ROYAL CANADIAN AIR CADETS

PROFICIENCY LEVEL THREE

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE

SECTION 15

EO C390.10 – IDENTIFY METHODS OF PREPARING AND COOKING A SMALL ANIMAL OR FISH

Total Time: 60 min

PREPARATION

PRE-LESSON INSTRUCTIONS

Resources needed for the delivery of this lesson are listed in the lesson specification located in A-CR-CCP-803/PG-001, Chapter 4. Specific uses for said resources are identified throughout the instructional guide within the TP for which they are required.

Review the lesson content and practice skinning a small animal or preparing a fish and cooking a small animal or fish with the equipment provided prior to delivering the lesson.

PRE-LESSON ASSIGNMENT

N/A.

APPROACH

Demonstration was chosen for this lesson as it allows the instructor to explain and demonstrate skinning a small animal, preparing a fish and cooking a small animal or fish.

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

N/A.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson the cadet shall have identified methods of preparing and cooking a small animal or fish.

IMPORTANCE

It is important for the cadets to identify the methods of preparing and cooking a small animal or fish that can be used in a survival situation. While food is the last component of the survival pattern (a person can live for weeks without eating), if it is readily available, the efforts made in catching, preparing and cooking a small animal or a fish are worthwhile. Proper preparation and cooking minimizes the chances of getting sick and helps to preserve the food.

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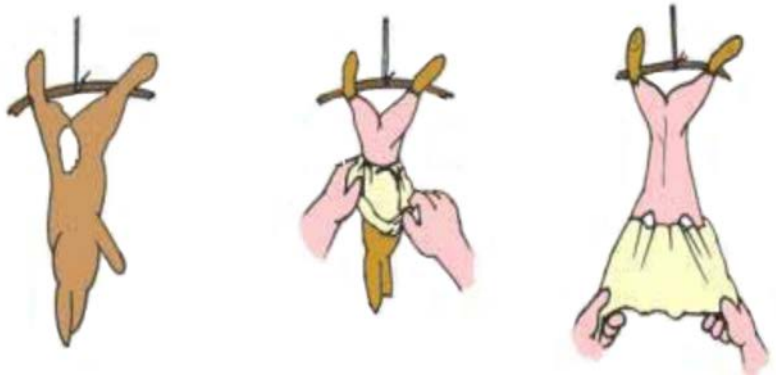
Teaching point 1 **Explain and Demonstrate Skinning a Small Animal**

Time: 15 min Method: Demonstration

SKINNING A SMALL ANIMAL

For best results, the steps for skinning a small animal should be done in the sequence outlined below.

1. Remove urine by holding the animal's forelegs and gradually squeeze down on the body from the chest to the bowels.
2. Cut a hole in the belly area.
3. Pull the skin apart at the hole exposing the guts. Remove the guts.
4. Cut the skin around the front and hind paws and between the hind legs.
5. Hang the small animal and pull off the skin by pulling it down and over the head.
6. Cut the head off the small animal.



Note. From "Dressing", Simple Survival. Retrieved March 15, 2007, from http://www.simplesurvival.net/dressing.htm

Figure 1 Skinning a Small Animal



The guts (innards or entrails) can be used as bait or buried as the odour will attract insects and scavengers.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 1

QUESTIONS

Q1. How do you remove urine from the animal's body?

Q2. What area of the animal's body is first cut?

Q3. What is the last step in skinning an animal?

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ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Remove the urine by holding the animal's forelegs and gradually squeeze down on the body from the chest to the bowels.

A2. The first cut is made in the belly area.

A3. Cutting the head off the small animal.

Teaching point 2 **Explain and Demonstrate Preparing a Fish**

Time: 15 min Method: Demonstration

PREPARING A FISH

To prevent spoilage, prepare the fish as soon as possible. The innards (guts or entrails) can be used as bait or buried as the odour will attract insects and scavengers. Keep the fish cool and cook as soon as possible.

1. **Bleeding.** As soon as a fish is caught, cut its throat and allow it to bleed. Wipe the slime off the fish to make it less slippery. Do not let any slime get into your eyes as it may cause Fisherman's Conjunctivitis (pink eye). Cut out the gills (these are the flaps on both sides and just behind the fish's head) as they will quickly spoil.

2. **Gutting.** Make an incision from the anal orifice to where the throat was cut. Remove the entrails – you can use them for bait. Keep the roe, which runs down the side of the fish. It is hard in females and soft in males; it is very nutritious.



The roe of a fish are within the sexual organs (hard roe are eggs, soft roe is sperm). It is recommended that this is not explained to the cadets.

3. **Scaling.** Scaling is not necessary and fish can be cooked with scales on, but if there is time, scrape them off. Remove scales by holding the tail and pushing a dull knife across the skin at a forty-five degree angle. Draw the knife from tail to head.



Catfish have skin, not scales and should be skinned like a small animal.

