Cuddeback’s®
GAME PLAN

The “Seasonal System” for finding the big bucks with your scouting cameras

Cuddeback Digital

CLASSIFIED
Game Plan is the revolutionary new “seasonal system” for finding big bucks with your scouting camera. Developed by Cuddeback, the #1 name in digital scouting cameras, Game Plan is a guide for when and where to place your cameras to maximize the chances of finding that buck of a lifetime.

The Game Plan system breaks down the year into nine seasons. Each season is decidedly different in terms of where you deploy your scouting cameras and what you can hope to accomplish. Follow Game Plan and you will have a better idea of what bucks are on your property and how to best set up to harvest the biggest one around.

The Nine Seasons

When we say seasons, we are not referring to spring, summer, fall and winter. The Game Plan seasons are “phenological.” They follow the various seasons in the annual life of the whitetail deer. This way, they apply equally as well north or south, although not necessarily at the same time on the calendar. If you are an experienced hunter, you will recognize these “seasons.” What we’ve done is to identify how to best use scouting cameras during each one.

Most scouting camera users, even those who are experienced hunters, tend to put cameras on food plots, trails, scrapes or stand sites and leave them there throughout the hunting season. In some cases, they have learned that certain spots experience more activity early or late and will move their cameras accordingly. That’s what Game Plan is really all about. We’ve fine tuned this approach and developed a system for you to follow. Game Plan gives you the formula to become successful at scouting deer with your cameras.
1. **Summer**
   
   Inventory every buck on your property by putting your cameras in funnel areas on primary food sources.

2. **Pre-Opener**
   
   Pick out a buck to hunt for opening day and use your cameras to determine his pattern.

3. **Opening Day**
   
   Set up to catch your buck still sticking to his summer patterns on opening day and the days following.

4. **The Lull**
   
   Use your cameras to find deer activity during that period prior to the rut when deer seem to lay low.

5. **Pre-Rut**
   
   Take advantage of a buck’s early rutting activity by monitoring rub lines and primary scrapes.

6. **The Rut**
   
   Once the rut is in full force you are better off finding bucks by looking for does.

7. **Post Rut**
   
   Once the rut is over, concentrate your scouting efforts on food sources as big bucks need to eat to prepare for winter.

8. **Post Season**
   
   The best time to start scouting for next year’s trophy is the day this year’s season ends.

9. **Springtime**
   
   Don’t put the cameras away just because the bucks have lost their antlers (Plus bonus section on scouting bears, scouting turkeys and general tips).
SEASON 1

Summer

Goal: Inventory all bucks on your property
Wouldn’t you love to have an image of each and every buck on your property? Seeing all of them would be extremely helpful when it comes to determining which bucks to hunt and which ones to let grow. Before a particular buck walks through your shooting lane, you would be able to determine if he is the animal you want to take, or if you should wait for a bigger buck.

The very best time to inventory bucks is during the summer months. Does are looking after their fawns during summer and generally have little interaction with bucks. The deer world is matriarchal which means that the does run the show. So bucks are relegated to their own small groups called bachelor groups. Bucks tend to hang out during the summer in bachelor groups of similar age, so not all of the bucks on your property are likely to be together. Bucks also tend to lay low during this time of the year choosing to stay in cover during the heat of the day while traveling short distances to feed during low light hours and at night.

If you think about it, how often do you see bucks roaming around or crossing roads during the summer? Relatively speaking, not very often.

The fact that bucks congregate during the summer months and that their movement is predictable and related to food, gives the scouting camera user an opportunity to pinpoint likely areas of frequent travel.

