

Scent Deterrents are effective

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Fall is a busy time, Livestock distributions are condensing as the natural resources are at the end of the growing season. As hunting seasons are winding down, so is the available hunting aftermath for the predators.



The predators as well as the livestock are beginning to condense because both are seeking a more available food source.

Because of the presence of the Pajaroello tick and the cattle's response of foothill abortion, I have two calving seasons. The spring calving herd is more susceptible to foothill abortion than is the fall calving herd.

The fall is the season when most of the foothill abortions occur. The third trimester of pregnancy is the timing of the abortion. An opportune time for predators as their proximity to the cattle condenses.

Such an attractant brings predators closer and jeopardizes the healthy fall calves.

When a cow aborts we make the effort to graft another calf on to the mother cow to help mitigate the financial loss.

One of the tricks to getting the mother cow to except the new live calf is to fool her into accepting that the calf is the same calf that she aborted. We skin the dead calf and tie the hide onto the live calf so that the mother will accept it. This is called "grafting".

After a brief time the hide is removed and the mother and her newly adopted calf are returned to the herd. By grafting, the cow moves from the spring herd and into the fall's.

Disposing of the hide is a necessity because the decomposing hide is an attractant to predators.

In the grafting process I once apparently lost track of the hide and apparently one of my dogs absconded with it.

My first realization of a problem were the magpies that I began seeing. I spent a few hours searching for a problem. But, at this time I was still unaware of the missing hide.

Ravens soon followed and then a large number of howling Coyotes soon moved into a close proximity to the cattle's location.

Unable to find a problem, I applied a round of scent deterrent. The coyotes were gone within the day. I still was scratching my head over what was drawing them.

The next morning when I was driving out to feed some first calf heifers, one of my younger dogs jumped in to the truck carrying his prize, the graft calve's adopting cape, the missing hide.

As I have said before, I don't believe in coincidences, especially when it comes to animal behavior.

Although the magpies are not a predator, I believe their actions act as an alert or as scouts for the predators. Their presence alerts nearby predators of opportunity. I believe that buzzards and ravens are also incorporated into this mix.

Keeping the area free of attractants may seem to be a minor detail, but if allowed, the coyotes would quickly consume that dead abortion and not be satisfied because of the lack of food volume that it provided. They would certainly have

food on their mind and continue looking for opportunities. That opportunity would be the healthy fall calves.

Deterring presence is the first step in deterring conflict.

Although unintentional, the “graft hide” was an active attractant and by placing the scent deterrent, it proved again that scenting is effective in deterring predators. Mitigating the risk to the healthy calves.

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