

Oliver's BIG 8-POINTER

— LARRY'S SHORT STORIES #268 —

Deer season is a special time for the Potterfield family! The third generation is now nearly fully engaged and there's never a dull moment when they're here. This year was the second, for 12-year-old Oliver, to hunt bucks, as we always start the grandkids out shooting does during their first season. He didn't get a buck last year.

Game cameras are the tools we use for annual deer management surveys, which helps us set the harvest goals for does. Of course, a camera gives you more than just a count of bucks and does, it's also our primary scouting tool. But, this 8-pointer never showed up on the cameras. He simply walked out of a cedar thicket late afternoon, on the second and final day of the youth deer season — and began feeding in the food plot, at about 80 yards.

Russell was guiding and quickly

got his son Oliver reorganized to shoot out the left side of the Redneck blind (north) rather than the front. At the shot the buck turned and ran back into the cedar thicket.

And now, the story gets a lot more interesting. They waited ten minutes, then climbed down and walked to the spot the buck had re-entered the woods — no blood! So, they went to the point of the shot, where they found faint blood and began tracking. (As we learned later, the bullet had blown up on contact with the shoulder — there was very little internal damage.)

The buck ran 80-100 yards into the woods and laid down,



Oliver with his 8-pointer. The memories will last a lifetime.

but as they got close, he jumped and ran farther in. There was very little blood where he had bedded. Twice more they bumped him, so they pulled out for the evening to start the track over in the morning. They called the local game warden to let him know they would have a gun in the woods the next day (after the season), which was fine.

It must have been a restless night for Oliver, though he didn't mention it.

I joined the group early the following

morning. It was cool, with bright sunshine, perfect tracking conditions. Oliver's young eyes were out front picking up the occasional drops of blood, and excitedly called them out. Tracking was very slow. We lost the trail many times, then found it again. Then, there he was lying dead; the hunt was over, but never to be forgotten.

"...now, the story gets a lot more interesting"



Larry Potterfield
Nightingale Farm
Woodlandville, MO
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Checking the sight in of his Remington model 7 in 243 Winchester. (grandma and grandpa's back yard)



Tracking a wounded deer is easy, if there is a lot of blood; but if the blood trail is weak, it is a very slow, patient process.