

A Review of the 2005 Season

Season of Frustration

By Nick Pinizzotto
Appalachian Whitetails Owner



Frustration. That's probably the best word to describe the 2005 archery season, particularly if you were pursuing mature bucks.

The season started off on a promising note for many and it was common to overhear conversations about unusually high amounts of sign, particularly early-season scrapes, being located.

Then, it didn't happen. It seemed as if fall didn't arrive until the second week of November. The temperature remained above normal, the leaves remained on the trees, and the rut simply never got going. That is a formula for disaster if you are a big buck hunter.

Nobody truly has the answer to why Mother Nature was working two weeks behind schedule, but one thing is for sure, this was a season hunters will be talking about for years to come.

On top of the lousy hunting conditions, the hunter's moon didn't occur until November 16, which was after the close of archery season in many states. For those of you not familiar with the book *Hunting Whitetails by the Moon* by Charlie Alsheimer, the rutting moon is the second full moon after the autumn equinox. According to the research of Alsheimer and Wayne Laroche, this typically signals the peak rutting time, within a few days, for northern whitetails. Based on my own experience, I believe firmly that they are right on. If you don't have a copy of this book, do yourself a favor and purchase one.

To add insult to injury, the second week of November included at least two days worth of heavy rain, which seemed like the exclamation point at the end of a tough year.

It wasn't all bad news, however. Several nice bucks were taken toward the tail end of the season, including my last day, last hour 10-point. I also had photos shared with me of some beautiful deer taken in Illinois, Ohio, and Kentucky.

The dark cloud hanging over the 2005 season may have a silver lining though, as several nice bucks may live to see another birthday, making 2006 a year to remember for all of the right reasons.



Nick Pinizzotto

Most buck activity, such as tending to scrapes, was occurring at night.