



DIY: Wildlife Cameras

Wildlife cameras (also known as trail cameras or “trail cams”) are motion-sensor cameras that are used by wildlife biologists, hunters, and anyone else interested in the whereabouts of wildlife. They serve as a great way to remotely observe cryptic animals and monitor which critters call your backyard home! To get started, you’ll need the following:

- Wildlife camera – many options are available for purchase online or at sporting goods stores
- SD card – this is the memory card that stores the camera’s images and videos and that you can use to transfer these images and videos to your computer
- Batteries!

Your camera’s location can make the difference between capturing many animals on film to getting “skunked.” Here are some great places to set up a camera:

- Places where you have seen animals on your property before
- Near fresh tracks, scat, or other sign (like broken branches or dens)
- In an edge habitat (like the transition zone between a forest and a meadow or a wetland and an upland forest)
- At water sources like creeks or ponds etc.
- Along worn-down game trails

Lastly, here are a few other tips to help you be successful:

- Consider having two SD cards so when you retrieve the card from the camera, you can immediately replace it with an empty card. This ensures that the camera is always capturing wildlife that pass it.
- Positioning the camera at about waist height on a tree is a good bet. This allows you to see small animals like squirrels and rabbits but also larger animals like deer.
- Try not to position the camera in a spot where there will be lots of non-animal movement (like people, swaying grass, a creek with rapids, etc.) because the SD card will fill up with unwanted images!

