



Doe White-Tail Deer Feeding In T+R9 NWP

Weighed down by a moderately heavy backpack and carrying an unwieldy tripod and folding chair, I clumsily step through the forest, bushwhacking to an un-named pond in T+R9 NWP. Pausing 100 feet short of the pond to listen to the wildness, I recognize the unmistakable resonance of a moose rushing through chest-deep water.

A large, well-built beaver lodge is the pond's most significant landmark. Trekking south in search of the pond's outlet, I pass an aging pink lady slipper orchid that has faded to white; a reminder of the rarities the woodland bestows. I locate the pond's outlet and a series of beaver dams that have formed several small pools; the ideal place to patiently sit in my blind at dusk.

The entertainment includes the antics of red-winged blackbirds and common grackles. Their backdrop is resplendent blue flag irises in a sea of forest green.

A movement draws my attention; a doe white-tail deer gradually approaches the pond while feeding. She is vigilant, but not nervous. Only 50 feet from where I sit she lowers her head to sip from the pond. She steadily crosses one of the narrow dams and resumes feeding while walking downstream until out of view.

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