

A memorable day

A good experience doesn't necessarily mean a limit

BY JOHN N. FELSHER

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Bagging game doesn't necessarily define a successful hunt. Some hunts create memories that live forever because of the wonderful experiences in the natural beauty of the wilderness.

For me, one such memorable day occurred in a marsh many Septembers ago during teal season. One balmy afternoon, I paddled through a narrow marsh channel to reach my hunting spot. As I rounded a bend, the boat nearly bumped into two alligators sunning themselves on the muddy bank, barely a few feet away. One quickly disappeared, but the larger one stayed put until the boat began to pass it. Then, it slipped into the channel,

resting on the bottom as the boat glided over it.

With water barely two feet deep and clear, I could easily see it and decided to give it a less than subtle nudge with the paddle -- perhaps not my best decision! Nearly upsetting the tippy craft, the very surprised alligator sloshed a 100-yard thrash through the marsh to get away from this crazy person!

Feeling rather cocky after fighting my way through alligators, I reached the pond where I wanted to hunt. As I stepped from the boat, I tripped on a root and fell face first into the muck -- quite literally bringing me back

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