

May 21, 2008

Hello, my name is John Ruther and I would like to deliver a message, using the experience of my dog companion Logans' death in a snare trap.

The first hint of a snares' work is your animal will be jumping, acting as if he is getting into mischief off there in the woods. Then, as your attention wanders, the corner of your eye will catch the jumping turning bizzare, almost as if a buck deer, or bear, or mountain lion, or something, is throwing him backwards, violently, over and over. It will be quiet, all the while there will be only the struggle. As you walk cautiously towards that place there will be stillness. When you see your animal it will be alive, fighting with every ounce of life it has left to get air into its' lungs. Its' legs will be straight out, perpendicular from the body, the tail will be rigid, the eyes will be wide and bright and pleading, the mouth and tongue will be the wrong color, a precursor to death purple. You may think, as I did, that your animal friend has broken his neck. You might speak to your friend to try to comfort him in what suddenly seems to be his final moments, you will search his body for wounds, you will gently roll him to search his other side and to be prepared to give him heart compressions. The realization of his life slipping away will compel you to say his name to him what seems to be a thousand times. In the end you will be staring into his eyes, they will be the eyes of your best friend, they will be shining and filled with terror, and then, as sure as we all will die, the brightness fades slowly, and that unique irreplaceable spirit is no longer there. And then, as you stroke your friends' still warm body for the last time, you may find it, as I did, the hidden wire around his neck, the snare embedded in his neck and lying in the tall grass and tied to the bush. Then the absurd but necessary for your sanity attempts at mouth to mouth resuscitation and heart compressions, and finally the acknowledgement that it all is very wrong, but absolutely real. This must be trapping at its' best, the physical killing of a dog and the spiritual killing of a man.