

REFLECTIONS

Thoughts on nature and the Christian faith - 12/3/18

"O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom have you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures."

- Ps. 104:24



There is something about a whitetail buck that always makes my heart fill with wonder. They are truly magnificent creatures. Jo and I have watched this buck grow from a fawn on our property. We hadn't seen him for awhile, and when he came into view recently following several does, he had turned into quite a handsome fellow indeed. If he lives a few more years, he will certainly be impressive. The problem is, he in all likelihood will not make it. It is the beginning of hunting season and soon our forest will echo with the sound of gunshots. The deer will flee from the sight and smell of one hunter only to run into another. They must, of necessity, abandon their usual caution in an effort to find a place, any place, that feels safe. That is why magnificent bucks are often killed by inept hunters who just happened to be in the right place at the right time. I am not anti-hunting. I grew up hunting with my father and I cherish those times we spent together. But times have changed. New technology has all but taken the skill out of hunting. The numbers of hunters are increasing as the space available to wildlife decreases. And for many hunters the reason for hunting has radically changed from necessity to competitive pride. As a Christian, I have had to ask myself why I hunted. What were my motives? If I had no one to show my prize to, would I be less satisfied? And why was observing not enough? Each Christian must come to his or her own conclusions. Just be honest with yourself. For me, I get the same thrill now out of hunting with my camera, and I love the feeling of allowing an encounter with a nice deer like this to be passed on to others who venture into our woodlands. God has certainly displayed His wisdom in the creatures He has made. It's only my opinion, but I think He is delighted to see me enjoying His creation and not harming it unless it is necessary. One thing I do know is we would love to see this fellow again next year. - John