

THE CROOKED SPORTSMAN

Bi-monthly newsletter for Crooked Foot Upland Bird & Game Hunting Club.



A NEW ADVENTURE

My dream job...
hunt club assistant? p.2

SHOOT TO RECRUIT

Busting clays is a great way
to develop new hunters. p.3

UPLAND ETIQUETTE FOR THE FIRST-TIME BIRD HUNTER

Learn how to behave on an
upland bird hunt. p.4

THE BEST WAY TO COOK PHEASANT BREASTS

You can have simply succulent
game for dinner. p.5

CROOKED FOOT MEMBERSHIP

Time to renew or become a
new member! p.6

UPCOMING EVENT

Check out what is up and
coming at our club. p.7

A NEW ADVENTURE

Dear Friends,

We all seek adventure for different reasons. While putting this issue of The Crooked Sportsman together, I was struck by an article I read recently in a magazine about a writer, John, visiting the Peruvian Amazon to try out "citizen science," in which travelers assist researchers in the field. For John, travel is about being "knocked back to the person I was at eight years old, when I hadn't a doubt that the world beyond our fly-over town was as action-packed and strange as adventure novels made it seem."

What a wonderful sentiment this is, and it's one that I share. Setting out to try new things and new adventures, like working as a hunt club assistant, is one of those for me. When people ask me why I love roller coasters so much, how I can do 20 coasters straight by standing in line for hours without tiring of it all, I answer that roller coasters make me feel like a kid again—wide-eyed, ready to soar, and open to the possibility that something exciting or strange or even scary could occur. I love being given the chance once again to smile and laugh uncontrollably, to take in new experiences, to make sense of the unfamiliar. It's about reconnecting with a feeling that is innate in children but that adults, too often lose sight of: *wonder*.

Last November, I took a job as an executive assistant, slash, hunt club assistant. The executive assistant position I was familiar with—but, hunt club assistant? I don't know how many times I've told people what I do only to hear them say, "hunt club?—oooooh, how cool!" That is usually followed by "I am or my husband/father/uncle/brother is a hunter." I never get this type of reaction when I tell them that I'm also an executive assistant. I truly believe that the men I tell think this is the best job in the world!

Although hunt club assistant wasn't on my "dream" job list, I decided to give it a go. Looking back I expect if I'd know when I started out that the job would require me to understand the ins and outs of pheasant hunting—reaching out to hundreds of "manly" hunters and understanding their lingo and love for this sport—I might not have taken the job.



Kim with her children Samantha and Benjamin.

But if I hadn't, I would never have had that feeling of eagerness to learn. I love being given the chance once again to ask a million questions, to take in new facts, to make sense of the unfamiliar. It is an adventure. A contained adventure, perhaps, but one that is exciting and fun and creative. And I'll always remember it...no matter where I am years down the road. It may not be glamorous, but it certainly is cool!

My best,

Kim

Kim Capone
Crooked Foot Hunt Club Assistant

SHOOT TO RECRUIT



Hunting lessons begin with shooting lessons, and a skeet field or sporting clays course makes a perfect classroom. Keep lessons light all around: light in tone, light on recoil (gas guns and low recoil loads), and light in workload. Fifty shots per session are enough. Here are four key lessons you need to teach and how to teach them.

LESSON NO. 1: MOUNT UP

Start your student with the gun premounted. Make sure they stand quartering toward the target, with more weight on the front foot. Encourage them to push their head forward, keeping their eyes level and looking down the rib. Explain that the gun only shoots where they look if their head stays in the right place.

What to watch for: Most new shooters want to tilt their head over the stock. "Turn your nose into the stock" is a good piece of advice to help them keep their eyes level.

LESSON NO. 2: SMASH SOME STRAIGHTAWAYS

Start with simple, going-away targets to get your new shooter comfortable with the gun. But not too many. Straightaways are too easy to hit by aiming a motionless gun, so you want to progress to targets that require gun movement as soon as possible.

What to watch for: Monitor the students head to make sure it stays on the gun until after the target breaks.

LESSON NO. 3: CRUSH THE CROSSERS

Use low-house 2 and high-house 6 on the skeet field to introduce crossers. These targets don't require much lead and give students plenty of time to react. Emphasize a hard focus on the clay, not the bead, and moving in time with the bird. Avoid speaking of lead in terms of feet, which encourages aiming and measuring. Tell students to miss in front. Once target explodes, they get the idea.

