



MEMBERS UPDATE

July 2022

GOVERNMENT ENDORSED VAMPIRES?

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- How To Get More Bang! For Your Buck, That Is...

NEXT ISSUE: Most Versatile Knife on Earth

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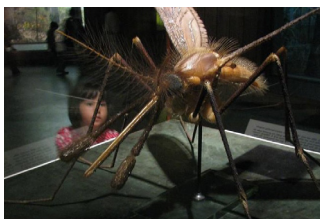
Accessibility is the very key to survival whenever carrying a firearm. Here are some options that have all been designed for a lethal surprise needed at just the right time. Plus you'll answer the question, "Who has a mobile arsenal consisting of an impressive array of both firearms and knives hidden all over?" You'll also discover which holster is like wearing sandals with black socks; hideous, just hideous, so you can plan accordingly to avoid any fashion faux pas.



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Get More Bang!...For Your Buck That Is

As Americans, we like our little extras with everything, and having bells and whistles with our firearms are no exception. Since they sometimes command fantastic prices, we expect to get a little bang for our buck when it comes to keeping them in working order, ease of use, and providing the shock and awe needed at the right time. It is because of this demand for comfort and reliability of firearms use that various companies have swung into action to provide the best possible gear and accessories to spice up your shooting life. Improve your tactical performance with the help of these tools.



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New 'bugnology' has some people wondering about what new genetically modified mosquitoes (GMM) are capable of. Since 2019, over one billion genetically modified mosquitoes have been released. Let's take a look at what GMMs are, the unforeseen consequences when tinkering with nature...and whether you should be worried.



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Your Guide to Good Wood

When you're in an emergency situation, you might not care that much about what types of wood you can find. But, if you make a mistake while gathering wood, it could come back to haunt you. What could possibly go wrong? Let's find out.

Next Issue: Most Versatile Knife on Earth



Clever Concealed Carry Methods

Back in December's issue, while we were all sitting around the fire, sipping cocoa, and swapping lies with kith and kin, we looked at concealed carry methods that seemed to focus more on the waistline and less on other bodily areas. This is my fault entirely, as my immediate world is filled with jean wearers of both sexes that make their living in a world where traditional business attire is not usually the uniform of the day. Therefore, I shall perform cleanup duty and tie up all the loose ends of on and off body concealed carry for those that have a diverse choice of wardrobe or job that demands it. Also, if any ladies felt left out in the previous article, have no fear, as I believe I can address your concerns for practical concealed carry whether you are at home, on the job, or just getting down with your bad selves, wink wink.



Next Stop 5th Floor, Ladies Lingerie

It never ceases to amaze me just how the female of the species can cram almost the entire contents of their purses in the ole over-the-shoulder-boulder-holder without any outward evidence of stored contents. I have seen all manner of belongings extracted from an underwire that would put a magician to shame. Everything from money to a pack of smokes to hairbrushes seem to blend into the natural surroundings without causing much alarm among bystanders. So it seems natural that one would add firearms to the list of things effectively hidden by the curvature of the female form. The majority of these types of holsters accommodate smaller frame and caliber weapons that hang in front allowing for left or right handed pull. I would be careful when carrying a firearm in this manner as the muzzle is pointing not only at people on your sides but the muzzle will be pointing at you as well, so exercise extreme caution if you choose this method. Other products have magazine pouches and holsters built into the sides of the garment, however the positioning of these essential survival items will require some training on your part to be proficient in drawing your weapon from this position when that crucial moment hits. Panty holsters do exist, but from the examples I have seen, it is quite awkward to carry in this fashion and in certain attire would obviously advertise what

you are packing, so it's up to you as to pursuing this line of concealment. As an alternative you may wish to try garter or thigh holsters that would work magnificently with any evening dress and get you ready for a night in the fun, but rough side of town. This type of holster can be worn with skirts, thus giving you total coverage no matter where your day takes you. These are usually constructed with elastic stretch material, velcro enclosures, and silicone grippers that keep the holster from sliding down the leg. There are also lacy, frilly affairs on the market that you can purchase to blend in with the rest of your ensemble. The only drawback to this carry is drawing and reholstering can get a bit awkward but the concealment is excellent, bar none.



Concealed Carry For Loose, Slacker Clothing Wearers

If you are like me, padding about in loose, tasteful clothing is a must for overall mood homeostasis. Constrictive clothing is also counterproductive to the concept of concealed carry. Because of this, one should pick their wardrobe carefully on days they will be carrying or everyday for those that make it a daily thing. An excellent way to carry if you prefer the t-shirt and sweatpants look or for 2A fitness buffs out there, is the belly band and fanny pack. Now I know what you're thinking about the fanny pack and no I am not advocating reintroducing flash in the pan fads from decades past but rather utilizing them for hiding your artillery when engaged in athletic activities that would prohibit the use of a belt holster. An added plus for this carry style is that you can transport whatever you need for your day and extras for your iron with relative ease, and you won't be giving away your tactical position by the outline or bulge of your weapon. The belly band, on the other hand, is basically an elastic band secured by velcro. You can go with just the band and tuck your handgun and magazines between it and your belly, or you can get one with an attached zippered pouch which will protect both

your magazines and gun's finish from the prolonged damaging effects wrought by human oil and sweat. Muzzle direction should also be considered when carrying with either of these options.



