

We Slept with THE MOOSE

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #155 —

Trophy moose hunting, on horseback in the mountains, is truly an adventure sport! Unlike shooting the first nice bull you see, when trophy hunting you're looking for 'Mr. Big' — and simply 'pass' on everything 'average'. Several features define a trophy; but mostly it's the mass of the palms, the outside spread, the fronts and the total number of points. That's a lot to study, which is just one of the reasons you need a good guide; but there's no mistaking 'Mr. Big' when you see him.

Getting to remote mountain camps is a significant investment in time and can be quite trying on your patience. From Missouri, our first overnight was Vancouver, B.C., then a late morning flight to Whitehorse in the Yukon and another motel room. Early morning on day three we flew north to Dawson

City, explored the town and spent the night. The ceiling was too low to fly on our fourth day, but we got to base camp late on the fifth day and spent another night. Made spike camp on day six and began hunting the

following day. Yes, getting there was a serious investment; but wow, it was remote!

Finding a moose is mostly a matter of riding the horses up above timberline and glassing for what the guides call 'sheets of plywood' — in the valleys below and opposite hillsides. We saw several moose, but were looking for 'Mr. Big' - and spotted him at 4:30 one afternoon a couple of miles away. It was an interesting, complex stalk and Matt made his shot a little after 6:00. After pictures our guides



This is a serious moose, 67" wide, big palms and fronts — and lots of points; it will score way up in the record books. (l-r) Logan Young (guide), myself, Matt Fleming (the shooter) and Levi Letkeman (guide).

started skinning, while Matt and I gathered firewood for the long night. Above timberline, there isn't much timber - mostly just willow brush. It was full dark at 10:00 pm when the work was finished. Fresh moose tenderloins over the campfire was our dinner; then we settled in for the night - it was 42 degrees.

"...then we settled in for the night - it was 42 degrees."

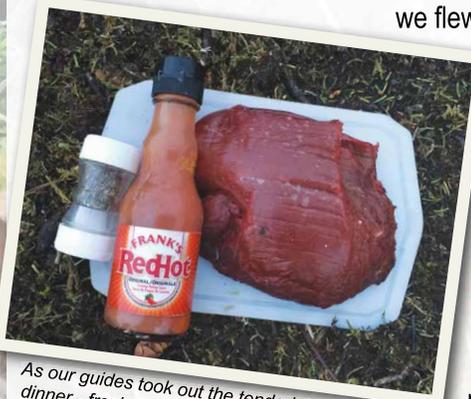
We had no tents or sleeping bags, just our clothes; and laid on the ground near the fire until cold hands and cold feet woke us up. Cutting more willow brush and building up the fire warmed us enough to lay back down for another 30 or 45 minutes of rest/sleep till we got cold again. The only salvation was that we knew morning wasn't far away. At first light (7:00 am), we packed up and headed out. It was a long/short night, sleeping with the moose.



Larry Potterfield
Midnight Sun Outfitting
Young Meadows Camp
Yukon Territories, Canada
20 September 2016



This log cabin was finished up last year; it was made entirely on site, using an Alaskan Saw Mill to cut the dimensioned lumber. It's warm and dry and comfortably sleeps four.



As our guides took out the tenderloins, Matt prepared dinner - fresh moose meat over hot coals, with plenty of salt and pepper - and Frank's. Yes, that's a cutting board we brought along just for this occasion.