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# Winter 2020

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## WHITETAIL FRENZY

Beyond The Backyard would like to give a big thank you to Whitetail Frenzy for their continued support of our organization. Each year they help us by providing financial support and giving us equipment to raffle off to our members. This year the guys surprised us by coming to our office and giving us a check for \$10,000 to ensure that we can keep up our mission of reaching the youth in West Virginia and getting kids into the outdoors.



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# *Attitude Change is Leading to Bigger Bucks in West Virginia*

**As you scroll through your social media feeds in West Virginia, you may have some eye popping hunting pictures jumping out of the screen. This is the time of year everybody likes to look for big antlers—hoping to bag a big set to show off. Over the course of the last couple of decades, it might have seemed like you were seeing more and more big bucks being killed in West Virginia. You'd be correct.**

**The reasons vary, but the biggest factor is that bucks are managing to live longer.**

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"Antler development is mainly determined by the age of the animal," said Jim Crum, Deer Project Leader for the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. "Nutrition is important big time and everybody wants to talk about genetics, but that plays a minor role and it's really hard to influence."

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Crum said data from the Division of Natural Resources tends to bear out those facts. The average age of bucks killed in West Virginia the past three decades has steadily gone up.

"Back in the 90's or even earlier our age structure on the harvest we were having 60 or 70 percent yearlings. Now, some counties which we've been able to look at, our percent yearlings in the harvest is in the high 20 percent range. That's had a big influence," Crum said.

Over the last several decades the DNR has run concurrent antlerless hunting seasons with the two week rifle season for white tailed deer. A lot of those hunters who were just there to kill "a deer" have been content to shoot the doe when they see her and be done. Crum noted antlerless season has saved a lot of bucks and it's solved a lot of problems for all deer.

"That addressed some of the nutritional problems, because we had a lot of areas where we were pressing the nutritional part of the habitat. We had some winter die off and if you have winter die off that means you had too many deer on the landscape," he said.

Those overpopulation issues which were prevalent in the 90's and early 2000's have been corrected according to Crum. There are still some places where deer densities are higher than what the agency believes is the carrying capacity of the land, but they are far fewer today than 20 years ago.

The other factor which is fueling bigger racks and head turning antler groups are hunters themselves. Hunters, on the whole, have become more disciplined. They've started to make the conscious decision to let young bucks walk on and wait to see what might come later. Crum said the practice has been a key factor in the larger antlers we're seeing.

"We've had a big change in hunters. They're allowing smaller antlered deer to walk. They understand some of the biology behind how they get bigger antlers," he said.

***Source: WV Metro News***



# How to Make Shotgun Shell Crafts

## Things You'll Need

- Peach acrylic paint
- White acrylic paint
- Red acrylic paint
- Paintbrush
- Wooden skewer
- Ruler
- Textured snow medium
- Disposable cup
- Pink acrylic paint
- Orange acrylic paint
- Black acrylic paint
- Cotton swab
- Craft wire
- Wire cutters
- Spoon
- 1/4-inch wide ribbon

## SANTA SHOTGUN SHELL ORNAMENT

**Step 1** | Lay a red shotgun shell on your work surface. Turn the shell so that the metal end is positioned at the top.

**Step 2** | Paint a 1/2-inch circle on the side of the shell, just below the top, using peach acrylic paint. This is Santa's face. Allow the paint to dry.

**Step 3** | Dip one end of a cotton swab into the pink acrylic paint and dot two cheeks on the face. Dip the blunt end of a wooden skewer into the red acrylic paint. Dot a nose in the center of the face. Dip the pointed end of the skewer into the black acrylic paint. Dot two eyes above the nose. Allow the paint to dry.

**Step 4** | Cut an eight-inch length of craft wire using wire cutters. Wrap the wire around the shotgun shell, just below the metal rim. Twist to secure the wire to the ornament. Twist the ends of the wire together one inch from the ends. The loop between the twisted sections is the hanger for the ornament.

**Step 5** | Place a spoonful of textured snow medium into a disposable cup. Add a small amount of water until the mixture is the consistency of thinned oatmeal.

**Step 6** | Apply the textured snow medium around the top of the shell and around the face using a paintbrush. Drag the snow downward on the bottom of the face to form the beard. Center a dot of snow on the top of the shell's metal top. Allow the snow medium to dry.

## SNOWMAN SHOTGUN SHELL ORNAMENT

**Step 1** | Paint the surface of a shotgun shell using white acrylic paint. Do not paint the metal end. Allow the paint to dry.

**Step 2** | Cut an eight-inch length of craft wire using wire cutters. Wrap the wire around the shell below the metal rim. Twist to secure the wire to the ornament. Twist the ends of the wire together one inch from the ends. The loop between the twists is the ornament's hanger.

**Step 3** | Dip one end of a cotton swab into pink acrylic paint. Dot two cheeks 1/2 inch below the metal top and spaced 1/4-inch apart.

**Step 4** | Dip the blunt end of a wooden skewer into orange acrylic paint, and dot a nose between the cheeks. Place the pointed end of the skewer in the wet orange and drag to the right to form a carrot shape.

**Step 5** | Dip the blunt end of the skewer in black acrylic paint. Dot two eyes above the nose and five dots in the shape of a smile from one cheek to the other. Allow the paint to dry.

**Step 6** | Cut an eight-inch length of 1/4-inch wide ribbon. Wrap the ribbon around the shotgun shell, just below the smile. Tie the ends in a knot.

**Step 7** | Dip the blunt end of the skewer in black acrylic paint, and dot three buttons down the front of the snowman's body. Allow the paint to dry.



# Word Find

Can you find them all?

Using the list to the right, find the words that are hidden in the jumble.

BITTER	FIRE	SKATE	COLD	MITTEN
EARMUFFS	SHIVER	COCOA	IGLOO	SWEATER
SCARF	COAT	LOVES	SNOWMAN	
BOOTS	FROZEN	SLEET	DECEMBER	

D E C E M B E R N B C R D E S A C D T P N B C  
X A O E N O E T H N Y U V C B J O E F O H N T  
N E L A O O X F C W K L N C E E A R M U F F S  
D B D J G T M E P M M I O K A E T X Z Q H D L  
C A S M Y S N O W M A N J B M P K I M V B G E  
H D B N Y T R S D E E A C Z X G T O L U U H E  
S K A T E M U G Q L A M K P I U C W S Y J M T  
S K U H B N R S D T G F R O Z E N X C C A R N  
T D I N D C G M N R S T J U N B A G A A S D T  
T X G L O V E S Q Q O E L B I T T E R M Y N I  
P M L E G H N V B S D T V G Y U H I F M H N J  
E E O V H R S Z A K M N R D S C V L B T G H P  
X C O C O A L L E C S H I V E R E V I R F M N  
C B H T G C C A Z E D R S C W B H F P F I R O  
C B N T M M I T T E N N B V G O U F P R R J T  
B N R C S D X T R H A Z E D X S W E A T E R R



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