For Those Shackled To Corporate America

Many of you out there, either willing or begrudgingly, wake up every day to tackle the complexities of the suit and tie world, and based on my observational research of these critters in their natural habitat, most all of them have a briefcase, day planner, or some such satchel in which to put laptops, personal items, or important earth shattering documents. Fortunately, there is still an entrepreneurial spirit pervading the land, leading to some crafty urban jungle business world concealment designs for off body carry. The aforementioned cases have all been cunningly re-designed for adding a lethal surprise the next time you encounter corporate raiders or other ne'er do wells running about. Holsters have been incorporated into the new designs keeping the gun from moving around, allowing for quicker access and preventing the muzzle from pointing in an unsafe direction. This option is generally engaged by those that are unable to carry on their person for one reason or another. It may seem as if it would be an impossibility to walk away from a potentially lethal situation with your firearm in a satchel or closed briefcase, but given the deceptive qualities of bags of all kinds, this will give you ample time to draw and fire when faced with a belligerent who wants everything that's in your bag, they asked, they shall receive. Carrying in this fashion should be practiced by those that are attached to the hip with their bag and not prone to misplacing it everywhere they go. Ladies whose entire world is stored in their

purses certainly qualify for this category. Wearing a firearm on your body gives you more control over your handgun and is more preferred than off-body carry, but if this is the only option available to you, pick the bag or satchel that will best serve your needs.



Que Every T.V. Private Eye Theme Song

I'll be totally honest with ya, the only time I have ever seen a shoulder holster being used by anyone is by private investigators and cops, usually ones who don't play by the rules and have menacing villains tsk tsking them, in various hard-boiled shows or movies that blast their way across the T.V. and silver screens of America. That's not to say that these holsters are not being actively employed by civilians and law dogs alike, I just haven't seen a specimen in the wild and they're not really my cup of tea, although some people love them. The idea for these hidey holes are as old as the revolver itself, finding popularity with the hardy bunch pursuing "Manifest Destiny" and profits at various gaming tables strewn about the wild frontier. This was one of the preferred carry methods when gun belts were prohibited or clashed with the wearer's snappy duds. They were normally worn, under a coat or jacket, in a neutral position with grip pointing towards the shooter's dominant hand.

Some examples were made with a slight cant to facilitate a faster draw, such as the type used by Val Kilmer's "Doc Holliday", although that piece of gunleather was based more on the U.S. Army tanker shoulder harness from World War Two with an appropriate period correct holster added. Not knocking it, just pointing it out for those that appreciate attention to detail in regards to history. Shoulder holsters currently on the market boast a variety of configurations that will fit the bill for the demands of the most discerning of consumers. Many of these holsters come with different cants, with magazine pouches built on the off hand side. Some holsters can be changed from left to right hand configuration simply by turning the rig inside out or there are some that have snaps placed in strategic areas so that the owner can position the holster and mag pouches for the greatest comfort and ease of use. The only cons for wearing this particular holster is the need for an outer garment, however if you live in an open carry state, I will leave the decision to wear one without a jacket entirely up to you. The other con is that depending on which cant you choose, muzzle direction will always be important for your safety and others.



Drawing From An Unsuspected Place

If you prefer having your daily carry hugging you, look no further than the pockets provided by your favorite comfy pants designer. The principal factor to this manner of carry is casual flowing shorts or pants. The secondary concern should be continued training for unrestricted drawing from the pocket

and safe replacement of the gun to the holster after use. This is easily achieved by taking the holster out of the pocket, reinserting the weapon, and then positioning the whole package back where it belongs. Many of these clothing products may have some well built pockets that will hold your gat tightly without the need for a holster, however some pocket material is rather thin and will necessitate the use of one of many ingeniously designed pocket holsters. Like its relative the shoulder holster, the concept of pocket guns and corresponding holsters has been around since the first revolvers. As you know holsters come in a variety of materials, however pocket holsters are generally constructed in leather with the rough side out like suede and nubuck. This is so the holster will have a better grip inside the pocket and not slide out when drawing your weapon. The basic model of all these holster types is a square of leather folded in half and stitched along the contour where the bottom of the trigger guard and muzzle will rest. Others are more elaborate in their design with snug fits and using the excess leather to build extra storage for loose ammo, magazines, or speed loaders. Smaller frame pistols and revolvers with 3 inch barrels or less are ideally suited to this type of carry and are great for first and last line of defense situations, whether you carry it in a front or back pocket.



The Very Last Line Of Defense

Accessibility is the very key to survival whenever carrying a firearm and should always be in mind when choosing what method of carry is right for you. If you like to plan for every contingency that could possibly happen, might I suggest adding an ankle holster to your routine. Granted these are far from accessible or ideal for daily carry, but they are a lifesaver if you ever find yourself in a scuffle with an assailant and getting a hold of your belt mounted heater is out of the question, although they can be used to covertly draw your weapon from a kneeling position in the calm before the storm as well. They are also an ideal option for anyone who is in a sitting position throughout the day such as drivers and desk jockeys, or for a relaxing restaurant or theater outing. An ankle holster can be worn on either side of the leg depending on what is more comfortable and practical for you, although if you are not used to having it strapped on all the time your gait might give away the fact you are carrying in that region. Many in law enforcement that I have spoken to wear an ankle holster for the purpose of last ditch defense and also to have as much firepower on their person so as not to be killed for a lack of shooting back. You wouldn't know it to look at them, but lots of plainclothes cops are a mobile arsenal consisting of an impressive array of both firearms and knives hidden all over. This is a pants only type of holster as shorts isn't going to cut the mustard in this instance, unless you are allowed to open carry, then knock yourself out, but be advised, wearing an ankle holster without pants is like wearing sandals with black socks, hideous, just hideous, so plan accordingly to avoid any fashion faux pas.

