



Inexpensive Dove Hunting Insurance



The author avoided getting skunked during a recent dove hunt by fishing for bass.

**By Steven Bridges
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I sat with my wife, Debra, next to our favorite dove hunting stock pond with our game bags full of shells and cold shotguns. We had not fired a shot. Not a single dove flew through the air.

My wife is competitive. She likes to

keep score on antler size, numbers of doves and fish as well as board games. But neither of us could count birds that don't fly by...

We were both getting skunked.

But like a good Boy Scout, I came prepared for the possibility the doves had moved on. So, I unloaded my shotgun and put it next to my seat. I

hiked over to my pick up and pulled out my "Dove Hunting Insurance Policy," my fishing rod. It was already strung with a topwater Torpedo.

I strolled back over to where Debra still sat scanning the sky. I stepped up to the bank of the pond and flipped the lure just past the moss line in front of me.

I let the Torpedo sit still for a few seconds until the water rings settled. When I couldn't stand it any longer, I gave the frog the smallest of jiggles. WHAM!

A nice bass blew up from inside the moss line, engulfed the lure and went airborne. I gave the rod a big yank to set the hook. The bass dove straight back into the moss. He burrowed deep inside the thick weeds. I had 20 pound test line in preparation for just such an event. But a three pound bass and 25 pounds of pond weeds can be too much. Just do the math!

I pulled with steady pressure and moved down the bank to change the angle of my force against the bass... and the weeds. I gently increased the pressure on the line until the bass slowly pulled loose of the entanglement. I now had three pounds of fish and many pounds of moss on the line... all in one big blob.

I carefully eased the whole mess up to the bank. I slowly began pulling off the moss from the fish. Finally, I was able to grab the lip of the bass and hold it up for my wife, Debra, to see. I was no longer skunked!

Debra said, "Wash that thing off and I'll take a picture."

As always, I immediately followed her orders. I washed the fish off and posed for a quick snapshot.

After I released the fish, she handed me her phone and held her hand out. "My turn," she said.

Of course, I handed her the rod and got out of her way. Her casting can get a little wild when she gets competitive.

In no time Debra landed a bass. She didn't even look back at me as she quickly released the fish and cast back into the water. The only thing Debra hates more than losing is a tie.

I just kept scanning the horizon from my bucket. My only chance now to fish was for a dove to fly by.

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A fishing rod has saved more than a few poor dove hunting days. I always keep the rod and a few choice lures in the toolbox of my truck, just in case the doves are not flying.

Dove season is also a great time to fish in Mills County. The bass are especially hungry putting on extra weight before winter. Top water lures work well until the water really begins to cool down, which is usually not until October.

Brown Bag Bass Fishing

There is no need for a bass boat. You don't need a bunch of rods and a big tackle box full of lures to gear up for your dove hunting insurance policy.

You only need a rod rigged up with your favorite lure. I have a Mills County General Store bag in my truck toolbox with a few extra lures just in case the bass breaks the line (or just in case Debra gets ahead).

So, next time you go out dove hunting near a stock pond, don't forget to throw a fishing rod in the truck. That little piece of fishing insurance might just keep you from getting skunked.



Pictured above is my brown bag bass fishing insurance policy purchased at Mills County General Store in Goldthwaite. Included: Worms hooks and weights, POP-R and my favorite Heddon TORPEDO.