



Expressions of Wildlife  
TAXIDERMY  
Professional Wildlife Artistry

SINCE 1991

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**Field Care**

The quality of the finished mount is usually a direct reflection of the care the animal received when collected. The lower the quality of the skin, the lower the quality of the finished mount. There are some steps that you, the sportsman can take that will account for about 50% of the quality of the finished mount.

First, select a reputable taxidermist, preferably one who is involved in National or State Taxidermist Trade Associations and Sportsman Organizations. These associations are a critical link in the coalition that supports localized wildlife management practices and your right to hunt and fish. They offer a wealth of information to the general public and professional development opportunities for taxidermists.

Next, familiarize yourself with what-right-looks-like. Shop around...the internet is a powerful tool for this as you can type in your state, city or town and the word "taxidermist" or "taxidermy" to the Google search engine and find numerous returns for local taxidermists with websites from which you can review photos of their work, prices and credentials. Look for common traits such as membership in trade organizations, awards, years established, etc. This can be helpful in developing a profile to measure those who are within your own geographical range against your requirements. Do some advanced planning...the next time you see a mount hanging in a restaurant or in someone else's home, look a little closer at the eyes, the lip line and the nostrils....does it look like the real thing? Look at the same features in a picture of the live animal and ask yourself how important it is to you to achieve that level of realism. Right after you have taken your trophy in the field is the wrong time to make that kind of decision.

Next...if you choose to utilize deer processors, choose one that is going to go the extra mile to care for your cape. Ask him to explain to you his method of caping and storing mountable capes.

With furbearers, be selective with shot placement. Make it clean. When you locate the animal, there are three critical elements that you must remember...**time, moisture and heat.** Any of these elements alone or combined can create disastrous conditions that can ruin a good skin. Do not wash the hair side of the carcass down unnecessarily with water if the carcass is still warm. Heat combined with moisture makes an ideal atmosphere for bacteria to thrive. This is even more threatening in predators like foxes and bobcats and especially so in gut-shot animals. Bacteria born into this environment begin producing destructive enzymes that immediately begin attacking the skin causing epidermal separation known as slippage. In short, the hair falls out in chunks. Bacteria does not stop growing in the cooler...it only slows...two elements present...moisture and time. If you are not going to take it to the taxidermist right away, cool it quickly, package it in plastic so that it will not lose moisture and dry out in the freezer, then freeze it... but do not let it hang in the cooler. The meat can hang...mountable skins should not.

Do not carry by the tail or hang by the neck any animal that you intend to have mounted.

Fish should be wrapped in a wet towel and frozen or frozen in solid block of ice.

Birds...I wont even try to convince you not to use a dog to retrieve your birds. I will say that an overzealous retriever can make quick work of a beautiful bird. Careful with your handling...pay attention to the feathers and try to keep them in place. A stocking is perfect for any smaller birds, i.e., waterfowl and smaller upland birds like quail or dove....place them in the stocking head first. Try not to let your turkeys flop around too long. It destroys the natural lay of the feathers.

Take these precautions and get your trophy to your taxidermist as soon as possible...you will be glad you did. ....KD

Price Averages	
50% Deposit	
Required before work begins	
90-120 Day Completion	
<b>Gameheads</b>	
Whitetail	\$550
Mule Deer	\$600
Antelope	\$650
Hog	\$695
Elk	\$900
Caribou	\$750
<b>Lifesize</b>	
Whitetail	\$1800+
Bobcat	\$650
Coyote	\$650
Fox	\$650
Raccoon	\$550
Squirrel	\$300
<b>Birds</b>	
Turkey	\$750
Ducks	\$295-\$400
Pheasant	\$250+
Geese	\$350-\$500
<b>Fish</b>	
Bass	\$300
Bream	\$175
Striper	\$15 Per in.
Trout/Salmon	\$18 Per in.
Replica	\$16 per in.
<b>Misc</b>	
European	\$125+
Tanned Deer	\$125-\$200
African/Exotic Quote	