How Not To Be Seen Carrying Your Concealed Weapon

The entertainment industry and corrupt media have done a superior job in disseminating a great deal of garbage information when it comes to firearms and sound safety practices of the same. The cavalier manner in which guns are handled in movies and television shows is as maddening as watching some character firing 30 or 40 rounds from a 7 round capacity mag semi-auto handgun without reloading. It gets exhausting, especially if it's a particularly crappy movie you've been roped into viewing. The most egregious of offenses committed by these celluloid cowboys is the stuffing of a handgun



into a pocket or waistband sans holster. This an absolute no-no and a maneuver that will likely kill or maim the wearer or others around them. This style is usually referred to as a “Mexican” carry and associated with the lawless element running loose in many larger cities where street gangs and crime are the order of the day. To be fair, carrying without a holster gives the advantage of better concealment, however the trigger will be exposed more than a holstered weapon, thus increasing the chances of accidental discharge resulting in injury or death. You will also open yourself to a whole host of problems when carrying in this fashion such as: having a bad draw due to the constant movement of the gun, the weapon sliding down your pants after running or other aggressive movements, clothing can get in the way of your draw, body oils and sweat destroying the finish and metal, and accidental pressing of the magazine release or safety and decocker disengagement. These factors alone should give anyone pause when choosing this as a carry method, but for me the elimination of a holster and decided lack of safety associated with it are enough that this choice of never-to-do enters my mind and prevents me from engaging in this high risk activity.

By now we should have satisfactorily sewn up the other places on and off the body that one can successfully carry a firearm without a hint of detection. This should serve as a catalyst to further your own research as to the discussion at hand and holsters to compliment your carry area of choice. I would like to add that there are metal strips designed to use the frame screws of your firearm to create a clip that serves as a middle ground between holster and holsterless carry. Once again, where and how you carry is entirely up to you and what feels comfortable. Moreover, continuous practice with

your manner of carry will make you confident in your decision and handling of your lead spitter when your moment of truth arrives unexpectedly. So, until next time, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.





Get More Bang! ... For Your Buck That Is

As Americans, we like our little extras with everything. From the bells and whistles that come with automobiles to an added fry count in our happy meals. Firearms are no exception and since they sometimes command fantastic prices, we expect to get a little bang for our buck when it comes to keeping them in working order, ease of use, and providing the shock and awe needed at the right time. It is because of this demand for comfort and reliability of firearms use that various companies have swung into action to provide the best possible gear and accessories to spice up your shooting life. Since we have already discussed different types of holsters and the materials in which they are constructed in this issue's "Clever Concealed Carry Methods", I encourage you to review that article for insight into that subject. We will, instead, plunge into the depths of related equipment and accessories you may need and what's available out there to hone your skills as a proficient firearms handler.

Dressing For Success

I also briefly touched on clothing in "Clever Concealed Carry Methods" when it comes to

concealed carry and feel it needs further explanation as it relates to having a tactical advantage over those that want to get touchy feely, and not in an encounter group sort of way. When people think of tactical clothing, they usually conjure an image of combat troops or police SWAT teams conducting raids on bad guys. While that may be true in many cases, one must also envision tactical clothing with the civilian consumer in mind. There is an excellent variety of clothing on the market catering to the shooter wanting to blend in with the scenery, but able to produce any necessary tools for personal



and familial survival at the drop of a hat. Shirts, pants, shorts, and jackets are just some of these tactical clothes that can be had from your favorite internet or brick and mortar establishment. The shirts I have seen are made from lightweight and flexible blends of materials that aid in heat and moisture removal resulting in cool, comfortable daily life experiences. Pants, shorts, and jackets are made from the same types of materials, however since these articles of clothing work well with the daily carrier, they feature extra pockets and nooks and crannies to stuff extra magazines, speed loaders, knives, or what have you. 5.11 Tactical is an excellent source for civilian tactical wear, but there are plenty of other places you can shop around to find your perfect concealed carry outfit. While you can't really carry much in your socks and shoes, I should briefly make mention of this part of our daily wardrobe as it is a variable of great consequence to consider. A warm, comfortable, moisture wicking sock is important as it promotes the overall health of your feet and performance throughout the day, especially if you are on them for a good part of it. Coupled with a pair of shoes with the same specifications as the socks, with some waterproofing thrown in the mix, you will be fleet of foot in the event any emergency should arise. I prefer my shoes like I prefer my tires, all terrain and able to get me out of trouble as quick as I got into it, that is why I rock a pair of every day, waterproof hikers that sport a mean tread and are at home on a city street as they are blazing a path through the Rocky Mountain empire. The key to tactical wear is to keep it light, breathable, flexible, and allowing for all your firearm essentials when going about your business.

Keeping A Level Playing Field

Many of the elected, and even unelected, folks in this country have argued as to what the Second Amendment actually allows when it comes to the term arms. These sometimes less than honest schmucks have posited that it only covers muskets and nothing more, even shamelessly repeating the lie that cannons were not covered, when in fact they were. And even before the conception of the 2A, that's what the redcoats were on their way to Lexington to confiscate at the time "The Shot Heard Round The World" was first discharged.



Not to mention the warships that were privately owned and employed in federal service when the English sailors had their hinders handed to them a second time. The fact of the matter is that the founders knew exactly how to structure that sentence in order for it to be ironclad.

They meant for the citizenry, privately and those serving in the state militia, to have firepower comparable to the federal military, through each stage of America's technological development, to equally match the might of a government bent on tyrannical machinations. Even though it is not mentioned in the 2A, the very concept for the need of accessories to make these arms go pew-pew is implied and would make an anti-gunner have an apoplectic fit. That is why there has been outright rage, feigned or genuine, over the use of tactical vests, chest rigs, and plate holders by people other than law enforcement, military, or various government squads. The idea that those in positions of power should be the only ones allowed to possess this equipment is anathema to the specific purpose laid out by the Second Amendment. Tactical vests and chest rigs are great for spare mags and storing other essential 2A gear. Plate carriers are a must have if you live or work in areas that resemble Chicago on any given weekend. They can be worn under your clothes like a regular bulletproof vest or over the clothing with mag pouches attached to it courtesy of the PALs webbing sewn to the vest's front and/or sides for MOLLE attachments. The civilian manufactured vests are exactly like their military counterparts and include many of the same features such as lightweight and durable woven mesh materials, emergency drag handles, quick adjust straps, and strategically placed padding. To compliment your tactical vests and the array of mags it holds, might I suggest Magpul's line of durable rubber looped magazine pullers designed for high stress and quick reload circumstances.