**Look for primary food sources**

First, you need to find the primary summer food sources. This is easy if you have food plots or agricultural sources that draw the animals. If you don’t have access to food plots or agriculture, search for the best primary food sources you have.
Locate funnel areas or sweet spots within food sources

Once you identify as many of these primary food sources as you can, thoroughly scout them looking for travel funnels or sweet spots within each food source. Do not scout travel funnels going to or from the food source, but travel funnels within the actual feeding areas. Deer will move through a food source while they are feeding. Eventually, most, and perhaps all deer, will have spent at least some time just about everywhere in the food source. However, there are certain areas within each food source that get more traffic. If your food source has a natural funnel, it is very likely that every deer will eventually travel through this funnel. The funnel may be a narrowing in a food plot, a road or trail connecting food plots (see diagram 1), or perhaps some brush or rocks that force deer into a narrow area. Sweet spots include low areas in a field that retain moisture or allow deer to feed out of sight, a shady corner in a food plot or the side of a field that is closest to heavy cover. After you have pinpointed these funnels, or sweet spots, set up a Cuddeback to capture deer moving through. It is possible that within eight weeks or so you will have photographed every deer on your property.

Funnel areas are superior to food source edges

Many scouting camera users will simply place a camera on the edge. The best place to get images of deer during summer is in a funnel within a food source. Deer have favorite spots within primary food sources. Find such a “sweet spot” and you’ll likely get images of every buck on the property.
of the food source. The problem with this method is that deer will frequently be too far from the camera to be seen in the image. Cuddeback’s long flash range will help in this situation, but a better solution is to place your Cuddeback such that deer will be moving within 20 feet of the camera. This will provide close up images that will make it easier to determine antler size. Finally, another advantage of setting your Cuddeback on a funnel or sweet spot is that you need only one camera per food source. In fact, that is how Mark Cuddeback discovered this scouting method. On a pair of food plots, Mark set up three cameras – one on the edge of each food plot, and one on a tractor trail connecting the two plots. After three months, Mark discovered that the camera on the tractor trail captured all of the deer seen on the other two cameras, but the two cameras on the edge of the food plots did not capture all of the deer photographed on the trail. The one camera on the tractor trail was all he needed to see all the deer that visited these two plots.

**Avoid moving cameras between food sources**

Set up cameras in as many food sources as you have on the property. If you have five food plots, you should setup five cameras. Your goal is to create an image inventory of all the bucks on your property, which requires you to monitor the entire property for the entire summer.
Do not move cameras from plot to plot. You may discover that the bucks move from time to time, frequenting one plot for a few weeks, and then move to another as conditions change. If you try to monitor all your plots with just a few cameras, you risk missing some bucks.

Add a mineral block to lure wary bucks and to get better photos

Another technique you can use to help assure bucks move in front of your Cuddeback is to use a mineral block as an attractant. This will increase the likelihood of getting images of every buck that visits each primary food source, even the wariest big buck. A mineral block will also help you to position the bucks for an optimal view of their antlers. Position mineral blocks roughly 10 feet from your cameras. This will give you close up images of each deer.

Use the same spots each year

Once you’ve gone through the process of determining food source sweet spots, you’ll probably not have to do it again. These spots tend to be consistent from year to year and really only change with dramatic changes to the area. By using the same spots from year to year, you’ll also be able to more accurately assess the relative quality of each year’s buck crop.
It’s exciting to see what bucks you’ll hunt

Following these simple techniques will not only generate a complete image inventory of your deer herd, but will likely get you very excited about the upcoming hunting season. By late summer you will know what your bucks look like, and where they are. You’ll also know the makeup of your entire buck population. This process, which may sound difficult, is actually very simple and easy to set up and manage. Now we need to concentrate on getting you positioned to harvest one of these bucks.

Camera recommendations for Summer

- Begin process in late June or early July
- Use 1 GB or 2 GB media card because you will get many images
- Long battery life is essential due to large number of images and long periods of time you will leave cameras out
- Try to locate cameras close to mineral block or deer for close-up images so that you can better assess antlers
- 3 to 5 minute delay – don’t need an image every 30 seconds
- Flash camera (not infrared) is preferred for better nighttime picture quality so antlers are easier to see
- Check cameras no more than once a week (or less)
Pre-Opener

Goal: Pick and pattern a specific buck to hunt on opening day
In many states, the bow hunting season begins early enough that the deer are still in their summer pattern on opening day. The bucks you’ve been photographing will still be using the same food sources. To take advantage of this situation, the Game Plan is to use the images from your summer buck inventory to select a specific buck to hunt and re-deploy your cameras to pattern that buck’s movements.