4. **Filleting.** Pass the knife along the top side of the backbone. Cut behind the fin down to the backbone. Push the knife through and cut the fillet free from the tail. Cut the flesh away from the bones. Remove the fillet by cutting the skin at the stomach area.

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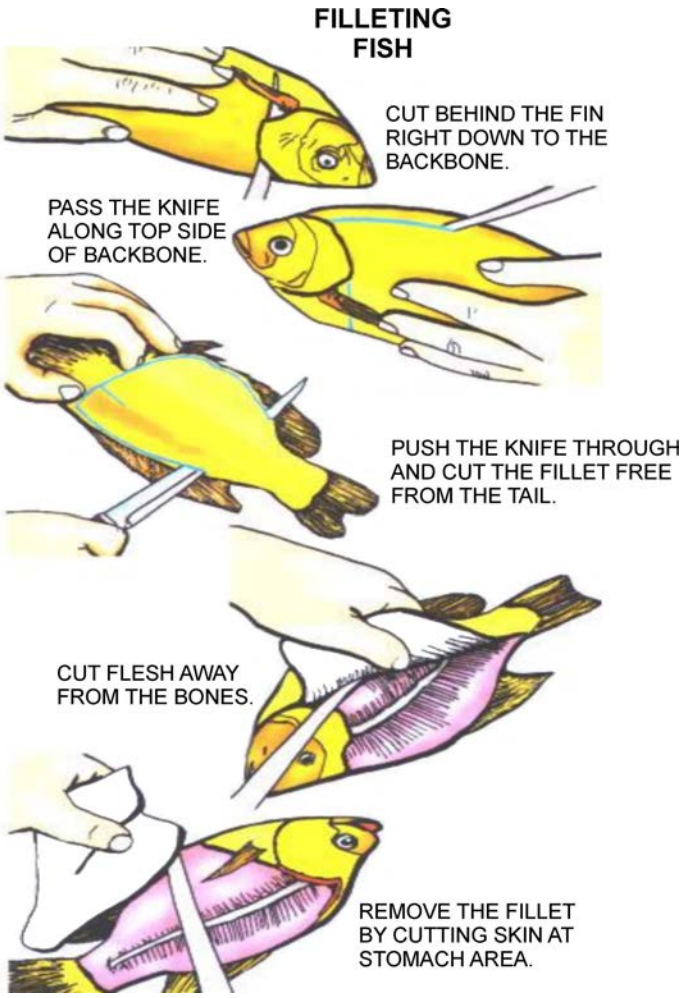

P. Tawrell, Camping and Wilderness Survival, Paul Tawrell (p. 144)

Figure 2 Filleting a Fish

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 2

QUESTIONS

Q1. What is done as soon as a fish is caught?

Q2. What should you do with the entrails?

Q3. What is the process for filleting?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. As soon as a fish is caught, its throat is cut and allowed to bleed.

A2. Remove the entrails – you can use them for bait.

A3. Filleting:

(1) Pass the knife along the top side of the backbone.

(2) Cut behind the fin down to the backbone.

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(3) Push the knife through and cut the fillet free from the tail.

(4) Cut the flesh away from the bones.

(5) Remove the fillet by cutting the skin at the stomach area.

Teaching point 3 **Explain Methods of Cooking a Small Animal or Fish and Demonstrate One of the Methods**

Time: 20 min Method: Demonstration



While only one method will be demonstrated, all three are explained.

COOKING A SMALL ANIMAL OR FISH

In addition to killing parasites and bacteria, cooking food can make it more palatable. The methods chosen for cooking a small animal or fish are based on the items one may have in a survival situation.



Practice cooking a small animal or fish before demonstrating one of the following procedures to the cadets. Prepare all materials before the start of the class. The small animals and fish prepared during the instructor's practice should be cooked using all three methods and used as examples of the finished (fully cooked) products.

GRILLING

The following are some considerations for grilling food:

- Grilling is a quick way of cooking large amounts of food but it requires a support – such as wire mesh or a grid of green sticks – rested on rocks over the embers of the fire.
- It should only be used when food is plentiful since it wastes most of the fat from the meat.
- Hot rocks beside the fire can be used as grilling surfaces.

Grilling:

1. Place the large rocks on either side of the fire for the wire mesh/green sticks to rest on.

2. Place the wire mesh/green sticks (in grid formation) on the rocks above the fire.

3. Place food on the wire mesh/green sticks and cook until the meat is no longer pink. Fresh water fish are normally germ free and may be eaten raw, however it is more palatable when cooked.

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IF NO WIRE MESH IS AVAILABLE, MAKE A GRID OF VERY GREEN STICKS OR REST A LONG STICK ON A FORKED SUPPORT SO THAT IT CAN HOLD FOOD OVER THE FIRE. WRAP FOOD AROUND THE STICK. YOU CAN ALSO BARBECUE MEAT AND VEGETABLES ON A STICK SUPPORTED ACROSS GLOWING EMBERS BY A FORKED STICK ON EACH SIDE.