Simply put, it's a wide rubber band with an attached loop that can be secured around the bottom of the mag for the aforementioned reasons of their conception. Magazine clips are another product out there that allows for carrying in and quick retrieval from one's pocket. It is a magazine base plate that has a clip attached to it so that the magazine hangs out in your pocket without need for visible ammo pouches. The only drawback with these items is that rounds could easily pop loose from the mag during your daily activities, so be careful if you go that route. If you like having your gear close at hand to sustain a prolonged engagement while keeping your center mass protected, this would be one piece of gear to add to the SHTF rainy day closet.

Slings? Yes. Arrows? Not So Much. Outrageous Fortune? Nada

Slings have evolved from being a mere boring strap of leather to an exciting adventurous tool of neoprene and nylon, enhancing any tactical outing. Many have gone from being a simple over the shoulder two point affair to ones that hug the body while giving you full range of motion with your firearm of choice. Some are single point slings that attach at the rear of the gun with the weapon hanging muzzle down from the shoulder and the shooter's hand resting on the grip in a ready position at all times. This allows the shooter to quickly put the weapon into service and keep it attached to their body if they were to get knocked down or become other than right side up. The body huggers are for those that prefer having their artillery with them with zero chance of falling off for whatever reason. These slings all adjust to the user's comfort and given the simplicity of the design, one could easily make their own from nylon straps and adjusting plastic buckles individually purchased from any leather accessory or hardware supplier that has a



shingle hung out. If you want to get decadent, you might consider incorporating a bungee material into your single point sling as it gives a little extra comfort and flexibility when employed. Leather hasn't been completely forgotten in the tactical game as it has been used as slings for shotguns and rifles in that arena, often in conjunction with sewn or woven cartridge or shell loops. Detachable shell and cartridge holders are available, but are mostly seen in use with the leather slings' nylon cousin. The sling you buy will ultimately depend on what type of material you are looking for, what firearm it will serve, and for what situations it will apply. Or you could go slingless, if you prefer, but I would recommend taking the precaution of getting that little extra bit of security to protect the one investment that will protect you in the long run.

Riding The Rails

Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey tested and certified the rail of the same name in the mid-nineties and designated it as the Mil STD-1913. It is similar to the Weaver mount except that the Picatinny rails have dimensions that are standardized. They are primarily used to attach all those bells and whistles that will improve your tactical performance. The rails are simply a strip of aluminum, steel, or some other such tough lightweight metal that have been undercut producing a flat T shaped look with cross slots along the length of the rail. Typically they are mounted anywhere the shooter feels the need to place the different attachments such as various sights, lasers, night vision equipment, scopes, foregrips, bayonets, bipods, slings, and anything else you can find on MyCrisisGear.com.

Mounting will require drilling holes to accommodate the screws that come with the rail of your choice. The amount of screws will be dictated by the particular length of rail you need. Screws should never be overtightened as it will cause the screw hole to become stripped out, leaving needless holes in your stock. Barrel mounted rails should have some red Loctite placed in the screw holes to prevent them from working their way out during heavily active days at the range, although they will come loose no matter how many rounds you put through your weapon, so these should be checked



after shooting and at regularly scheduled firearms maintenance sessions. One of the many advantages to using the Picatinny rails is the ability to have more surface area in which to place whatever it is you want to apply to your weapon. It gives the shooter great ease in switching out or adjusting the placement of the attached item. Whenever an attachment is removed, the position where it sat on the rail should be marked so that it can be put back where it belongs. The only disadvantage you will have with the Picatinny is their reputation for chewing up your hands, especially with handguards constructed entirely of these rails, but can easily be overcome with the addition of handguard coverings. The coverings will provide a more secure grip, allow for cuffing the rifle's front, and will reduce injury to other body parts when the firearm is not in a ready shooting position. Point being, Picatinny rails are a popular accessory for firearms of all stripes that will eliminate the problem of not having enough hands to work peripheral items pertinent to the use of your firearm in a tactical situation, by giving you more surface space to attach them and freeing you to focus on your survival.

Shedding Some Light On The Subject

Now that we have a way of attaching things to our firearm of choice, what kind of groovy things can we stick on them? Flashlights are the first thing that I would consider before anything else. Why?, you may ask. Well simply put, if you don't have the light to use your iron or holographic sighting system,

purchasing flashlights, the brighter the better, and there are many tactical lights on the market that are ready to brighten even the darkest of situations and possibly sear your retinas right off. Flashlights made for firearms use come ready to attach on your Picatinny rails with either a built in or separate mounting system. Separate mounting brackets are ideal if you need to quickly switch out or remove lights for handheld use. Many of the flashlights available have a built-in battery, while others require plain old fashioned batteries or an attached battery pack that has a rail mounting system. Powering up is as simple as flicking a switch or pressing a button. These types of flashlights are more for rifles and carbines, however for all you shotgun owners out there, do not fret as there are forends for pump actions that have a flashlight built right into it and can be easily switched out for your existing forend. Pistol lights are generally more uniform in construction, offering a very sleek and



compact profile design that doesn't interfere with drawing your weapon from a holster. An accessory rail attached to the bottom of the handguns frame just forward of the trigger guard will be needed to mount the light via a rail clamping system. Many of the rifle flashlights have a lumen output between 500-1000 and can reach distances of up to 450 feet, whereas pistol lights produce 300-500 lumens and are effective in lighting up someone's world at the same range as rifle lights. One cool feature to some models of flashlights is the employment of a strobe function for use in situations that call for disorientation tactics against an assailant. When considering from which company to purchase your firearms and accessories I generally let you, dear

reader, make those decisions for yourself, but in the field of flashlights, I have always been a huge fan of Streamlights products as I have used their flashlights in many extreme high and low temperature atmospheres where they performed admirably and never let me down. However, whatever light you choose is entirely up to you.