**Which buck? The biggest or the most vulnerable?**

After you’ve had the opportunity to view images of the bucks you’ve photographed during the summer, hopefully you’ll have several candidates to pick from. Obviously, antler size and makeup will be key factors in determining which buck you will target. You might also consider the vulnerability or predictability of the various bucks. Usually the biggest buck is not the most vulnerable. They don’t get big by being predictable.

**Move your cameras to suspected travel routes**

Once you’ve determined which buck to hunt, it is time to determine where best to set up for that buck. Because that buck will likely continue to use the primary food source for a time yet,
you’ll have the opportunity to find his travel route and catch him coming to that food source. This usually means an evening hunt and it usually means having to move to the outside edges of the food source or even into the cover along a travel route to get a shot opportunity before dark. This is where your cameras come into play. Deploy them along all travel routes to the food source to determine how the buck you have chosen gets there and when. Once you’ve set up Cuddebacks, leave the area undisturbed for as long as possible. Do not check the cameras until just before opening day. Immediately before opening day (we recommend the day before if possible), check your cameras and view the images. Using these images to guide you, determine the best hunting location to ambush your chosen buck. Then set up your stand to maximize your chance of success. When placing your stand, consider how you will move to and from your stand. Your goal is to enter and leave without spooking or alerting any deer. Leave the area as undisturbed as possible, and don’t return until you are ready to hunt on opening day.

**Camera recommendations for Pre-Opener**

- Begin this process roughly two weeks before opening day
- Start with fresh batteries
- On field edges, or in food plots, use infrared cameras and 3 to 5 minute delays.
- On trails leading to food sources, use flash cameras and the shortest possible delays.
- Do not check the cameras until just before opening day
Cuddebacks are designed to give you excellent depth-of-field, brilliant colors and sharp infrared images.

Cuddeback is known for fast trigger speed and long battery life. Serious hunters trust their scouting to Cuddeback because they do not want to miss that buck of a lifetime.

Another big advantage of a Cuddeback is image quality. The better the image, the easier it is to analyze details, like antlers.

The custom camera in a Cuddeback was designed to maximize depth-of-field. This means that both the deer in the foreground and the deer in the background of an image will be in focus, making it easier to see antler details.

Cuddebacks also produce images with vibrant colors. This helps to create contrast and bring out details. And, who doesn’t love to look at a colorful image?

Cuddeback’s IR cameras are also designed with image quality in mind. While an infrared image will never compare to a nighttime flash image, Cuddeback has gone to great lengths to reduce the “blur effect” common to infrared images. All in an effort to maximize your ability to see detail.

Don’t miss that buck of a lifetime. Get a Cuddeback!
SEASON 3

Opening Day

Goal: Catch a big buck off guard

Your cameras have been set up to pattern your big buck for an opening day ambush. It is your hope that he continues to use the same food source and that your cameras have identified his travel path to that food source. Now it is time to hunt the stand you set up during the pre-opener season. It is key that you do not make any mistakes. Many of us are a little rusty on opening day. Even the most experienced hunters tend to make opening day blunders – too much noise, human scent, and countless other...
mistakes that lead to blown opportunities. Don’t make any mistakes and, if your buck cooperates, you could very well be successful within a few days.

It pays to be persistent for the first two weeks of the season. The biggest mistake most hunters will make at this point is to move from spot to spot, stand to stand, or buck to buck. Your cameras, in the weeks just prior to opening day, will have given you an idea of how often and when the buck might appear. Do not expect the buck to be any more regular than this. Let your cameras continue to monitor food source activity until you notice a reduction in deer movement. Your cameras will show this – you’ll get fewer total images and fewer daytime images. At some point, you will determine that it is time to change your hunting tactics.

