

Tips on How to Recognize Deer in the Thick of the Forest

When a hunter goes for hunting, there are times that he fails to recognize the deer due to the scene. Hunters have to adjust his sight with the scene while he arrived in the forest.

In one case, I was able to shoot a deer that I thought was a squirrel when I first saw the motion. I located the object that had attracted my attention, apparently on a branch of a blow-down. While waiting for it to move again, for positive identification, I noticed what seemed to be a knothole a few inches below the object that had moved in the first place. There was no tree where the knothole seemed to be.

Suspecting that I might be looking at a deer's ear and eye, I took one step forward and the other ear and eye could be plainly seen. The rest of the deer's body was completely concealed from view by the blow-down. That deer had seen me, but thought it was concealed enough so that I would pass by without noticing it. Deer do this more often than many might realize, but they can usually tell just when the hunter becomes aware of their presence and nearly always will run as soon as they are seen instead of staying around to see what will happen, as this deer did. If that deer hadn't moved its ear when it did, I would have, in all probability, walked on past unaware that there was a deer watching me and it would have lived.

Deer do not need to be behind a blow-down in order to be hidden. I have seen feeding deer vanish temporarily while in an open field where their color blended with that of the dead grass in the background. Even feeding motions would not reveal their presence on cloudy days until they moved into a place that gave them a different background. Naturally an animal that can blend into the landscape of an open field would be doubly hard to see in the shade of the woods where it would be partly concealed by underbrush. If it were not for their habit of standing broadside to approaching danger, many deer would be overlooked or mistaken for tree stubs by even the sharpest-eyed hunter.

Two deer, standing broadside, fooled me completely on one occasion. I knew they were in the vicinity and was proceeding very cautiously so as not to alarm them. There was a low ridge of ledge between me and where I thought that the deer might be waiting and I stayed behind this ridge until I came to a place where I could climb it and scan the opposite side. With my head and shoulders above the ridge, I could look into a grove of soft wood trees (mostly hemlock) with practically no underbrush for at least a hundred yards. I looked this grove over very carefully and decided that there was nothing there and I started to cross to check on another location. I saw the deer before they left the ground on their first jump and they had been standing broadside to me about half way through the open grove. Their camouflage had been so good that I had failed to see them until motion gave them away. The vertical tree trunks broke any horizontal lines and the shade under the softwood trees neutralized any contrasting color that they may have had so that they remained next to invisible as long as they remained in one position. Incidentally I never tried to shoot either of these deer.

The deer can even puzzle you pretending that you did not notice them. So to recognize the body of the deer in the thick of the forest is very important otherwise you may pass and never know that a deer was watching you from nearby.

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About the Author

Mitch Johnson is a regular writer for <http://www.best-scopes-n-binoculars.com/> . His articles have also appeared on <http://www.solidcampfun.info/> and <http://www.ezcampfunguide.info/>