

# Spring Homework for Autumn Rewards



## Make Scouting a Year-long Effort

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Appalachian Whitetails Field Team

Now that the season is over and the hunting equipment is all put away, that doesn't mean it is time to relax. Now is the key time to be out in the woods getting ready for next season. Doing a little homework now will pay off later. Now is the time of year when the woods are coming back to life, but there are still many signs left from the winter like deer trails, deer droppings, rubs, and scrapes. It is also the time of year to get out of the house and walk off some of the extra pounds gained over the winter months.

Be sure to take a GPS unit, notebook, and a topographical map. Look for funnels, ridges, trails, food sources, logging roads, field edges, and bedding areas. Each of these can be recorded in your GPS unit and notebook for later reference. You may also want to take note of prevailing winds.

Beyond walking your favorite hunting grounds, you may want to find out how many bucks and does were killed in the areas you hunt. Start by looking at the deer killed in that particular wildlife management unit or even by township if that information is available. This will also help give you an idea of the hunting pressure that that area receives. You may want to consider hunting pressure when choosing your spot for the following season.

Spring is also a good time to talk with landowners, and possibly gain access to new hunting areas. It is often easier to get permission months before the season starts than it is to show up in your hunting attire and ask permission. Volunteer to help out around the property and show the utmost respect. Remember, it only takes that one person to be rude and disrespect the land and word will get out, leaving neighboring land posted with no chance of ever being hunted.

There are now some excellent resources available online that allow you to look at aerial and topographical maps of your area, such as Google Earth, Terraserver, and MapTech. These tools allow you to get a bird's-eye view of the properties you hunt.

As a general rule of thumb, scout as often as you can. If possible, take a child or a newcomer to the sport and help them gain valuable experience.



Appalachian Whitetails sponsors a free monthly photo contest for pictures taken with trail cameras. At the end of each month, the submitted photos are reviewed by Field Teamer Cory Mennett, and a single winner is chosen. Winners receive a free 2 oz. bottle of any Apparition attractant scent, or a 4 oz. bottle of masking scent or Phantom Hunter scent eliminator.

To participate, send your best trail camera photos and accompanying story to Cory at [corym@appalachianwhitetails.com](mailto:corym@appalachianwhitetails.com). To see our past winners, visit Cory's Camera Corner on our website.

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