If all goes according to plan, when you come back to check cameras and pick a spot, you’ll have a buck like this to hunt.

Hunt hard and don’t expect your buck to come by any more often than he did prior to opening day.
SEASON 4

The Lull

Goal: Find some daytime deer activity
There is a period of time between when bucks abandon their summer patterns and before the rut, where deer movement is minimal. The bucks have largely left their bachelor groups and have found their own homes and developed their own individual patterns. Until the first rutting activity happens, hunting during this lull can be tough. In many parts of the country, this coincides with the leaves falling from the trees which, arguably, makes the deer even more nervous due to the perceived lack of cover and the noise of crunchy leaves.

Let your cameras look for activity

Of course, the deer are still out there. Let your cameras do the work to find deer activity. Disperse your cameras far and wide, leaving no area uncovered. As much as looking for the right spot, you are looking for the right deer. Some deer may very well be more active than others.

Set your cameras up in a variety of areas

Put your cameras in suspected feeding areas such as food plots, crop fields, acorn ridges, etc. Also put cameras in suspected bedding areas which are typically characterized by thick cover. In addition, look for activity in swamps or in cornfields as these are areas that offer cover without foliage.

During the “lull” period, you’ll likely find far more nighttime activity than daytime activity.

Put cameras in bedding areas where the cover is thick or other places that offer cover without foliage such as standing cornfields or swamps.
Finally, put your cameras in funnel areas to find active deer.

While this effort requires a lot of human activity, which obviously increases the risk of spooking deer, the risk will be worth it if you can find a deer that is moving during shooting hours.

**Check your cameras frequently to find activity**

During this lull period, you are looking for any daylight activity. Don’t be afraid to check your cameras frequently in an effort to find active deer. If you find active deer, or the buck you are after, set up a stand and begin to hunt without delay. Deer can change patterns quickly, so any delay could result in a missed opportunity. Again, once activity associated with the rut kicks in, everything changes, so be aggressive and you’ll find more deer.

**Camera recommendations for Lull**

- On trails or in funnels, use a flash camera and short delays
- In food plots or feeding areas use infrared cameras and delays of 3 to 5 minutes
- Check cameras often and move them frequently in an effort to find an active buck

*What you are looking for is daylight buck activity.*
Finally, there is software designed specifically to help you manage your Cuddeback images on your computer. Called Trophy Room, this software is available for free. Download at cuddeback.com

From media card to computer with one click of the mouse
Trophy Room copies images from your media card to your computer with a single click. All you need is a simple card reader (Cuddeback’s viewer, CuddeView, serves as a card reader). Once the images have been loaded, you can view images individually or as a slide show.

Enhance images (effectively doubling flash range)
Lighten or darken images. This is especially useful on nighttime images whereby flash range is effectively doubled allowing you to see distant background deer you didn’t even know were there!

Before enhancement

After enhancement

Special folders for bucks
Trophy Room has preset folders for “Bucks” and “Best Bucks.” Copying images requires only a single click on an icon. You can also make custom folders and organize images via camera locations, day or night or however you choose.

Determine sun and moon positions
Some other scouting cameras display that day’s moon phase on each image. Cuddeback’s Trophy Room Image Management Software, takes this a BIG step further. With your Cuddeback image displayed in Trophy Room, a pop-up box will show sunrise, sunset, moonrise, moonset, moon phase, etc. for that day. In addition, a visual graphic will show precisely where both the sun and moon were positioned...

AT THE TIME THE IMAGE WAS TAKEN!

Free download at cuddeback.com

Special folders for bucks

Zoom-in and crop images
Simply “box” the area you want to zoom in on to get a closer look at antlers or a distant buck. Selectively crop images as well.

