

WEEKEND ATHLETE

OUTDOORS / Gene Mueller

A few must-have items for the fall

As hunting season gets under way in earnest, here are some new, top-quality items that are definitely worth the asking price.

Let's begin with camouflage-patterned clothing from the Wrangler Co. of Greensboro, N.C. What could be better than a top-of-the-line camo outfit that consists of a dressy, functional shirt, a long-sleeved T-shirt and tough-as-nails jeans-style pants?

For several weeks now during dove hunting and scouting of new deer hunting spots, I have checked out Wrangler's latest long-sleeved twill field shirt and a pair of nine-pocket hunter pants — all in something the company calls Advantage MAX-1 camouflage that blends even a big fellow like me into the surrounding trees and brush with remarkable effectiveness.

For example, a hunting pal of mine walked past me, no more than 10 feet away, as I stood wedged between a massive oak and some underbrush. He nearly jumped out of his shoes when I suddenly moved and made a grunting sound. That's how good the MAX-1 camo is.

The field shirt is made of 5.5-ounce, 100 percent cotton twill designed for a great range of motion. It sports two front chest pockets with button-through flaps, has double needle stitching and is available in the MAX-1 open terrain or hardwoods grey camo pattern in sizes from medium to 4X. (I'm a 2XL and the shirt has been super comfortable, which is not always true with other 2XL shirts I've bought.)

The same goes for the very comfortable Wrangler pants that have what the company calls "deep scoop pockets" and four additional side accessory pockets. You could stash half the inventory of a small country store in them. The pants will fit easily over hunting boots and come in waist sizes from skinny to guys with 54-inch girths. Wranglers' all-cotton, long-sleeved camo T-shirt is sold in sizes up to 4X.

The field shirt and pants each retail for \$30 to \$35; The long-sleeved T-shirt is \$18; short sleeve \$16.

To learn more, go to wrangler.com and click on Pro Gear. If you're in a shopping center that has a Dick's Sporting Goods, you should see the clothing. All the major hunting catalogues carry it.

Knife sharpener is a winner — I readily confess that I'm a knife fanatic. I own knives that I bought while visiting Argentina, Brazil, Germany, Austria, Canada and, of course, in this country. In decades of hunting and fishing, I've spent hundreds of hours working with whetstones, electric grinders, hand-cranked sharpening wheels, steels — you name it. But how often have we been told that a new knife "sharpening system," as the professionals say, will end all our worries concerning sharp edges? Some of them do the job, but too many require a considerable investment of time and the taking of too many sharpening steps. Forget all that now. The hand-sized Australian



Advantage MAX-1 camouflage clothing from the Wrangler Company is wonderfully effective in hiding hunters from the sharp eyes of wild game. Photo by Gene Mueller / The Washington Times



This Wing and Clay Model is perfect for the trap and sporting clays shooter as well as hunters. The suggested retail cost is \$185.

and produces a quality edge.

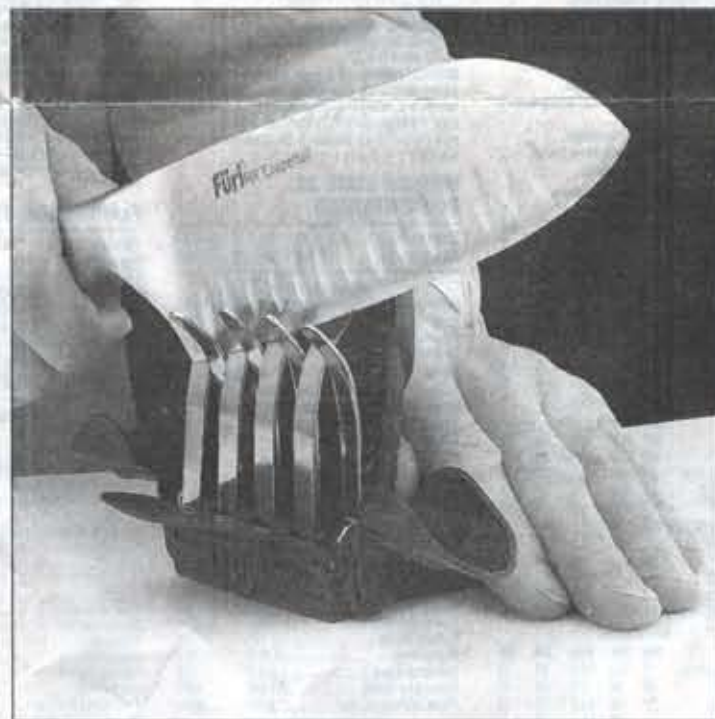
Several down-and-back swiping motions through Ozitech's eight diamond-coated fingers will set the edge bevels perfectly every time and quickly produce a professionally sharpened blade. I used an Ozitech sharpener and quickly put a fine edge on a small pocket knife, several medium-sized hunting models, a large kitchen knife and two favorite fish fillet knives.

The Ozitech sharpener has a suggested retail price of \$37.50, but some shops sell it for around \$30. Naturally, the longevity of the Ozitech depends on how much it is used, so I can't say whether the sharpener is a bargain at \$30. I can say, however, that it works wonderfully well. The

properties.

Online retailers that sell the sharpener include amazon.com and sportsman-guide.com. You can call the maker at 800/888-3006 or check out furitechnics.com.

Heavy-duty gun cases — The Tennessee-based Do-All Outdoors Co. says its gun cases are flight-proof. That means not even the meanest airport luggage handler can harm it, and let me tell you I've had some adventures during the transport of guns on airplanes. These Do-All Outdoors heavy-duty cases are built to withstand everything that comes their way, and that's saying something. Imagine flying across the globe for a dream hunting trip and as you arrive out comes your case with a hole



The Ozitech knife sharpener delivered the goods when it came to sharpening my sometimes abused hunting blades.

door gun cases is unlike any other. One of the most important features on the cases, is that everything is recessed. The handles flex to a comfortable 90-degree angle and are spring-loaded. When you let go of the handle it will pop back into its recessed place, out of the way and safe.

The recessed chrome biposition butterfly latches are super strong and also spring-loaded. Each corner is covered by a durable chrome

Every case has tongue-and-groove construction for a heavy duty locking fit. On the bottom of the case there are rubber feet with heavy-duty bolts and T-nuts to protect it. There also are low-profile wheels to provide easy transport.

For more information, call 800/252-9247 or 615/269-4889, or go to www.do-all-traps.com.

Look for Gene Mueller's *Outdoor column* Sunday and