OLD-SCHOOL: Remember tricks to bag more bucks

FROM PAGE 11

can also simulate a buck rubbing his antlers on small trees.

“I walked up on some deer one time and I heard a buck making a certain sound,” Chamlee recalled. “I started making that call, an exciter grunt. With a grunt tube that was made by a guy in South Alabama, I can make a deep sound like an old buck and then change so it sounds like a different buck. That makes deer think that a dominant older buck and a young competitor are arguing back and forth at each other.”

Hunters can also bang anglers together to make them rattle. Sound travels best on cold, calm mornings. If deer can’t hear the sound, they can’t come to it. Many sportsmen keep antlers from deer they killed. Some companies make synthetic rattling antlers. Chamlee also uses an old-fashioned “rattle bag” with rods in it that imitate deer when twisted.

“That old rattle bag sounded more like a deer,” Chamlee commented. “I used it successfully for years. I normally rattle in the mornings to get their attention. In the evening, I try to be as still as possible because deer are going to feed. I try to catch them when they move from one place to another.”

When stalking, Chamlee often blows a mouth call to keep his hands free to rattle. He frequently keeps a call in his mouth as he moves slowly through the forest. When he pauses, he can call without making any unnecessary movements. He usually calls twice in one spot and then moves a little farther.

“I use a combination of rattling and calling,” he said. “I slip around a tree and prop my rifle against it. I get down on my knees and rake the leaves to sound like a buck pawing at the ground. I rake the horns against a small sapling to mimic a buck rubbing. Then, I slash them together really hard like a fighting sequence. After a little hesitation, I do a couple slow grunt calls. I wait five to 10 minutes and then repeat the sequence. I’ve had deer almost run me over.”

Most people just don’t have enough patience to stalk deer. Even those skilled at it won’t tag a stag every time, but woodsmen who successfully hunt deer on their terms become hooked for life.