

Front Yard SQUIRRELS

— LARRY’S SHORT STORIES #278 —

Frankly, I haven’t hunted squirrels for many years; last time I used my Smith & Wesson K-22, 6” barrel revolver, without great success. When I was a kid, growing up in the country of northeast Missouri, and old enough to be out in the woods with a rifle, my brother Jerry and I hunted and shot lots of squirrels each summer. We used dad’s old Remington Model 12, .22 pump rifle, which I still have. We shot them, skinned them and mom cooked them. Thinking back, it’s hard to imagine how many squirrels have been shot with that rifle.

It was kind of a perfect storm, the way things came together for this squirrel hunt. We have a great many oak trees in the front yard that were planted 30 years ago, when we had the house built. They’re mature

now, though still growing, and dropping a great quantity of acorns each fall, which the squirrels bury in the mulched ground around the trunks. But squirrels also eat the green acorns on the trees in the summer, so there

is always a great deal of squirrel activity in the front yard.

Also, I bought a new rifle a short while back; well, not actually a new one, but a like-new old one. It’s a Remington #2 Rolling Block, chambered for .22 long, rim fire, and made about 1880. Beautiful gun! I opened up the chamber, ever so little — by hand, using a .22 long rifle chambering reamer — so I could shoot the more accurate and more

available .22 long rifle ammunition.

Now the shooting in the front yard could be while the squirrels were on the ground, or in the trees. Our house is not as remote in the country as sometimes I would like for it to be, so shooting squirrels on the ground and anticipating ricochets was not acceptable.

Approaching the squirrels and forcing them up a tree, using the tree

as a backstop, was the only option. Not a perfect option, as there are lots of leaves this time of year.

Sometimes squirrels don’t run far up the tree, before stopping and peeking around the trunk, thinking they’re safe. But you can still see part or most of their head.

Other times, they go all the way to the top, which is a real challenge if there is any wind. Anyway, here I am, still living in the country and still hunting squirrels.

“...before stopping and peeking around the trunk...”

Larry Potterfield

Potterfield Front Yard
Columbia, MO
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Here is the first of the “unlucky” squirrels. He was way up in the top of the tree and my first shot was through the middle. He came down the tree a bit, to the first fork; my second shot was in the head.



This is a Remington Rolling Block #2 (circa 1880), chambered for .22 rim fire. Yes, that’s all original finish. The empty cartridge cases you see were embedded into the concrete on the sidewalk in front of our house, when we had it built in 1989.



When I was a kid, dad taught me how to carry squirrels (his squirrels). He cut a small, green limb about six inches long, peeled off the right and left toes from one of the back feet of the squirrel, and slid the stick through the opening.