Predict deer movement - CuddeCharts, a feature of Trophy Room, lets you analyze all of your deer movement data in order to predict future deer movement based on sun or moon position.

Cropped image
SEASON 5

Pre-Rut

Goal: Find your big buck as he establishes his territory by making rubs and scrapes
Thank goodness for the rut. The frustration of hunting the lull quickly shifts to the excitement of hunting the pre-rut. Bucks become very active as they make rubs and scrapes to establish their territory and begin the annual rutting process. This is the time of year where a big buck’s preoccupation with mating causes him to become far more active and just may lead him to make a fatal mistake.

**Move your cameras to rub and scrape lines**

As part of the rutting process, bucks make rubs on trees and scrapes on the ground. Rubs are visual signposts on which a buck will rub scent through the glands on his forehead. Some rubs are used year after year. A community rub, if you can find one, is a terrific place for a camera. You’ll likely get photos of numerous different bucks. Other rubs may not be revisited at all. If you find a line of rubs that happen to coincide with a common travel route, deploy a camera there as well.
Scrapes are another good place to put up your cameras. The goal is to find active scrapes. Bucks urinate down their tarsal glands to leave scent in a scrape and also rub their forehead glands on the branch that overhangs the scrape. Numerous bucks will visit active scrapes which makes them a great place for a camera. If you do not get numerous photos of bucks on a scrape in five to seven days, move your camera to a different scrape. Even the best scrapes will have inactive days, but not many in a row, except when does come into heat at which time the bucks will likely abandon the scrapes until the does are bred. Research shows that, prior to breeding, a buck will visit any one scrape roughly once every three to five days. And, you’ll likely find multiple bucks at each scrape. That’s why they are such good places to put your cameras.

You might want to make a mock scrape if you want to attract bucks to a particular spot. The best way to “activate” a mock scrape is to steal the overhanging branch from a real scrape and put it over your mock scrape.

**Put your cameras over travel corridors and food plots**

Because bucks are so much more active during this pre-rut season, a camera overlooking a common travel corridor or funnel is also a recipe for success. If you can’t seem to find the right rub or scrape, you’ll find it easier to find a
big buck by catching him moving through pinch points as he is making the rounds. Travel corridors that are part of a scrape line are always worthy of placing a camera.

**Put your cameras on food plots**

During the pre-rut, bucks will be moving around and checking on their territory to keep invaders at bay. They will also be cruising for does, anticipating breeding time. Food plots are natural gathering areas for pre-rut activity. Edges of food plots also typically are good places to find scrapes. All of this makes food plots another good place to find a big buck during the pre-rut.

**Check your cameras frequently; be nimble and quick**

Because pre-rut is a time of relatively intense activity, it pays to check your cameras often. If any camera is coming up short, don’t be afraid to re-deploy it. Remember, you are looking for that big buck and an opportunity to harvest him. Timely information is critical. Once you find him, get on him right away. Any delay could result in a missed opportunity.

**Camera recommendations for Pre-Rut**

- **Flash cameras on trails and in funnels**
- **Delays on trails:** 1 minute or less
- **Infrared cameras on food sources**
- **Delays on food sources:** 1 to 30 minutes
- **Flash or infrared cameras on rubs or scrapes**
- **Delays on scrapes:** 1 to 2 minutes

Food sources are also good pre-rut camera spots as they tend to be a gathering spot for deer.
SEASON 6

The Rut

Goal: You are looking for bucks that are looking for does

Your cameras can help you determine when the rut is ramping up. You will begin to capture images of running does, running bucks, or bucks with their noses to the ground looking for does. Once this happens, it’s time to shift tactics from pre-rut to rut-style hunting.
Once does start coming into heat, everything changes. Rather than looking for bucks at scrapes or rubs, you are better off looking for bucks by looking for does. And, the best place to find does is near food.

Does will always be in the vicinity of their favorite food sources. Find those food sources and you’ll find the does. Find the does and you’ll find the love-hungry bucks.

