

Chapter 1 : Perfect Autoloaders for Upland Game | Gun Digest

*The Upland Gunner's Book: An Anthology [George Bird Evans] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. This book explores the life of the bird hunter, from his relationship with his dog to the skills that make the hunt memorable.*

He also bred a line of English setters whose descendants are treasured today by bird dog enthusiasts throughout America. Born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania in , he was raised by parents who were cultivated, loving and highly supportive of their precocious and multi-talented son. Bright and inquisitive, Evans also shared a love of learning, literature and the arts with his father. An excellent student, he skipped a grade in elementary school and was, thus, only seventeen when he left home to attend Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh in Intent on pursuing a career in art, he earned his keep while at college playing saxophone in a dance band. It was at a band engagement that George first laid eyes on fellow Carnegie freshman Kay Harris of Wheeling. The two enjoyed a casual friendship during the year that would have ended when the aspiring artist decided to transfer to the Art Institute of Chicago the next fall had fate not intervened. As he pondered, an open roadster approached carrying none other than that very girl! Waving enthusiastically to each other, their chance passing led to a lengthy correspondence, courtship and ultimately to marriage several years later. After two years study at the Chicago Art Institute, George decided that he was ready to break into the field of illustration in He spent the next eleven years working on a freelance basis for these and other clients before landing an exclusive contract to illustrate mystery and detective stories for Cosmopolitan in The job paid well, well enough, in fact, for George to begin contemplating a very early retirement while still in his mid-thirties. To prepare for that eventuality, the Evanses bought a Revolutionary War era hewn-log farmhouse in Preston County, West Virginia in Though it lacked utilities and was primitive by all other means as well, the couple quickly decided that they could not wait to until retirement to move in. Convincing his editors that the mountain air would stimulate his creativity, George and Kay left New York for good in June As his assignments usually required the equivalent of no more than two weeks time per month to produce, in addition to rejuvenating the farm, George found ample time to pursue his ever growing passion for bird dogs, guns and grouse. He would continue this journal for the next six and one half decades. Desiring to serve his country in the manner in which he felt he could be most useful, George offered his graphic talents to the U. He was put to work in Washington, DC, illustrating naval and aeronautical equipment repair manuals that showed how complicated things fit together in a pictorial language anyone could understand. People were turning increasingly to television for dramatic entertainment and magazines were responding by gravitating away from fiction and original artwork towards nonfiction and photography. Having grown tired of deadlines, and on relatively firm financial footing, George decided that it was time for a personal change in direction as well. Rather than working on assignments and timetables imposed by others, he would henceforth work for himself at his own pace, not as an artist but as an author! Both George and Kay were voracious readers. The two had often speculated that they could write as well as many of the popular authors whose works George had illustrated through the years. Thus, it came as no surprise to Kay when her husband announced one day that they would collaborate in writing mysteries! The couple patterned the protagonists of their first novel, *Never Wake a Dead Man*, after the people they knew best – themselves. Hamp and Carmel, a stylish couple from New York, find themselves embroiled in a whodunit mystery while hunting grouse in the Appalachian Mountains. Accompanied by their faithful English setter, Ruff, the two proceed to unravel a grisly tale of multiple murders at a sprawling mountain estate. Though the plot and setting would change in each of their succeeding works, Hamp, Carmel and Ruff would return in all but one of the four more mysteries penned by the couple that were to follow. Nor would just any English setter do. The dog he desired would have beauty, an excellent nose for scent, and an amiable personality. A dog that was intelligent and cool under fire. A dog with old bloodlines carrying the best traits of the various setter breeds. When it occurred to George that such a dog might not yet exist, he decided to create one! Seeking a solid foundation upon which to craft his own breed, within weeks of taking up residence at Old Hemlock, George wrote to champion setter breeder George H.