Reaching Out And Touching Someone

Being a huge proponent of gun control, that is hitting what I'm aiming at, I have tried many sights over the years in order to improve my accuracy. There is no doubt whatsoever that scopes are best for long range shooting and iron sights suitable for more close quarters situations. Due to the variety of scopes on the market, I shan't endeavor to belabor you with the pros and cons of one model over another, rather I shall cover what to look for when shopping for a scope. One should consider magnification, tube size, reticle and ability to withstand moisture to avoid fogging over when purchasing a scope. Magnification and tube size are self explanatory as is the need for moisture resistance. The reticle is your crosshairs and is available in traditional two line, red dot, or a Christmas tree configuration that helps to calculate range when looking through the scope. If you fancy yourself a sniper, some scopes have turret knobs that allow adjustments for windage, range, and elevation. Scopes are definitely a piece of equipment that should be researched in order to find one that will ultimately fulfill your needs. An intermediary between scopes and iron sights is the holographic sight. These sights improve aim accuracy by superimposing the reticle over the target, which eliminates deciphering between the target and reticle. They are light dependent and effective out to 300 yards, yet are geared more towards close

combat situations. When it comes to everyday carriers or just the casual handgun shooter looking to add a little bling to their shooter, tritium sights will complement any firearm and allow you to greatly improve expedience in your aim. Tritium sights are basically a glass tube lined with phosphor, filled with a small amount of the radioactive hydrogen isotope, and when the beta radiation emitted reacts with the phosphor, it glows. This light can not be seen in direct sunlight, however when used in low light or dark situations it can be a life saver as it needs no sun or artificial light source to charge it, so they will be glowing and ready to go when you need it in dim conditions. The tritium has a half life of twelve years, so expect to be changing them out when they start to lose their glow. They do run on the pricey side with some commanding upwards of \$200, but they will be well worth it to cover you everywhere you go. For the more money conscious out there, luminescent paint is an excellent alternative to tritium sights. Numerous dealers at the fine auction house of eBay have these paints or the paint makings for sale in various sizes depending on your need. The upside to using paint is that it saves you some money, provides multiple applications per bottle, and a variety of colors from which to choose. Other than needing to reapply every time the lume begins to fade, the only con to using paint is its dependence on light in order to charge. For shooters looking for an across the board sight, lasers might just be for you. Granted they are more for close range low light conditions, they will greatly improve accuracy in conjunction with iron sights and can be used with scopes or holographic sights, if you so choose. These sights will also require batteries, so make sure that they are inspected regularly to keep them in top form.

This is but a small offering of the tactical equipment and accessories available to keep all freedom loving 2A patriots ever vigilant and at the ready to uphold the common defense of their homes and the oath a great many took, voluntarily, whenever our national defense was threatened. Many items presented here, such as the scopes, are worthy of copy the length of a doctoral thesis, however my space is limited and further investigation on your part and further articles on my end will bring us all to perfect 2A harmony. So, until next, dear reader, stay safe and let's be careful out there.





GOVERNMENT ENDORSED VAMPIRES?

In the warmer months, you probably have ventured outdoors to soak in some sunshine and pretty weather. Maybe you've hosted the occasional barbecue as well.

No matter which way you choose to pass your time outside, it's all fun and games until you feel that familiar stinging that signifies that you didn't put on any mosquito repellent. And now you've unwittingly and unwillingly become a blood donor to mosquitoes. Those pesky little bloodsuckers can certainly ruin a good time outdoors, can't they?

Also, there sure have been a lot of them lately. So what gives? Moreover, can we get rid of them? Perhaps the better question is: should we?

If the news is any indication, the government thinks that we **SHOULD** cut their numbers down. To that end, they are doing something about it by supporting new biotechnology that's geared toward creating genetically modified mosquitoes.

However, this new 'bugnology' has some people wondering about what else these new genetically modified mosquitoes (GMM) are capable of. Let's take a look at what GMMs are, and whether you should be worried about them.

WHAT ARE GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS?

Genetically modified organisms are those that have had their DNA altered through genetic engineering. This process involves adding, deleting or modifying genes in an organism's DNA to change its characteristics. In the case of GMMs, the goal is to create a new generation of mosquitoes that can't carry and spread disease to humans.

To do this, scientists are inserting a special gene into mosquitoes. And when they are released into the wild, they eventually cause wild populations to drop to manageable amounts over generations.

ARE THERE MORE MOSQUITOES IN THE U.S. THESE DAYS?

Yes. In fact, the number of mosquitoes in the U.S. has increased due to a variety of reasons. One reason is that the use of pesticides has decreased the number of predators that eat mosquitoes, such as dragonflies and bats. Another reason is because of the increased and excessive moisture during the winter and spring of 2021 that is providing abundant habitats for mosquitoes.

WHAT DISEASES DO MOSQUITOES CARRY?

The species of *Aedes aegypti* mosquito is known to carry a variety of nasty diseases on U.S. soil, including chikungunya, malaria, Zika virus and Mayaro. They also carry severe fevers, including Dengue, a hemorrhagic fever, and yellow fever viruses.

The increased travel to and from places where diseases like Zika are common has resulted in more cases of mosquito-borne illnesses in the U.S. These diseases can be deadly, so it's important to find ways to prevent them from spreading.

The goal of GMM-manufacturing companies is to eventually have a population of them that significantly outnumbers our regular, disease-carrying mosquitoes. However, releasing GMMs is a slow process because they have to be reared in the lab and then released into the wild.

SHOULD PREPPERS BE WORRIED ABOUT GMMs?

Since 2019, over one billion genetically modified mosquitoes have been released. So what does all this mean to the prepper population? Preppers, along with many other people, worry that genetically modified insects could lead to unforeseen consequences. Of course, there is always the potential for unforeseen consequences when tinkering with nature.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently weighed in on the matter, evaluating the risk of releasing GMMs. They determined that there is none to people, animals or the environment.