**Hunt food sources**

Once you determine that the does are in heat, you’ll want to hunt the active food sources. It is during this time frame that you will see a lot of bucks! Remember, bucks are using these food plots to find does, not to feed. They sometimes leave as quickly as they came. In addition, the bucks you see may be out of bow range. You should try decoys, scents, and calls to attract the bucks to you. And, don’t be afraid to hunt the middle section of the day when big bucks do their scent checks looking for hot does.

**Monitor key travel routes too**

With all of the activity, deer will be moving in and out of food sources, doing their thing. Your cameras will help you identify which travel routes receive the most activity. This is important because the chasing activity is relatively random and if you want to get a close shot, you are sometimes better off hunting a travel route. Be aware that you will probably see fewer bucks on trails than in your food plots, but the bucks
you see are more likely to be within bow range.

Regardless of whether you hunt trails or fields, once you get an image of a nice buck, move in and hunt quickly before a hot doe changes the buck’s pattern. Responding quickly is the key to hunting the rut.

**Trust your cameras**

Trust what your cameras are showing you, not necessarily what you’ve seen any given day or what you saw last year. Remember that this process repeats itself during the second rut when any unbred does come into heat all over again. In the interim, bucks will go back to checking scrapes. Once the unbred does go into heat, roughly a month after the first time, the bucks will be after them again. Your cameras can show you when all of this is happening.

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**Camera recommendations for Rut**

- **Flash or infrared cameras**
- **Delays on trails:** 1 minute or less
- **Delays on food sources:** 1 to 2 minutes – Note the shorter delays in food sources during the rut. Longer delays may cause you to miss some action. Bucks are not in food sources to feed during the rut. They are looking for does and move quickly.
Cuddeback Photo Contest

Each year, Cuddeback holds a photo and video clip contest. Consumers are invited to submit images and video clips via the Cuddeback website. Sixty four image and thirty two video clip finalists are selected and website visitors vote for their favorites in a tournament bracket format. We invite you to submit your favorite photos and video clips via our website.

Winner – Mike Miller, Mondovi, WI

Winner – Jerry Reutten, Spring Green, WI

Winner – Steve Crandall, Roseland, VA

Winner – Brian Nell, Algoma, WI

Winner – Randy Powell, Bartlesville, OK
Post Rut

Goal: Find the food and you’ll find the big bucks
When the rut is over and fall has given way to the early portion of winter, everything changes once again. The bucks are drained, worn out from the rigors of the rut. With the rut now a memory, they will be very inactive except to feed.

**Use your cameras to find active food sources**

Once again, we are back to food sources. Use your cameras to identify which food sources the big bucks prefer as they repair their ailing bodies for the coming winter and to tell you when the bucks might show up for a meal. Keep moving your cameras to find the right spot. Remember, the food the deer wanted earlier is not necessarily the food they are interested in now.

Over time, you’ll learn how the bucks in your area act during the post rut. Once you figure it out, you can experience some very good hunting, assuming you can handle the cold. The good news is that your Cuddebacks work great in cold temperatures!

**Camera recommendations for Post Rut**

- Flash cameras preferred as battery life is typically better in cold weather than IR cameras
- Use longer camera delays to preserve battery life (3 minutes or longer)
- Change batteries more often in cold temperatures
SEASON 8

Post Season

Goal: Find a big buck to hunt next season
If you are lucky, you’ll be able to start your big buck hunt immediately following the end of the hunting season. This is an excellent time to find next year’s trophy as any surviving bucks will congregate at wintertime food sources, especially in the north. Take advantage of this by leaving your cameras out on proven food sources during the winter.

**Watch for antler shedding**

Bucks will shed their antlers earlier if they are stressed. Antlers that come off early are a good indication of poor overall herd health, especially if it’s more than just an isolated, individual buck.

