

Fresh MOOSE MEAT in the Bush

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #70 —

The Alaska moose (a.k.a. Alaska-Yukon moose) is the largest big-game animal in North America; they're also very interesting to hunt -- and as a bonus, they live in some of the most remote and beautiful places you will ever see. For these reasons, and more, this was a memorable hunt.

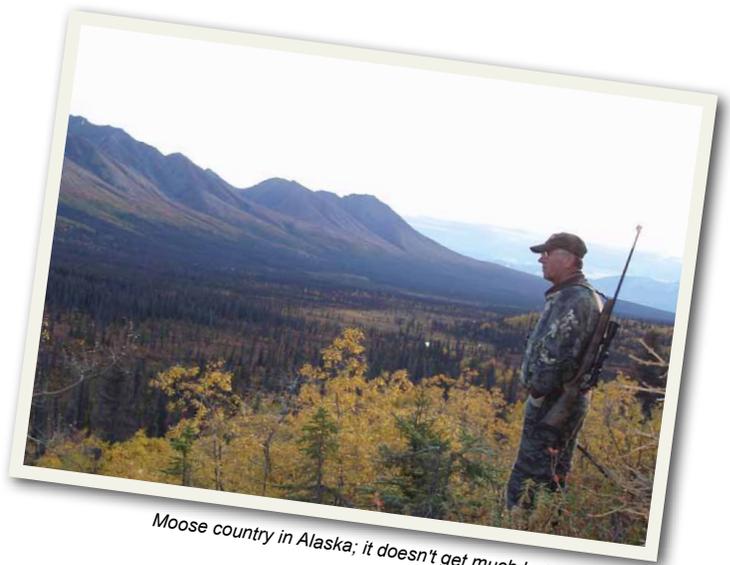
Bull moose are huge, by any standard; if a trophy bull was standing nearby, you would have to look up to see the top of his shoulder; and a big bull moose might weigh six to eight times more than the average man. Compare that with a 150 pound whitetail or a 500 pound elk.

Getting to moose country typically requires a string of horses, an Argo, a boat, a raft or a Super Cub -- and sometimes, more than one of the above might be required.

There are lots of ways to hunt moose; you can glass from the hills into the bottoms, call them in (during the rut), bump into one on the way to or from camp or float down a river and catch

one in the water or meadows alongside. Moose are often in the thick willow brush and in my experience, shooting distances are short. Since moose aren't thick skinned, a well-placed bullet from a 30-30 Winchester or 300 Savage has surely worked fine -- though I prefer something with a little more punch, as bears and wolves live there also.

With a big bull weighing over half a ton, even two people can't just turn him over and start gutting; as a matter of fact gutting isn't even normally part of the process. First,



Moose country in Alaska; it doesn't get much better than this.

you take the quarters off the side that's facing up; then roll him over and remove them from the other side. Finally you get to the filets and back straps, the meat between the ribs and on the neck. It takes a while to process a moose; and for me at least, fresh moose meat in the bush -- over an open fire -- is always a special treat, if we have time for a break.

There are two lessons you will learn, or hear about, on your first moose hunt: first, no matter how challenging a hunt might be -- the hard work begins when the moose is on the ground; and second, never shoot a moose that will fall in the water, because processing a moose in the water is a cold and miserable experience.

**"...even two people
can't just turn
him over..."**

Midway^{USA}

Larry Potterfield
The Wrangell Mountains
St. Elias National Park
Alaska
15 September 2006



This is a typical Alaskan/ Canadian Moose. My rifle is a Rifles, Inc. custom, lightweight Remington 700 in 300 Win. Mag.



Taking a break from skinning and quartering, I cooked up some fresh moose meat -- as we hadn't eaten in quite a while.