J. Wiseman, The SAS Survival Handbook, HarperCollins Publishers (p. 284)

Figure 3 Grilling

ROASTING

The following are some considerations for roasting food:

- Roasted meat cooks in its own fat.
- Continually turning the meat keeps the fat moving over the surface.
- The easiest method is to skewer the meat on a spit and turn it over the hot embers of a fire or beside a blazing fire where it is hot enough to cook.
- Roasting makes a very tasty dish but has two disadvantages:
    - Valuable fat is lost unless a drip tray is placed beneath the spit. Regularly baste the meat with fat from the tray.
    - Roasting by a fierce fire can cook and seal the outside, leaving the inner meat uncooked and harmful bacteria alive. A slow roast is preferable, and the inner meat can continue cooking after the outer meat has been cut off.

Roasting:

1. Build a spit with two Y shaped sticks and a green stick as the centrepiece.

2. Place the spit over the fire.

3. Skewer the meat and place it on the spit. Turn it over the hot embers of the fire or place the spit beside a blazing fire where it is hot enough to cook. If possible, place a drip pan under the meat to catch the fat.

4. Continue turning the meat so the fat moves over the surface.

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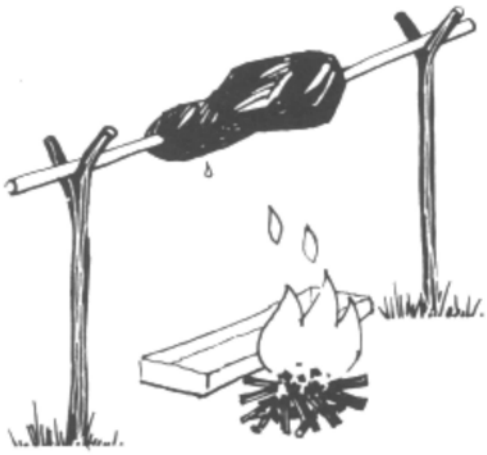

THE FIRE SHOULD BE SLIGHTLY TO ONE SIDE OF FOOD TO ALLOW FOR A DRIP TRAY TO CATCH VALUABLE FAT.

J. Wiseman, The SAS Survival Handbook, HarperCollins Publishers (p. 284)

Figure 4 Roasting

FRYING

The following are some considerations for frying:

- Frying is an excellent way of adding variety to your diet if fat is available and you have a container in which to fry food.
- Any sheet of metal that you can fashion into a curve or give a slight lip can serve as a pan.
- In some areas, you may find a large leaf which contains enough oil that will not dry out before the cooking is done. Before you risk valuable food on them, try the leaves first. See if the leaves burn when placed over the embers. If you use a large leaf, fry only over embers, not over flames.

Frying

1. Place a flat rock, large leaf, or sheet of metal on or next to the fire. (Avoid rocks with high moisture content, they may explode when heated).

2. Let the rock or metal heat up and cook on it as you would a frying pan.

CONFIRMATION OF TEACHING POINT 3

QUESTIONS

Q1. What are three types of cooking methods?

Q2. Which type of cooking should only be used when food is plentiful?

Q3. What material can serve as a pan?

ANTICIPATED ANSWERS

A1. Grilling, roasting and frying.

A2. Grilling should only be used when food is plentiful since it wastes most of the fat from the meat.

A3. Any sheet of metal that you can fashion into a curve or give a slight lip can serve as a pan.

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END OF LESSON CONFIRMATION

The cadets' participation in identifying methods of preparing and cooking a small animal or fish will serve as the confirmation of this lesson.

CONCLUSION

HOMEWORK/READING/PRACTICE

N/A.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

N/A.

CLOSING STATEMENT

It is important for the cadets to identify the methods of preparing and cooking a small animal or fish in a survival situation because before you can eat what you have caught you have to prepare and cook it. Proper preparation and cooking minimizes the chances of getting sick and helps to preserve the food.

INSTRUCTOR NOTES/REMARKS

Cadets who feel uncomfortable with skinning a small animal do not have to participate in that portion of the class but should be present for the TP on preparing a small animal or fish.

If a rabbit or squirrel cannot be caught in a snare, it may be bought at a farmers' market or a similar venue.

If a fish cannot be caught, it may be bought at a farmers' market or a similar venue.

REFERENCES

C0-111 (ISBN 978-0-9740820-2-8) Tawrell, P. (2006). *Camping and Wilderness Survival: The Ultimate Outdoors Book* (2nd ed.). Lebanon, NH: Leonard Paul Tawrell.

C3-002 (ISBN 0-00-653140-7) Wiseman, J. (1999). *The SAS Survival Handbook*. Hammersmith, London: HarperCollins Publishers.

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