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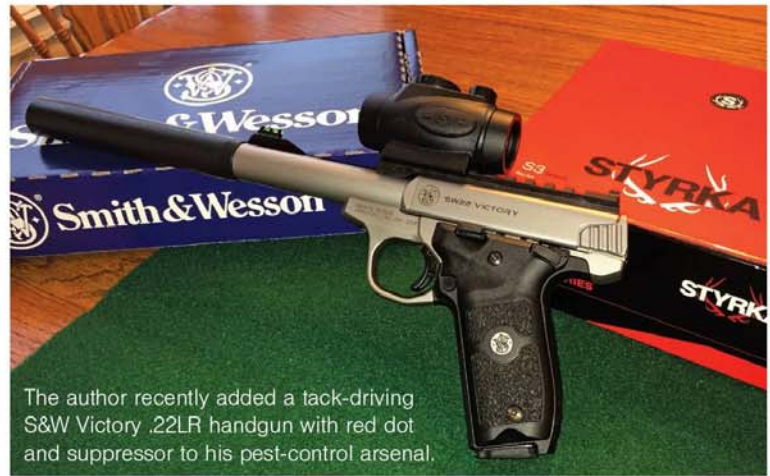


## From The Editor

By Mark Olis

# I Love Gear

Gear will never replace hunting knowledge and preparation, but the right gear is vital to success.



The author recently added a tack-driving S&W Victory .22LR handgun with red dot and suppressor to his pest-control arsenal.

### IT'S TRUE — I LOVE

**HUNTING GEAR.** I don't consider myself a gadget guy or a "techy" by any stretch, but the old saying, "Use the right tool for the job," holds true for hunters, too. If you hunt out West and regularly call predators in wide-open spaces, then an accurate rifle with plenty of glass capable of making clean kills out to 300 and 400 yards is a must. However, the same rifle in a jungle-like cutover in the Southeast will make close-range coyotes a tough target to hit.

Because predator hunters do rely on gear so much, *PX* puts together our annual Buyer's Guide section. It features more than 100 of the newest predator-hunting products on the market. We cover gear and gadgets, new rifles and ammo, night-vision optics and scopes, calls and decoys and much more. Be sure to take a look at the section and see what gear might help you put more fur in the shed this fall.

A new piece of gear I added to my arsenal this summer falls into the varmint category. I wanted something light and compact, but accurate and quiet for dispatching problem varmints around the house, while on the trap line or while cruising my hunting property. So I got Smith & Wesson's (S&W) new SW22 Victory .22LR handgun. I saw the new pistol at this year's SHOT Show while perusing S&W's booth with its Director

of Marketing Communications, Paul Pluff. The excitement Pluff exhibited when showing off the new match-barrel pistol had my attention and when he bragged about its accuracy I was itching for a reason to get one. Then he showed me the threaded-barrel version and I was sold. I had a new Thunder Beast Arms 22L-1 rimfire suppressor that would be a perfect match for this pistol.

The SW22 Victory has a 5½-inch removable/interchangeable match barrel with ½-28" threading. The frame, bolt and barrel are made of stainless steel with a satin finish and the gun weighs 36 ounces. It has a polymer grip and comes with two 10-round mags.

I wanted to ring out every bit of accuracy that this pistol offered, so I removed the back sight and installed the Picatinny rail that came with the gun. I then topped it with a Stryka S3 red-dot sight. The S3 is also compact and light at only 5.8 ounces it adds little weight to the pistol. However, with a 5 MOA red dot and 1X magnification it really allows me to stack bullets on top of each other from 30 yards away. The S3 is waterproof and comes with Stryka's lifetime warranty. It won't break the bank either, and is priced at \$299.

Once I had the sight and suppressor on, it was time to shoot. Prior to sighting it in I wanted to hear just how quiet this setup

would be with subsonic rounds. I fired three rounds into a sand pile in my backyard and I was giggling at the results. It sounded like a pellet rifle, with the gun's action being louder than the report of the round. I was amazed at the stealth that this little handgun would afford me when dealing with backyard pests or maybe a limit of squirrels from my treestand on a boring deer hunt!

So far the SW22 Victory had fulfilled my desires for compact and quiet, but how about accuracy? After sighting it in, I shot several three-shot groups of subsonic hollowpoints from Winchester, CCI and Eley. All three rounds achieved dime-sized groups at 30 yards while shooting from a rest. The CCI and Eley rounds seemed to do it with a bit more regularity, while the Winchester rounds would occasionally give me a flyer. The CCI rounds also seemed to be the quietest of the group, though all were in that "pellet gun" range of sound.

I've been practicing plenty with the new SW22 and I can't wait to hit the woods this fall with my new varmint handgun. These are just a few pieces of gear that I added to my collection this year. What are you going to add? 🐾

God Bless,

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