Ryman of Shohola Falls, Pennsylvania, explaining precisely what he had in mind. This dog, which George and Kay promptly named Blue, proved to be a worthy progenitor of the Old Hemlock setter line. George spent the next two seasons training Blue in the field. His efforts were well rewarded as the dog proved to be an outstanding hunter, retriever and companion. Yet, serendipity intervened once again when his father informed him that he had discovered an exceptionally handsome orange belton white coat with orange flecks and patches female at a kennel near Pittsburgh in the spring of . Upon personally inspecting the dog, which he later named Dawn, George heartily agreed. Their brood of nine became the foundation of the Old Hemlock line of setters and set its dissemination in motion. The descendants of the offspring of this legendary couple are treasured by bird dog lovers to this day. As the hunting seasons passed, George continued to plan his life around his forays into the woods with dog and gun, and usually with Kay at his side. As he had done since , he continued to document his outings in a journal that traced his steps, described his experiences, and documented his observations right down to the precise number of birds flushed and shots fired. Focusing on his experiences and philosophy regarding the breeding and training of English setters, it was evident, however, that this voice spoke with an eloquence, a breadth of knowledge and a sensitivity that was all too rare in this genre. Over the next decade and a half, Evans published an average of three articles per year. In addition to more essays on breeding, training and simply admiring fine bird dogs, he wrote about shot guns, birds, habitats and especially on the joy of experiencing and appreciating the glorious interaction of all of the above. For Evans, hunting was not about the kill but about the entire experience. It was about the exuberance of the dog and the pleasure of working with a well trained animal. It was about the solitude and beauty of nature. It was about the quest for and flushing of the quarry, the smell of gunpowder, and the thrill of a fine shot. The kill was undeniably a critical part of this grand scheme, yet, it was a part that was inherently flawed, a part made bittersweet by the remorse of destroying something cherished. This remorse grew keener for Evans as the years passed and game birds declined in number, due in his view to overhunting and seasons that were too long. He aired his views in this regard to the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources repeatedly during the s and s to no avail. Evans published his first monograph about his sport and the utopian existence he had forged at Old Hemlock, in . Titled *The Upland Shooting Life*, the book is a manifesto, an autobiography, a manual, and a wildlife romance all rolled into one. Kills should be judicious, quick and dignified. And where birds were concerned, fairness dictated that the quarry must always be in flight. Any hunter that would blast a sitting duck was no sportsman in his eyes. With these basic tenets established, Evans goes on to write of the marvels of the woods, the beauty, character and habitats of assorted game birds, and the breeding and training of bird dogs, all illustrated with deft line drawings and tales of countless personal experiences regarding all three. An instant classic in the literature of this field, *The Upland Shooting Life* gained George Bird Evans a loyal following that would last for the rest of his life and far beyond. Altogether, these books would solidify his position as one of the foremost writers of all time in his genre. By the time of his death in , the bibliography of books by George Bird Evans had grown to some twenty-seven monographs including re-issues and well over articles. Adding to his legacy is his enduring contribution as the breeder of the Old Hemlock line of English setters whose descendants are still treasured by bird dogs enthusiasts across America. In his own eyes, however, it is quite possible that Evans would consider his greatest accomplishment to be his very existence and the manner in which he lived it. The Regional History Collection is pleased to announce the receipt of a vast array of publications, manuscripts, illustrations, audio visuals and personal papers of George and Kay Evans from the Estate of Mrs. Evans who died in

Chapter 2 : Collecting Browning's First Gauges | Gun Digest

The Upland Gunner's Book Hardcover - by George Bird Evans Author) out of 5 stars 1 customer review. See all 3 formats and editions Hide other formats and.