Regardless of when bucks shed their antlers, your cameras will let you know when it’s time to go shed hunting. Who knows, you just might collect the sheds from the trophy buck you’ll harvest next season!

**Camera recommendations for Post Season**

- Flash cameras preferred as battery life is typically better in cold weather than IR cameras
- Use longer camera delays to preserve battery life (3 minutes or longer)
- Change batteries more often in cold temperatures
During the months between antler shedding and summer, too many hunters put their cameras away. This is a great time to get photos of other animals such as winter coyotes or pheasants, drumming grouse in the spring, strutting tom turkeys, waterfowl in their gorgeous spring plumage, nesting birds or newborn fawns.

Spring bear hunters can use their cameras to watch over baits. Turkey hunters can scout strutting zones. And, this is the perfect time to introduce youngsters to the outdoors.

**SEASON 9**

**Springtime**

*Goal: Have fun; teach youngsters; scout for bears, turkeys*
One big advantage of taking photos in the springtime is color. With the emerging greenery, your photos will have a lot of color. As any turkey hunter will tell you, the springtime woods is also very alive. Birds and animals are active which makes it easier to get photos.

**Teach a youngster to appreciate the outdoors**

Using a scouting camera is a lot like hunting but without the need to physically wait or endure cold temperatures. This makes it an ideal time to teach young people about hunting and the outdoors without requiring them to spend too much time. Have them help you decide where to put the camera so they get a sense of accomplishment when you successfully get a picture. Turn older kids loose on their own to see if they can get some pictures. Again, because scouting is really a form of hunting, they’ll be gaining valuable hunting experience and an appreciation for what it takes to be successful.

Youngsters are interested in animal young. Find a den or nest for your camera to get images of little ones.

At some point, as you get into the summer, you’ll want to move your cameras back to their summer big buck locations.

The plumage on waterfowl is especially colorful in the spring.

Dens are always good places to find springtime activity and a good place to educate kids.

Youngsters are interested in animal young. Find a den or nest for your camera to get images of little ones.
Before scouting cameras, bear baiters had to rely on reading sign to determine the size and color of the bear(s) using their baits. Track size and scat size were how they would determine the size of a bear. To figure out color phase, they would check for hair left along the edge of the hole in the bait barrel or they would have to look for hair on the ground.

String timers would give some idea of the time a bait would be hit but what happened after the timer had been tripped was anybody’s guess.

Scouting cameras have made scouting for baited bear a lot easier than reading track size and hair color.
Today, the guessing games are over. Savvy bear hunters use scouting cameras to assess the bears at every bait they put out. Their cameras tell them when the baits are hit, how many bears come into the baits, how big the bears are and, most important, if the bears come during shooting hours. Obviously, the cameras also show if you have a color phase bear.

**Some tips for bear baiting/hunting**

- Set up your camera so you can compare the size of the bear to your bait barrel or marked tree.
- Be extremely careful with scent. Do not get the smell of bait on your camera.
- Always put your Cuddebacks in a BearSafe enclosure (manufactured by Cuddeback). Bears have a penchant for destroying unprotected cameras.

**Camera recommendations**

- Flash cameras give you better night photo quality
- Always protect your Cuddebacks with a BearSafe enclosure
- Set delay to 3 to 5 minutes for bear baits
- Set your camera 10 to 15 feet from the bait
Every year, more and more turkey hunters are using their scouting cameras to pattern gobblers. As with deer, if you know when and where a tom is apt to show up, your odds of a turkey dinner are increased. Turkeys are creatures of habit and, unless interrupted, will generally follow a routine. Unless you have a lot of spare time, the best way to learn that routine is with your scouting cameras.

Use your scouting camera to pattern turkeys

Turkeys will likely roost in the same general area and will travel to and from that roosting site along the same general path. Preliminary scouting, i.e. looking for droppings, feathers, roost trees, scratchings, dusting areas, etc. will give you an idea of where to set up your cameras. In turn, the cameras will tell you when and where to set up to bag your bird.