What to watch for: The muzzle tells all. It should move smoothly and uninterrupted to the target. If it stops, the shooter looked at the bead to check the lead. If it slows, they're measuring lead. If it jerks, they're panicking to get the gun in front, or the bird took them by surprise.

LESSON NO. 4: START LOW

As soon as your student is able, have them do all their shooting from a low-gun start. Once they see the target, the first move is to push the gun's muzzle out, so the buttstock clears clothing, and the direction of the

target. Then the gun comes up the face and shoulder--not the face down to the gun. Stress that the mount be smooth, not fast.

What to watch for: Track the hands. Most people want to whip the gun to the shoulder, then find and chase the bird. They need to see the bird first, and then move the muzzle toward the target as if they were trying to bayonet it.

This last lesson is also the time to rehearse safe field carries and taking the safety off quickly while mounting the gun. The final thing to watch for you'll see later, in the field: a smile when the lessons pay dividends.

*By Phil Bourjaily
Field & Stream June-July 2018*



UPLAND ETIQUETE FOR THE FIRST-TIME BIRD HUNTER

By Gary Lewis

A couple of weeks ago, I ran into my Uncle Jon and he told me he had

just bought his first shotgun. I reminded him that he had owned a shotgun once before. In fact, we bought our first shotguns when we were teenagers. I remember our first pheasant hunt and Jon remembers too. We both winced. Seventeen roosters flushed that day and we didn't hit one. I asked him if he was a better shot now than we were back then. He said he actually shot the new gun pretty well. Breaking targets with a shotgun is all about how the shotgun fits and a shooter's hand-eye coordination. It comes natural when the shotgun fits. What doesn't come natural is how to behave when you get invited on an upland bird hunt.

The sport is bond in the tradition that followed Europeans across the pond and evolved on these shores. We hunt chukar, partridge, pheasant and quail behind flushing or pointing dogs. We don't take easy shots on the ground, we let them fly, let them have a sporting chance.

A week or two weeks before your hunt, go shooting and get familiar with the shotgun you will use on the hunt. Learn how to load it properly and how to handle it safely.

Don't show up in camouflage. Camo is for big game and turkey hunting. On an upland hunt, you want to be seen. It's a safety thing. Upland bird pants or chaps are a good idea and bird vest with orange panels allows your fellow hunter to see you and keep everyone safe while swinging on a bird.

Don't hunt on your own. Again, it's about safety and working together as a team. Whether there are two hunters or half a dozen, stay in line, maybe ten yards apart and don't get too far ahead or too far behind. Be ready for some give and take. If a guy is walking slow, wait for him. If the dogs are working slow, let them.

Expect to be surprised by a bird. Sometimes the dogs miss a pheasant and you almost step on it. If a bird flies directly over the line of hunters, pivot like a basketball player and keep the muzzle pointed skyward all the way through the turn to make the shot going away. Don't yell at your friend's dog. It doesn't matter what the dog is doing, don't command it, scold it or even make a suggestion. If you have to talk to the dog, praise it. And always trust its nose.

Don't complain about the birds, how hard they fly or how few there are. In fact, keep your talking to a minimum. If a dog goes on point, signal to the other hunters with a wave of the hand. Birds get nervous when a small army closes in on them. The more noise you make, the less likely they are to stick around for the dogs to sniff them out.

If a dog is on point, his nose locked on a pheasant in a bush, walk in with the muzzle of the gun pointed toward the sky. Keep the safety on until the bird is in the air and wait until there is open sky beneath the bird before you shoot. If the bird flies low over the dog, or over your companions, hold your fire. You can always mark where the bird goes down then go after it again. There is no bird worth scaring your friends over or sacrificing their hearing. If more than one person shoots at the same bird, don't claim it. There is nothing more annoying than the guy that yells, "That one's mine," after every shot. Let someone else assign the bird to you.



At the end of the hunt, if you outshot everyone else, don't take all your birds, divide them equally. If someone doesn't want their share, that's okay, as long as people who do want them get to take birds home.

There are a lot of variables on an upland bird hunt from the weather to your companions to the dogs they bring along. The one thing you can control is your attitude. After the hunt, thank your host and give the guide a tip.

