

Jacob Fox
Mapleton
LD 716

This is the second year I have been coyote hunting. The first year I hunted them was over bait. I had them coming in consistently to the bait from the pictures I got on my game camera. But they would also come in at times when I was unable to be present at the bait site to hunt them. I had limited success hunting them that year. I learned after talking to other hunters it would be very helpful to have a thermal scope to hunt them. With the cheaper thermal scopes costing \$1000-\$2000, it was a large purchase for something I had just started as a hobby.

For this year I purchased a thermal scope (\$1800) which allows me to hunt coyotes more effectively at night. This season I have been just using an electronic predator call to hunt coyotes. My friend and I have been putting in an average of 5 hours each week calling while night hunting at various spots. We had some success in December, with me getting one and him getting three. It has been very difficult to get them to come in since mid-January now being in mated pairs.

With the snowpack here in northern Maine and these animals being much lighter than deer, they have an advantage as they can float on top of the snowpack while deer have to trudge through the deep snow, effectively slowing them down and allowing the coyote to catch them. They need to be effectively managed in order to reduce they're threat towards local deer herds. If we reduce the season to October through March, we are allowing these animals to proliferate more. By doing this they're packs becomes larger and we could start to have an imbalance between coyotes and deer.

Coyote hunting is not for the faint of heart. I would even argue that it is more difficult than deer hunting. I have been deer hunting for the past 15 years and I typically see a deer ever week of the season. I have only ever seen two coyotes while in the woods and I was not actively pursuing them. They are an extremely smart and cunning animal. Hunting them takes a time commitment and financial investment that not every hunter is willing to put into the sport. In summary, I oppose LD 716 as I believe it is not in the best interest of managing coyotes for the betterment of Maine's deer populations.