



■ By Michael Ware

Yote this. Yote that. I feel a bit foolish admitting it, but I remember all too well smiling and nodding as if I understood what the heck these guys were talking about in the local watering hole one night. After several stories, much laughter, and a couple pops, I was able to pick up some new hunting nomenclature and learned “yote” was actually hunter speak for coyote.

While I was slow to grasp the predator master lingo, I was quick to build and utilize the necessary weapons, equipment, and support devices for all genres of coyote hunting. I hear customers all over the state comment on the high volume of coyotes in their neighborhoods and the reflection of my wandering area mirrors theirs. Predator pressure is high, and coyote hunting is making quite a comeback. As such, it is high time we explored some options.

What rifle should I use? That is the most common question we get at CCA regarding coyote rigs. There are many possible ways, but the two most common are the standard bolt action rifle and the AR15. Both can be chambered in plenty of capable calibers that do a great job of efficiently dispatching this size of game. AR15s and bolt guns alike can be chambered in speed demons like the 204 Ruger, 17 Remington, as well as old favorites like the 223 Remington. I build as many 6.5 Grendel AR15s for yote callers as the other chamberings oddly enough, and the same customers use them for deer hunting down south. The AR15 is limited though if you're searching for something like the 22-250 or 243. In order to implement either of these main stream chamberings, you'll need to move up to the larger and more expensive AR10 chassis. The AR15 simply isn't large enough internally to accommodate any chamberings longer than the 223 Remington. The AR10 becomes your default if you want to run 243 and 308 overall length ammo. It isn't that folks don't do it, but half of what I consider a prerequisite in a good coyote gun is light

weight. The AR10 generally isn't that light, so the bolt guns get my recommendation in cases like the 22-250 mentioned earlier. Wildcats abound for both, so if you can dream it, I promise you it can be done.

Both the AR15 and average bolt gun come in around 6.5 to 8lbs depending on configuration and barrel profile. Both are capable of fantastic accuracy, as the myth of a semi automatic weapon being incapable of performance has long been shattered. You're going to have to ask yourself if detachable magazine feeding and semi auto cycling are important to the way you hunt versus hinged floor plates and cycling a bolt by hand. It depends more so on your hunting method and comfort than it does on weapon capabilities in my opinion. Scopes are another subject all together. The trend is towards high magnification. I believe this is a mistake in some cases. Quality will trump magnification every time. I'd put a 4-12x40 of quality manufacture up against anybody using some Hubble Telescope sized 60x cheap scope, and probably best them. It won't matter a lick how high the magnification is if you can't get positioned to see through it well due to how high it sets upon your rifle. Add issues like contending with mirage stemming from high magnification, and the basic strain on

your eyes to see the object, back ground, etc. when using optics with poor glass and lacking coatings, and you'll skip the cheapo optics the next time around. Even when shooting out to a mile and beyond I rarely use more than 20x while banging steel plates. Rifle scopes with top ends more than 15x to 20x aren't necessary in most cases and I prefer those that can be dialed down to as little as 3x or 4x for a wide field of view and the ability to pick up on a target quickly. Hunt at low magnification settings, and if you have the time to dial up, then go ahead is my motto.

I do enjoy all the new reticles though. There are so many each manufacture offers now that you're just plain nutty not to take advantage of these. You can now utilize them for ranging purposes, bullet drop compensation, wind corrections, and moving target leads. Granted, all the nifty uses need to be verified by range time and performance on paper. There are a handful of reticles that are a bit 'busy' for my taste, but the majority offer great advantages.

So be honest and ask yourself what attributes are crucial and important to you 90% of your shooting time. Answer those questions honestly about your weapon and optics and you'll put together a yote buster for sure.



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