Like any complex sport, no one expects you to get it right the first time in the field, but if you pay attention to the mostly unspoken rules of upland etiquette, you can assure a second invitation.



THE BEST WAY TO COOK PHEASANT BREASTS



The best way to cook pheasant

sometimes appears to be a closely guarded secret. It isn't, one just requires the little know-how. So whether you use this advice to improve upon your favorite pheasant recipes or want to try reviving a dry bird, this method produces top notch results.

We have all eaten pheasant breasts that are dry, tough, stringy and vaguely disappointing. This is because, unlike chicken, the pheasant lives a real, free-range life and, especially by the end of the season, has flown a fair bit, thus exercising its flying muscles (the breasts). Thus, the only way to ensure a great result is not to overcook it. To this end, we will get a little Heston and cook the breasts in an unusual way.

Serves 4

- ▶ 4 undamaged pheasant breasts (skin on)
- ▶ 1 tbsp olive oil
- ▶ Black pepper
- ▶ 1 large ziplock cooking bag
- ▶ 1 sprig rosemary
- ▶ 1 drinking straw
- ▶ 5 tbs of butter (for later)
- ▶ Sea salt (for later)

Marinate the breasts in the oil and pepper and slide them into the bag. Add the sprig of rosemary and lay the bag flat. Zip it almost shut, and poke the straw into one corner. Suck out the air, then zip it completely shut. Pop the bag on a roasting tray and put it in the oven at 170 F or a pan of water at the same temperature; use a thermometer. Leave it for 50 minutes then remove. The meat should feel firm with no wobbliness. If there is, put it back in the oven.

When done, remove from the bag and pat dry on kitchen paper. Then heat the butter in a non-stick pan. When the butter foams, pop the breasts in skin-side down, then sprinkle over the salt. Cook for one minute, continually spooning butter over. They are ready when golden.

Crooked Foot

Upland Bird & Game Hunting Club



MEMBERSHIPS

We believe that Crooked Foot Hunt Club is both a unique place and a special experience; we encourage you to be a part of it as a member of Crooked Foot. Individual and corporate memberships are available and entitles you access to the Club's Private Property (nearly 300 acres of undeveloped hunting land), ponds, 3 hunting towers, 5 stand shooting range, walkups, overnight lodging in our Grand Club House and dining facilities.

Membership will extend to the member's immediate family which is defined as the member's spouse and dependent children. Each member is welcome to bring as many guests as desired on designated "open hunt" dates; however, the member or a qualified family member must be present.

Membership Fees:

- ▶ \$1,500 Individual 6 Month Membership
- ▶ \$1,750 Individual 12 Month Membership
- ▶ \$2,500 Corporate 6 Month Membership
- ▶ \$3,000 Corporate 12 Month Membership

Memberships: October-April

With a Crooked Foot Membership you will be invited to exclusive events throughout the bird hunting season that is only available to our members!

If you are interested in Membership at our Hunt Club, please contact us at **989-723-9823** and see how you can become one of our very own Crooked Sportsman!

Sizzlin', smokin' and satisfying

MEMBER BBQ



The Crooked Foot staff invites you to our annual Member BBQ to say "thanks" for being a part of our hunt club! Bring your family and enjoy great food, clay shooting, music and fun!

Please RSVP Kim at:
CrookedFoot@Frontier.com or call 989-723-9823.

Wednesday, September 26, 2018 ▪ 6:00 PM
7303 S. Delaney Rd. Owosso, MI

Old & New Members Come Join Us for our Annual Member BBQ!

UPCOMING EVENTS



Dog Training

6:00 pm every Wednesday & Friday thru August 31st



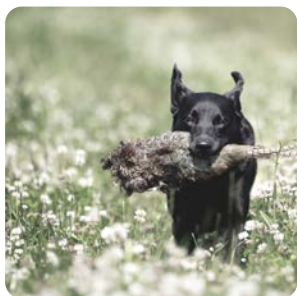
SCI Fall BBQ & Board Meeting

12:00 pm • Thursday, September 20, 2018



Member BBQ

6:00 pm • Wednesday, September 26, 2018



LiUNA Local 1076 European Hunt

8:00 am • Friday, October 26, 2018



Wisner Electric European Hunt

8:00 am • Saturday, October 27, 2018



3rd Annual Veterans Hunt

8:00 am • Sunday, November 4, 2018