There were other imported autoloaders that were pretty light in 12 gauge. In the 50s and 60s there was the Breda, a unique, exceptionally well-made long recoil-operated autoloader. So there has never been a shortage of light, properly balanced autoloaders for the uplands. In 16 gauge, the Browning Sweet Sixteen in the old A-5 configuration " and its licensed Remington and Savage humpback knockoffs " is just about all that was and is available. Savage did make a rather bulbous-looking Model , a lightened version of the model that weighed around 7 pounds, but it was an ugly gun and did not sell well. Whatever the case may be, in the older models it is best to avoid ventilated ribbed barrels for upland gunning. Not only does the ventilated rib contribute significantly to overall gun weight about a quarter of a pound but it adds weight in a crucial area, up front. With a ventilated rib, the weight can increase to over 7 pounds. A 7 pound gun should be a 12, not a 16, if it is to be used in the uplands. The same thing can be said about the Remington . The legendary Remington did come in 16, but as good as the is for a variety of shotgunning, it is not the best gun for the uplands in 12 or 16 gauges. Besides being somewhat heavy, it was always a bit nose-heavy, not the best thing for an upland gun. Yet, because it points so well, it has served as an upland gun for many a successful upland hunter. In the 50s Remington attempted to correct the nose-heavy tendency of the for the uplands and came out with their Special Field models with inch barrels. But these guns, although lighter with their short barrels and shortened magazines, did not have a very good balance. Just about all the 20 gauge autoloaders are suitable for upland gunning provided that they are properly choked. Some are, of course, better suited for upland gunning than others. Perhaps the best way to separate the 20 gauges is by using three categories. These guns make good upland guns if they are choked properly. They are all balanced right for the uplands and their light overall weight makes them ideal for carrying over hill and dale. Currently there are only two that qualify as ultralights. The Benelli Ultra Light model in 20 gauge is claimed to weigh 5 pounds, 2 ounces. It is indeed a feathery, delightful autoloader, but not quite as light as claimed. Benelli achieved lighter weight by using a shorter magazine tube, shorter barrel, and a carbon fiber ventilated rib. Therefore, the Benelli with a inch barrel is of same overall length as a Browning A-5 with a inch barrel. A sleeper in this group of ultralight autoloaders is the Franchi 48AL. The Franchi was always considered to be the lightest autoloader one could get. Like all Berettas, it is fairly light at 7 pounds in 12 gauge. The Benelli Ultra Light is indeed very light, but it is a few ounces heavier than the Franchi. The Franchi has excellent balance combined with feathery weight. A typical Franchi 48AL gauge the earlier model without screw-in chokes with inch ventilated rib barrel weighs 5 pounds, 4 ounces. With shorter barrel Franchi made inch barrels it would weigh-in at the advertised 5 pounds 2 ounces. The Benelli Ultra Light 20 gauge with inch barrel averages around 5 pounds, 6 ounces, which is 4 ounces more than the advertised 5 pounds, 2 ounces. In 28 gauge, there is the Remington and the Franchi 48AL. The Remington tends to be heavier, but it still makes for an excellent upland gun, as does the discontinued Remington, which is lighter than the . The Franchi is one of the lightest 28 gauge autoloaders on the market today. It is built on the 20 gauge receiver and weighs about the same as the . At around 7 pounds in 12 gauge, it made for an excellent upland autoloader. The latest addition in 28 gauge comes from Benelli. It is a scaled-receiver Legacy Model that weighs 5 pounds. They seem to be great little autoloaders, but they are pricey. Benelli would have been better served putting out a Montefeltro or M2 model in 28 gauge rather than the more expensive, engraved Legacy model. There are those who use the. However, it should be confined to use on the smaller game birds such as quail and dove and not the larger birds. I know, many a game farm pheasant has been shot with a. Also, shots should be kept to closer distances. For most gunners, 30 yards would be about the maximum distance that they should attempt to use the. When it comes to the. The older Model is about a half a pound lighter but is extremely scarce on the used-gun market. There are a number of inexpensive double guns on the market today that cost less than the pricier autoloaders. Balance and handling qualities will not be something you will find in these cheaper doubles. It is far better to spend your money on a

quality autoloader than on an inexpensive double gun. Brezny explores the recent popularity of and fascination with shotguns and shotgun sports, from clay bird competitions and hunting, to home- and personal-defense uses, as well as their general affordability sparking interest from gun buyers. Learn more about these applications, as well as shotgun accessories for self-defense, hunting, and target shooting. Discover a variety of shotgun ammunition choices, from.