**Scouting Turkeys**

**Goal: Pattern a big tom**
Find a strutting zone and you’ll have a good all-day spot

Gobblers also have favorite strutting zones. Again, look for areas with turkey sign and set up your camera to determine if they might be regular strutting zones. Toms will sometimes strut on and off all day long. Knowing where they like to strut is wonderful information for the turkey hunter.

Learn where turkeys like to feed, enter/exit fields

Your scouting cameras can also help to find feeding areas and common travel routes. Set your cameras up overlooking cut cornfields, acorn ridges or any other potential food sources likely to attract turkeys. Knowing which spots are active can help you avoid wasted hunting time. Scouting cameras are also helpful when it comes to determining where turkeys like to enter and exit fields. Knowing turkey tendencies can mean the difference between an easy shot and a bird that’s just out of range.
Camera Tips

Goal: Get good photos of big bucks

Here are some general tips and recommendations that will help you get better photos and enjoy your scouting camera experience. You never know when that buck of a lifetime might happen by. We want to help make sure you get a great image of him.
Scouting camera tips and recommendations

• For best image quality, position your Cuddeback cameras about 10 to 15 feet from where you expect the deer to be.

• Mount your cameras to a stout tree to prevent tree movement from blurring images.

• Position your cameras about 3 feet off the ground.

• Clear out all brush from directly in front of your cameras to avoid a small plant from ruining your images.

• Use Cuddeback’s test mode to verify that the motion/heat detector will sense movement in the area you expect the deer to be.

• Use name brand alkaline batteries at all times. Our testing has shown there is considerable variance in battery performance amongst the various brands, especially in cold temperatures. We recommend Ray-O-Vac®, Duracell®, or Energizer® brands.

• In cold temperatures (below freezing) using a longer camera delay (over 3 minutes) will extend battery life.
Cuddeback... the choice of some of the biggest names in bowhunting!

Here is what Cuddeback Pro Staffers have to say... along with some of their favorite photos!

“We can’t afford to gamble with an inferior camera. Simply put, we use the BEST camera we can get our hands on. Cuddeback!”
— Don & Kandi Kisky - Whitetail Freaks TV

“I don’t go anywhere without my Cuddebacks!”
— Dick Scorzafava - The Radical Bowhunter

“There are a lot of different brands, but none of them can touch Cuddeback for dependability and ease of use. Cuddeback is THE camera!”
— Babe Winkelman - Outdoor Secrets
“Cuddeback makes us successful in the field!”
– Pat Reeve & Nicole Jones - Driven Television

“Our Cuddebacks always deliver, and picture quality is outstanding!”
– Lee & Tiffany Lakosky - The Crush

“When it comes to trigger speed, nothing beats a Cuddeback!”
– Tammi Gregory - Cuddeback’s Wild Outdoors
The pros know they can

“I see bucks that I didn’t even know existed!”
– Tom Nelson - The American Archer

“My Cuddeback Found Beatty Buck Jr!”
– Mike Beatty - Tag’d Out

“My Cuddeback is an essential tool in my hunting. It makes the decision process easy”
– Outdoors Dan Young
count on **Cuddeback!**

“Cuddeback is the one we always turn to; both for our research and in finding big bucks for our show.”
— Dr. James Kroll - North American Whitetail Television

“My Cuddeback takes the guesswork out of my hunting.”
— Alan Treadwell - Bass Pro Outdoor World

“Here is what I call a Cuddeback before and after.”
— Dave Maas - North American Hunter
“Cuddeback is our extra set of eyes, 365 days a year!”
– Rick & Julie Kreuter - Cuddeback's Beyond the Hunt

“Trigger speed is important if you don’t want to see the rear of the deer.”
– Tom Miranda - Territories Wild

“When that big buck walks by I know I’m going to get a picture of him with my Cuddeback!”
– Jay Gregory - Cuddeback's Wild Outdoors

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