



Hunting with a Smart Phone

BY TOXIE GIVENS

EVERYONE in this new millennium has a cell phone. Many of us even have a smart phone such as an iPhone, Blackberry or Droid. However, many of us that have these smart phones might be missing out on some features that your smart phone is capable of that could help you when you are hunting. I, personally, have an Apple iPhone 3GS. I will be using my phone to illustrate my points in this article. All of these examples can be duplicated on the other smart phones with similar applications and similar phone features. One more thing to note is that you need to have cell service in the areas you hunt.

I am an avid whitetail deer and turkey hunter and the weather is a key factor in hunting these challenging animals. Weather Channel (www.weather.com) is the foremost site for providing weather information. I have tested other weather applications but I like theirs best. Besides when you need instant weather what channel do you turn on? They have

developed a weather application to run on all smart phones.



The first thing I do is check the 10 day forecast to plan my hunting trip. It shows me the trend and pattern of developing weather patterns. Then, the day of the hunt, I check the hourly forecast where I can see the temperature, wind direction and wind speed that correspond to the hours I plan to

spend in the woods. This helps me decide what stand location I want to go to. Also, many of my hunting times have been adjusted according to this data. I also check this data while in the woods to see what is happening

around me and I have sometimes changed locations due to the wind not being correct for a particular location.

Finally, I use the weather application when rain clouds are in the air. You can toggle to the radar tab (Explore Map) and see a storm view of where you are hunting. You can then determine if the weather is going to miss you or if you need to get down and seek safety immediately. It also allows me to stretch my hunts to the last minute before I know the weather is going to set in.

As hunters we know how the weather affects the game and, as you can see, how useful a smart phone can be to deliver this information in a timely way. Of course, all of us hunters are trying to increase the odds in our favor and this type of technology can do it for you. If you have an iPhone and want this application, you can search "Weather" in the iTunes App store. Other smart phones can download other versions of this software from www.weather.com website.

Now that you know the weather you need to figure out where you are going to hunt. My phone has Google Maps with built in GPS so I mark my stand locations ahead of time so I can find them in the dark. This is handy because I don't have to carry my GPS hand held unit anymore because I always have my phone. I also mark other important items such as trail camera locations, rubs and scrapes and other useful information on my phone.

Once safely on the tree stand, I have heard of hunters taking books and magazines to pass the lull times during their stand time. I have done this, but with new smart phones you can now have so much more. Also, it is a lot more compact and easier to carry. (You can even read HuntX3 articles and interact with our GREAT Website: www.huntx3.com while on stand!)

GAMES: I have a several different games

installed on my phone. These games range from card games such as Solitaire and Blackjack to strategy games such as Chess and checkers. Smart phones are becoming the new game systems and more games are being developed for them. One thing to note is most of the games I play are games that have pauses in them so I can look up and scan my surroundings to make sure nothing gets by me while hunting. You don't want to get engulfed in a game and miss a deer walking by.

MULTIMEDIA: I use my phone to listen to my favorite artist's mp3s and to my favorite podcasts. I also can watch recorded TV shows and movies. I just recently installed the Sirius/XM application where I can listen to satellite radio over my phone. This is how I listen while on stand: I stick one ear bud speaker in my ear and keep the other ear free to listen for game. I can't count how many times I have watched deer or turkeys while listening to my iPod. This is great way to pass the time.

INTERNET SURFING: Everyone who surfs the Internet has favorite websites that they go to every day. Whether it is sports, news, tech or gossip, you can read these websites while sitting idle on stand. You can even write articles like this while sitting up a tree and of course don't forget to read the articles on www.HuntX3.com. (I know, another shameless plug!)

Email – I sometimes check my email while on stand. This can be good when family and friends email you but it can also be bad if it is business and there is a problem. Problems can distract you from



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hunting and I try not to check my email on really good hunting days. In the past, I've had to get down from a stand to go back and get on the computer or phone to solve a problem. Not fun!

TEXT MESSAGING: I never did much text messaging until I started texting while hunting. It is a great way to communicate with other

hunters while on stand. Text messages start flying back and forth such as: Where we going to eat after we get down? You seen anything? Did you shoot? I just got the BIG one! You can also use it to keep in touch with other people who are not hunting. I have taught so many people how to text message just for hunting. Even the older generation,

who are sometimes technologically challenged, are now avid texters!

As you can see, these entertainment tools allow me to stay on the stand longer which always increases my odds of killing the big buck I am after.

Now that you are entertained, you can review trail camera pictures of bucks that you have captured so when a shooter buck walks out you can recognize him and take him immediately. This review can be provided by your hunting club like your own FBI most wanted posters. It can help you nail down a buck you want to shoot or maybe let go. I also store property maps on my phone. Use them with Google Maps and this can be one of your most useful tools to figure out that big buck.

Now that you have been prepared all during your hunt with your smart phone, let's say you take that big buck. Use your smart phone

to take pictures of him so you can immediately email or text them to your hunting buddies. Better yet, have a hunting buddy take pictures of you and your trophy! Smart phones can be used to give you a technologically edge while hunting. They are very powerful and with new features being added all the time; they will remain part of my standard hunting equipment. I recommend they become part of yours.

