

Today we started something different. I thought we would do a series of hands on outdoor activities before Winter sets in. Our series is about surviving alone (until rescue) in the forest.

There are four critical problems that must be addressed if you are to survive in the wild. They are: food, water, shelter, and fire. Of these the most important is shelter.

This is the scenario: You have become separated from your Boy Scout troop. Its getting late and they might not find you today. What can you do? Rich thought obtaining food is the most important thing but I said you could live for weeks without it. I said shelter is critical to protect you from wind, rain and cold that can cause hypothermia.

This is what we did:1) We selected a tree with a crotch branch about 6 feet high.2) Rich found the ridge pole approx 10 feet long and we secured one end in the crotch allowing the free end to rest on the ground.

3) We used dead branches as spars that are laid perpendicular to the ridge branch.

4) We then found debris scattered around, but located a large stand of Japanese knotweed which made excellent cover. Large palmate leaves act as both a wind barrier and tarp if rain were to occur.

Our entrance faced northeast which was just large enough to crawl into.

Inside a soft bed of thick grass lined the living space which had dimensions of 5 feet height x 6 feet wide x 6 feet long = approx 181 cubic feet of living space. After Rich built this shelter, we went inside. There is no doubt in my mind he would stay dry, and relatively warm if lost in a forest for an extended period of time.

*Note It took approx. 60 minutes to construct a shelter that can protect anyone against the elements if lost using available biomass.*