Oxitec, a biotech company and subsidiary of the Intrexon Corporation, has created a genetically engineered version of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito, which they've named OX5034. They originally captured this species of mosquito in Chiapas, Mexico.

WHERE HAVE THEY BEEN RELEASED IN THE U.S.?

So far, these genetically modified insects have been successfully used in the Cayman Islands, Brazil and India to manage the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito populations.

The government previously approved the release of GMMs in America in the Florida Keys for the first time in 2021. That feat was accomplished by Oxitec after a decade of fighting for regulatory approval and public acceptance.

Soon, Oxitec will release millions of these little guys in sunny California neighborhoods in a second experiment. Oxitec already uses this same tech in several other invasive creepy crawlers like the soybean looper and the fall armyworm. If all goes according to plan, they eventually hope to sell the technology across the U.S. and worldwide.

HOW DESIGNER MOSQUITOES ARE MADE TO ACT AS PESTICIDES

To design OX5034 mosquitoes, Oxitec uses a process called 'genetic drive.' This is when a particular gene is passed down from generation to generation in a population, regardless of whether it's beneficial or not.

The company's method for making these designer mosquitoes involves adding two extra pieces of DNA to the male insects' genome.

The first piece is known as a "self-limiting" gene, and it keeps female *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes from making it to adulthood. This particular gene produces a protein that interferes with the normal development of the mosquito's skeleton.

In the case of OX5034 mosquitoes, the genetic addition ensures that almost all offspring inherit the two extra pieces of DNA.

When the designer insects pass on this gene to the next generation of mosquitoes, the population of regular mosquitoes will decrease over time, since most of their offspring will die before reaching adulthood.

The second gene the researchers at Oxitec introduced in the GMMs is a fluorescent identifier that glows under a specific red light. The feature allows them to track GMMs in the wild easier.

THE SELF LIMITING PROCESS ONLY KILLS FEMALE AEDES AEGYPTI MOSQUITOES

Oxitec says they are only releasing male mosquitoes into the California neighborhoods. Once they are released, they mate with the wild females and the introduced gene kills the female offspring, they added.

The males then fly off to mate with more females and spread the company-made genes even more. Also importantly, Oxitec says there isn't any danger of OX5034 slurping on human blood since they are males—only the females bite and spread diseases, they added.

That's right, it's only the lady mosquitoes that bite. To manufacture eggs, they need a bloody meal. Male mosquitoes don't bite, and they get their sustenance from flower nectar.

The main takeaway here is that the process is deadly only to the *Aedes aegypti* and not other species.

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY GO WRONG?

Those who are not connected to Oxitec's tests say they believe releasing GMMs into the wild can carry risks that scientists haven't fully considered or studied yet. They say they may cause harm to other species or develop into mosquito populations that are more challenging to manage. Even researchers who see the promise of genetic engineering have concerns about releasing these transgenic vampires into neighborhoods because of how hard such trials are to control.

Natalie Kofler, a Harvard Medical School bioethicist, has followed Oxitec's work. She says,

"There needs to be more transparency about why these experiments are being done. How are we weighing the risks and benefits?"

Kofler added that,

*"The potential benefits of GMMs in California are quite a bit lower than they would be in tropical regions where mosquito-borne diseases are a threat to humans. In fact, the state has never experienced a case where *Aedes aegypti* transmitted disease."*

However, the rapid spread of *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes in California over almost a decade led to Oxitec choosing California for the experiment, explained Nathan Rose, the company's head of regulatory affairs. The insects are aggressive little day-biters who can lay their eggs in a space as tiny as a water-filled bottle top discarded in the yard.

Rose added that studies show that Oxitec's GMM release in Brazil reduced the bugs' population by 95 percent in 13 weeks.

OTHER SCIENTISTS VOICE THEIR CONCERNS

Other researchers have voiced concerns that the released GMMs could produce hybrid bugs that are more dangerous and robust than the current ones that are being swatted at neighborhood get-togethers.

The Los Angeles Times reported that,

"The EPA said it had reviewed a 2019 study led by researchers at Yale who found that DNA from the Oxitec bugs had been transferred to the local mosquito population in an area of Brazil—raising questions of whether the experiment had unintentionally created hybrids that were more robust."

When that study was published, Oxitec complained that the researchers had exaggerated their findings, and the journal's editors later added a note to the article that some of the languages may have been misleading."

*That being said, you don't need to be a conspiracy theorist to think that Oxitec sounds an awful lot like the mayor of Amity Island in *Jaws* and that the mosquitoes are the great white shark, albeit more of a more obscure nature. You can almost hear someone saying, "Don't worry; get in. The water's fine!"*

The prospect of creating super mosquitoes is not the only concern here, experts say. The experiment also involves releasing millions of insects that have been genetically engineered with DNA from other species, something that has never been done before on such a scale in the U.S.

"This is really playing with fire," said Dana Perls, a senior food and technology campaigner with Friends of the Earth, an environmental group that has been critical of the proposal.

Perls added,

“We have no idea what kind of impact this will have on human health or the environment. We do know it’s risky. And once you let these things out, you can’t put them back in the bottle.”

The trial is set to take place this summer, weather permitting. So far, more than 100,000 people have signed a petition asking state officials to halt the experiment.

AGAIN, SHOULD WE BE WORRIED?

While manufacturing genetically modified mosquitoes isn’t exactly the horrifying, fictional “Screwfly Solution,” there is some cause for concern. As an aside, if you are a survivalist or prepper and haven’t read this Nebula Award-winning short story by psychologist Alice Sheldon, you’re missing out.

Science has had many unintended consequences. Take Thalidomide, for example, which was meant to be a cure for morning sickness but resulted in deformities for children born to mothers who took the drug.

Or Agent Orange, which was used as a herbicide during the Vietnam War but led to an increase in birth defects, cancers and other health problems among those exposed to it.

