



# Hunting Season

By Jamie Murdock



Tis the season to go hunting. I don't mean squirrels or deer. I'm talking about bottles. I personally can't think of a better way to shed those extra holiday pounds than hunting for glass in the woods.

Several factors make January through March the prime time to go exploring the many wood lots, farms and streams, which are scattered around the region.

One of the most obvious factors is that your range of vision is greatly expanded now that the leaves have fallen. Recent snowfalls have flattened the leaves against the woodland floor helping to expose bottles, which are normally covered with debris. The sunlight can now penetrate the forest reflecting off any exposed glass like a mirror. I've actually been able to detect the "flash" of a bottle from as far as 100 yards!

Another important factor is that you don't have to contend with all those pesky insects that swirl around your face in the summertime.

I like to travel as light as possible when venturing into the woods. I carry the basics, which to me are: a machete for hacking brush and honeysuckle, leather gloves, a small hand trowel and a mesh bag filled with old socks for placing bottles in. You may want to keep a water bottle in your car. Even though it's winter, it's amazing how quickly you can work up a sweat.

Whenever possible, be sure to obtain permission from the landowner before entering the woods. Most owners are more than happy to grant you access, especially if they know you'll be hauling trash (bottles) from their property. Some property owners may even be able to direct you to a dump on their land.

Once I'm in the woods, locating bottles boils down to plain common sense. Check out the lay of the land. Where would you dump your trash if you lived here? Start looking for old foundations, ravines, drop-offs, hillsides and stream beds. Old tractor trails can be detected much easier this time of the year. Just look for a slight depression about 10 feet across running through the woods.

A small island of trees located out in the middle of a field usually indicates a dumping pit and is worth checking out.

Begin searching for broken pottery, glass shards and oyster shells lying about the woods or stream beds. This usually means you're hot on the trail of a dumping area. It seems many people have enjoyed oysters throughout the years, and their discarded shells have led me to several dumps in the past.

Walking just inside the woods along farmers' fields has been productive as well as along old tractor trails. Many farmers used to haul trash back into the woods and dump it off to the sides of the trail.

I like following small streams to their source, which is often an old spring house foundation. This has yielded some bottles on occasion.

As you can see the possibilities are endless once you get into the woods. It's also a great way to escape from the hustle and bustle of day-to-day living.

If you don't find any bottles, don't be discouraged because at the very least you got some exercise and got to enjoy nature at its finest.

