

BB guns can be used in teaching young shooters

As a youngster it seemed like everyone had a BB gun. It was the device when, combined with a caring parent, an eager child began the process of fostering responsibility.

The BB guns available then were not considered powerful. However the lessons learned from handling one were.

It would be safe to say that the vast majority of hunters of today had exposure to or learned the fundamentals of shooting using a BB gun.

What better teaching tool. It was not so much gun to be intimidating, yet it reacted in a similar manner when the trigger was pulled to a cartridge gun.

Strike up a conversation sometime following a day of hunting about shooting your BB gun.

Chances are the conversation that will follow will put more than a few smiles on the faces of those you're with. Not to mention some interesting tales of fun and adventure.

Since its introduction in late 1886, Daisy air rifles have become the recognized name when it comes to BB guns.

However over time a lot has changed. Additional manufacturers have entered the marketplace. BBs and lead pellets are used by various manufacturers in their air guns.

Today a number of manufacturers offer precisely manufactured projectiles being launched in air guns.

The familiar lever action Daisy Red Rider is a common BB still being sold today. However the original has been joined by air guns employing vastly improved propulsion systems.

Delivery systems are so well engineered and accurate, they are used for competition shooting.

Today's variety of air rifles has grown dramatically. There are economical

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models that range in price from \$30 to \$100 bucks.

Or choose from the competition models starting in the \$140 range and go and exceed the \$500 price range. And thank goodness for that.

The wide price range of BB guns provides options that will fit the needs of young shooters and the parents who teach them.

As the young marksman's shooting ability advances, there is an air rifle to complement their skill level.

Educating new shooters can provide challenges. In some cases parents may not have a solid background in the shooting disciplines.

Others may not feel comfortable about shooting. However if there is a youngster who wants to learn the skills needed, then Daisy can provide just what you need.

Daisy began creating educational partnerships with local schools and other organizations as early as 1948 and in 1956 established a Training Services Department working with the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education and Recreation to make target shooting with BB guns a part of schools' physical education curriculum.

In the 1960s, Daisy partnered with the U.S. Junior Chambers (the Jaycees) to establish a nationwide

youth shooting education program. Today many of those programs live on.

So check locally, especially with a sportsmen's club, to learn what introductory shooting programs are available. But there is more.

With kids eager to learn how to handle air rifles, any parent today can take it upon themselves to be proactive in a positive manner. For those willing to take on this challenge, the folks at Daisy are willing to help.

Daisy has compiled a teaching guide, Ten Lesson Curriculum for Shooting Education. The guide provides lessons for an instructor to present to the student.

The guide was developed primarily for on-the-range type instruction that include goals, requirements for classroom space, range personnel, along with materials.

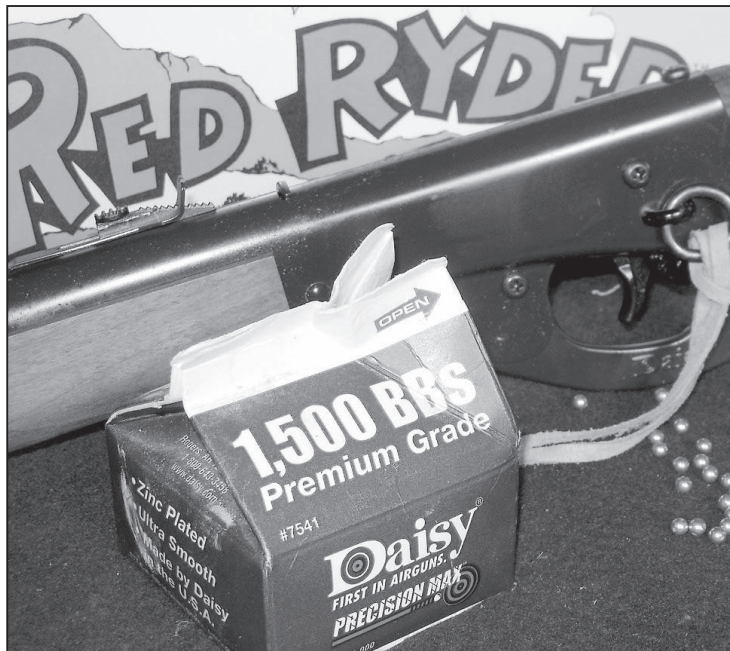
However the same guide in the hands of a dedicated parent will have at hand solid information to teach the basics providing an excellent start. The guide can be downloaded free of charge at www.daisy.com. Click on "info" then "education".

But at what age should a youngster begin? For most youngsters an age many experts refer to is 10. However that number is for reference.

Parents and others close to the youngsters understand their level of maturity. Some kids can understand and be taught at a younger age. While others need to be given some time to grown into the level of understanding needed to learn the basics.

However the child is not alone in this process. Adults need to know when the child is ready. The process requires dedication of time, patience and understanding.

After all, no one is born



Since 1886 BB guns have and continue to introduce young shooters and hunters to safe gun handling practices and marksmanship. (Photo by Charlie Burchfield)

with the ability to shoot, because shooting is a learned skill developed over time.

Another great thing about shooting air rifles is that there is no shortage of ammunition. Regardless if it is BBs or pellets, there are plenty to go around. And they are not very expensive.

Over the years the advancement in air rifle technology has changed. CO2 cartridges power some rifles and handguns.

Today manufacturers have stepped up the pace when it comes to air guns incorporating new and enhanced manufacturing processes.

Presently there are air guns on the market delivering lead pellets of increased caliber sizes at velocities enabling them to be used to hunt with, in states where permitted.

In another area where air guns prove themselves to the veteran shooter is that they allow any shooter more range time.

Whether it's shooting paper targets at home or on the range, or simply plinking tin cans at camp. It is possible to do a lot of shooting for a couple of bucks worth a BBs.

And if you practice with a purpose, over time you're skills as a marksman will improve.

It is easy to overlook the importance of the BB or pellet gun. Many of today's shooters, and hunters learned basic marksmanship skills by using one.

Think about that grandfather or his grown kids, you know them, the younger generation of sportsmen that accompany us while hunting these days. How many of them were intro-

duced to shooting using a BB gun?

Or it could be those folks who instruct youngsters today at the local rifle range.

Maybe it's that volunteer at 4H shooting events, or the BB Gun Nationals, or youth field day event.

If I were one to lay down money on a bet, chances are odds would be in my favor that the majority of those asked would admit that sometime during their youth they began shooting with a Daisy Red Rider. It's a tradition worth continuing.

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