The truth is, we simply don’t know enough about the long-term effects of releasing genetically modified mosquitoes into the environment.

There is a risk that we could be playing with fire, but there is also a chance that this technology could help us to control the spread of mosquito-borne diseases without resorting to pesticides. Still, is it fair to roll the dice just so we can have a better rib eating experience outside in places like California?

Only time will tell whether or not this experiment will be a success or a failure. Meanwhile, the EPA is expected to announce its final decision on whether to allow the release of the mosquitoes soon.

Until then and based on other expert opinions, the jury is still out on whether or not these genetically modified mosquitoes are something we should be worried about.

So there you have it. Genetically modified mosquitoes are something that we should probably be at least a little bit worried about, but only time will tell for sure whether or not they are a danger to us.

WHAT’S NEXT?

If genetically modified mosquitoes work as well as expected, it’s possible that we could see them being used in other parts of the United States and the rest of the world to help control the spread of mosquito-borne diseases.

That could be very good news because just in Africa alone, malaria killed 627,000 people in 2020 and 400,000 in 2019. Sadly, most of the fatalities were toddlers and babies in sub-Saharan Africa.

The best way to prevent being bitten by a mosquito is, of course, to avoid them altogether. But that’s not always possible, especially if you live in an area with a lot of mosquitoes or if you enjoy spending time outdoors.

Meanwhile, blood-sucking mosquitoes are the bane of any survivalist or prepper that spends a lot of time outside, along with ticks.

If you ever want to have ammunition to use against people (we’re talking words here, ok?) who love Bambi and hate hunting and guns it’s this: when more deer are in an area, disgusting ticks thrive and proliferate, meaning that tick populations and deer are intimately linked.

When rural areas are developed, it brings people in closer contact with these arthropods, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Finally, climate change might be behind the changes of the tick’s ranges and tick pathogens in ways that aren’t fully understood yet, which can also increase the likelihood of people interacting with them. Maybe one day we will have a genetically modified solution for those pesky critters as well.



Your Guide to Good Wood

It seems so simple. You just go into the woods, find some fallen branches and trees, and collect the wood you need to make a fire and a good shelter. But did you know that certain types of wood are not meant to be burned in your fire pit? And that others won't hold up well enough to make your shelter a viable option?

When you're in an emergency situation, you might not care that much about what types of wood you can find. However, if you make a mistake while gathering wood, it could seriously come back to haunt you. That's the reason we wrote this guide – we want to ensure that you know what types of wood are good, along with what kind of wood you'd be better off leaving alone.

Best Wood for Making a Fire

Whether you're in the woods, using a fire pit, outdoor fireplace, or attempting to make a fire on the beach, your wood choice will make a big difference in how successful you are. The absolute best form of wood to burn is:

- Ash
- Beech
- 16** • Oak

The first thing you probably noticed is that these are hardwoods. These trees provide the very best heat when you're cooking, and they'll also burn for a long time. As an added bonus, using one of these hardwoods will actually improve the flavor of most foods.

Now that you know about the top three, let's take a deeper dive into wood types for making a fire. If you're lucky enough to find any of the following trees, you should be able to make a nice fire that won't go out quickly.

1. Pine



Yes, that's right; Christmas trees burn quite well. When you're gathering pine wood to make a fire, remember that this wood produces low heat, medium smoke, and also offers a pleasing aroma through its high spark production. This wood crackles and splits with ease, and is therefore perfect for ambiance. According to the expert, though, you'll want to use this as kindling instead of as your main firewood. Otherwise, it'll burn much too quickly. It could also make your food taste a bit odd because it tends to be so sappy.

2. Ash



As one of the preferred top three woods to burn, ash will work quite well if you find yourself lost in the great outdoors. Unlike pine, ash offers high heat production with low smoke. In other words, it's great for cooking something more quickly without introducing a strong, smoky flavor. Another bonus is that although it takes a while to get a fire started, it will burn for a long time.

3. Maple

This is yet another tree that will provide high heat and low smoke. However, unlike the ash tree, it also offers a strong and pleasing aroma. This makes maple good firewood for cooking with. And, of course, it can also burn for a while, which makes it a great choice to help keep you warm.

4. Elm

The elm tree is a nice, middle of the road option. It produces a medium burn, along with medium smoke. It'll also introduce a slight pleasing aroma. This means that it'll heat your food pretty quickly without overpowering it with the scent and flavor of the wood itself.

5. Oak



As one of the preferred three tree types, oak has the highest heat potential of any of the wood on this list. So you'd better not leave your hot dogs or marshmallows in the fire for very long! Interestingly, despite having a very high level of heat production, oak doesn't produce much smoke. This means you can cook your food quickly without having to worry about getting too much smoke in your face.

6. Beech

Beech is the best wood possible for producing a warm fire. One of its many perks is that it offers a high density burn. It also has the potential to emit a very pleasing smell, as long as you've seasoned the fire properly.

7. Cherry



Not only do cherry trees look delightful, but they also provide the perfect ambiance. This wood can be used to light a fire quickly, which means that you can sit back and enjoy it instead of constantly stoking the fire.

Which Wood is Not Good for Building a Fire

Beggars can't be choosers, but if you've got multiple options, it's best not to choose one of the following wood types.

1. Driftwood

You're building a fire on the beach, and you happen to notice some driftwood nearby. Should you lug it over to your fire? It is wood, right? The answer to these questions are no and yes. Driftwood comes from the ocean, and it'll take way too much time to catch fire. Additionally, it doesn't burn well and could even cause potentially hazardous toxins. Therefore, you'll be much better off if you leave driftwood alone.

2. Green Wood – Freshly Cut

As you may already know, the term green wood is applied to any type of wood that is freshly cut. It won't have enough time yet to dry out and season, which means that lighting it on fire is going to be extremely difficult. Even if you do manage to get it lit, it won't burn evenly. Your best bet is to stack green wood and allow it the necessary time to become a welcome addition to your firepit.

