

## Science:

### *The Environment. Hunting as a Humane Act.*

I have lived in the country all my life and I was hunting, fishing and strolling through the woods before I knew how to hold a pacifier. I have sat and watched wildlife in their natural environment, fascinated by how they used their surroundings. I have watched deer gracefully saunter through a dense stand of balsam fir and not make a sound. I have watched beavers work tediously for hours constructing a marvellous dam which can destroy acres of forest. Despite this, the resulting flooded landscape becomes superb habitat for nesting ducks. I have watched as the dead snags create perches for birds of prey, food for woodpeckers and homes for squirrels and other rodents. I never tasted beef steak until I was 18. Our family was brought up on venison.

I was taught how to hunt by a god-fearing man who was an exceptional hunter. Surely, he knew right from wrong. He told me never to shoot at anything until I was sure of what it was. He would tote me along with him on rainy days and cold autumn mornings showing me and explaining how the net worked, all about how the buck made a scrape, the scents they used in courting, where they spent their nights, where they were headed and how he knew all this. We knew practically everything about our particular animal before we ever saw it! A photograph could never achieve this.

I would be the first to admit that as a province we do have a problem with poaching and inexperienced hunters. This one point made in the article by Steve Griffiths in last week's Brunswickan Feature is well taken. There are careless hunters who have not maintained the tradition of respect and responsibility but it is a mistake to include the entire hunting community in this general condemnation. Not all hunters hold the same views and maintain the same attitudes as the abusers. There are many hunters who have much more respect for wildlife than is suggested by the article mentioned above. Fortunately, the

# Blood Sp The Other



entire hunting population is not made up of vandals.

The provincial government should be commended on their efforts, through the Department of Natural Resources to try and preserve our beautiful wildlife. Many rangers spend long cold nights in the woods lying under spruce trees waiting to apprehend violators of our wildlife act. The hunter education program is currently educating first time hunters as to the proper procedures to follow when hunting and the rules and regulations to abide by. One should look into what DNR is actually doing to enhance our wildlife even if opinions may vary as to the views one may hold concerning the environment.

The New Brunswickan deer population contrary to the conviction of (some quarters) last weeks article has been on the incline throughout the 1980's. This year was the first year which showed a marked decrease in the numbers harvested; which resulted in the main because of the reduction in the number of licenses issued and the 48 hour delay on license purchase until tagging. These healthy harvest numbers would suggest that the population is not declining the actual harvest was 26, 572 deer in 1987. Obviously, there must be a lot of deer available.

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