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If This Gun Could Talk At the end of the war, Remington vastly modified and modernized their autoloader and in came out with the Model The was made in 12, 16 and 20 gauge. Additionally, new imports from Italy â€” the Franchi 48AL and the Breda, two modernized versions of the Browning autoloader â€” appeared on the market in the s. They were both lighter than the A-5 and available in The Franchi in particular was exceptionally lightweight, and caught the attention many of upland gunners. Not long after the end of World War II shotgun ammunition was improved considerably and the newer gauge rounds became as effective as the old 16 gauge of the prewar era. The popularity of the 20 gauge soared while the 16, although still popular and number two in sales, began to sag a bit. It was time for Browning to do something about the situation, so Val Browning, son of the great John M. Browning, redesigned the old A-5 and scaled it down for a 20 gauge. Val had done this before, back in when he redesigned and lightened the 16 gauge and came up with the highly successful Sweet Sixteen model. Nevertheless, it was a great success and the Twenty remained unchanged, except for the shape of its grip in , until it was discontinued in It was made only in 12 through all the pre-World War II years, although Val Browning had developed a scaled-down gauge version and there may have been some very rare gauge Superposeds in Europe before the war. Initially they were available in just one grade, the so-called Grade I with minimal engraving. They were delightful little guns and immediately caught the fancy of upland gunners. Unlike the A-5 20 gauge, which remained the same throughout its life except for a change in grip shape and the change of manufacture to Japan in , the Superposed 20 underwent some changes almost immediately. First, the engraving pattern was increased only two years after its introduction. Then in , the Lightning grade was introduced. The Lightning had been available in 12 gauge before the war, but production was stopped after the war. In , both the 12 and the 20 were available in the Lightning grade. The Lightning was a lightened version of the Superposed. In 12 gauge, there was sometimes as much as a pound difference in weight between the Standard and the Lightning. The gauge Superposed later appeared in an even lighter version called the Super Light, with not just slimmer wood but also metal shaved and thinner barrels. These were alloy-framed A-5s that weighed much less and were made in Belgium at the FN factory in the s, just about the time Browning switched the manufacture of A-5s to Japan. But, they were only sold in Europe. The gauge Superposed made its first appearance in the issue of Gun Digest. Note the issue prices! The first-year 20 Superposed was a very simple affair. The engraving pattern was sparse, but deeper cut and of very good quality. For some reason many seem to think that this very plain, light colored wood is somehow superior, and actually seek out the guns with blonde wood. The main difference appears to be in the finishing of both metal and wood. The early guns seem to show much more care in metal polishing and fitting. The wood was oil finished before the war but finished with lacquer after the war. It had a nice subdued finish, not the glossy finish found on later guns when polyurethane replaced the traditional lacquer finish. The checkering was also finer and of better quality, or so it seems. Perhaps the Superposed 20 is more collectible since fewer were made and it is older than the A-5 20 by some 10 years. Normally, when you do find a Superposed 20 that was made in , it is usually pretty worn or has had some changes made to it, most of the time it has been re-blued. The same thing applies to the gauge A-5, perhaps even more so, since A-5s were less expensive and were considered to be working guns and used heavily, sometimes carelessly. Belgian Brownings are still quite common on the used gun market. The Superposed, in the opinion of many, is still not overpriced like some of the other classic shotguns. Unfortunately, the Superposed higher grades have skyrocketed in price. These prices, as already stated, are for gauge models. Values are much higher for the 28 gauge and. The gauge guns are much lower priced and more common, and therefore may be considered even better bargains. In our 69th Edition, Jerry Lee again helps us carry on the tradition of being the gun book every firearms lover turns to.

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