3. Construction Wood

Did you happen upon a dilapidated cabin in the woods? It might be tempting to harvest the wood from its walls, but doing so would actually be a terrible idea. The problem with wood that's been used for construction is that the vast majority of it has been treated with chemicals. There are also nails, screws, glue, etc. to worry about.

4. Anything with Wood Pulp

People commonly use a bit of twisted up newspaper as kindling, but doing more than that with it isn't the best idea. In fact, making a fire out of primarily newspapers, magazines, wrapping paper, cardboard, etc. will cause long-lasting embers. If you don't want your fire to spread out of control, steer clear of wood pulp products.

5. Non-Local Woods

This probably won't be a consideration if you're lost in the woods, but for general purposes, it's not wise to burn non-local woods. Simply having a non-local log can spread devastation to the other trees, and the emerald ash borer more than proved this point.

6. Endangered Wood

This one is tricky because if you've got the choice between burning endangered wood and freezing to death, we know what choice you're going to make. However, if you purchase or use endangered wood without a really good reason and get caught, you're going to end up in a good deal of trouble. Steer clear of this mess by sticking with the wood types listed above, under Best Wood for Making a Fire.

7. Moldy and/or Rotten Wood

Burning wood that's moldy is a very dangerous proposition because it has a high potential to create toxic smoke. Meanwhile, rotten wood doesn't produce the same level of heat as non-rotten wood. It's also less dense, which isn't a good thing.

8. Habitat Wood

Again, this may become a matter of life or death, and then we know what you're going to choose. But if you have any other choice, don't disturb or burn wood that's being used as a habitat by any creature. To avoid doing this, simply check the wood to see if there are critters in it. If not, you're good to go!

9. Poisonous Woods

Here's a simple way to know if the wood you're getting ready to burn could be poisonous. If there are vines or flowers hanging out on the wood you're looking at - and if it's not a safe type of wood such as the ones pointed out in the above section - it's better to leave it alone.

It's possible that it's safe, but there is also a risk that you could end up burning poison sumac, poison ivy, Oleander, or poison oak. This can become a huge problem as burning a poisonous tree will cause the poison to become aerosolized. Then, when people breathe the smoke in, it could cause significant health issues, including the possibility of death.

10. Not Wood - Don't Burn These Products

Have you ever been looking for kindling for a fire and decided to toss your cigarette butt in? Or perhaps you had some empty boxes or food containers, plastic, or styrofoam? It might seem like a good idea to use these items for kindling, but the truth is that everything on this list will release toxins once it's burning.

Let's Make a Shelter! Which Wood Works Best?



Aside from making a fire, your top priority if you get lost in the wilderness is to make a shelter. These come in a wide variety of styles, and they don't have to look good to work. But what wood types will make the best components of a shelter? Let's find out!

1. Pine Boughs for Insulation

If you need insulation - and you always do - you're going to want to search for some pine boughs. If you can't find any pine boughs, you'll have to go with a backup plan. You can weave and stack branches, leaves, and sticks together to create the same basic thing. As you can see, though, using pine boughs will make the process go much more quickly.

2. Anything for the Structure

When it comes to making the basic structure, you really can use any type of wood, as long as it is thick and sturdy. Therefore, you'll want to find the thickest, sturdiest wood you can find in a large enough size to create the structure of your shelter. Naturally, you won't want to use anything poisonous, but the vines hanging out on wood should stop you in your tracks anyway.

3. Bamboo Sticks

Bamboo works as one of the best alternative sources for building a shelter. If you happen to be near some, you can use its versatile nature to build the structure of a temporary shelter. You should have great success too, as it doesn't tend to bend or compress.

If you were going to use this material long-term, you'd have to treat it first or you'd run the risk of getting an insect infestation. There's also a big risk of rotting. Using it for a temporary shelter should be fine, though.

Basic Shelter Design

As long as you can collect the materials, you can build a shelter to keep you safe. First, seek out the right place to build it. You'll want it to be reasonably close to water, but not in a low spot.

You'll also want to verify that there aren't a lot of dead or leaning trees nearby, as you don't want anything to fall on you or your shelter. Additionally, be sure not to get started when it's close to dark because you won't be able to see well-enough to build anything.

When you're ready to build, look around for a strong ridgepole to support your shelter. It will ideally be about twice your height, but anything taller than you are can work. Using a thick tree branch or broken down tree should work just fine.

You'll need to locate something you can rest your ridgepole against. Whether it's a massive tree or boulder, stick your ridgepole against it, allowing the bottom portion to rest on the ground.

Now, you'll need to find the ribbing for your roof. Straight, sturdy branches are ideal. Place them vertically on each side of your ridgepole. Don't forget to crawl inside and check if it's big enough, without being too big.

The next step is to locate some brush and twigs to act as the lattice of your roof. Putting these down before you work on insulation will help ensure it stays in place.

Your insulation could be made of pine boughs. Alternatively, seek out the following:

- Dry broad leaves
- Dry grass
- Dead pine needles

Conifer boughs also work. If worst comes to worst, use any grass, straw, or hay you can find. Build your insulation thick - making it at least two feet deep is the way to go.

Finally, you'll need to finish the roof. Use leafy layers, and add a layer of sticks every so often. This will help ensure the leaves stay in place. And don't forget to save yourself some insulation materials to close off the entrance to your shelter if it gets too cold.

Final Thoughts

Were you surprised to see so many woods on the do not burn list? Most people believe that they can burn any wood, but as you've now seen, it's not quite that easy. Try to burn the wrong type of wood and all sorts of negative things can happen, ranging from the wood flat-out refusing to light all the way to poisoning people with toxic smoke.

Fortunately, you now have a much better idea of what you should burn - and what not to burn - in the woods. You've also been given a guide to what wood is best for building shelters, along with a basic shelter design. Now it's time for you to go forth and conquer the woods!



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