natural specimen next to you, feeling the surprisingly soft fur... I have now experienced that feeling. It is one of my trophies — along with every other deer I have taken with my bow — and along with every one of the truly amazing experiences I've had afield since I started this sacred pursuit.

Honored to be serving as your new editor and looking forward to coming season. Keep in touch.

**Randy Gaetano**

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E-mail: **Very important!** Print clearly: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Dues:  **Family/household \$30**     **Affiliate Club/business \$95**

Mail to: **Maine Bowhunters Association, PO Box 5026, Augusta, ME 04332**



*To all our Armed Forces: **THANK YOU!***  
**From everyone at the Maine Bowhunters Association**

**Maine Bowhunters Association**  
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