

Care and Feeding of Waders

By Tom Deschaine

Over the years we've all owned several pairs of waders, and probably still do. If you stored them properly you'll still have them for many more years to come. Today I'd like to share a few simple tips on storing your waders.

I'm in the water about 50 times each season. Over 90% of the time I'm wearing waders. At the end of each day I hang my waders outside my cabin, lodge or motel. Often times, if you're staying at a place that caters to fishermen, you'll find that they've provided a hook or wader hangers for just such usage. If inclement weather is approaching I'll hang them indoors. This simple ritual is a must! If your waders are left damp or wet you're inviting them to rot. By hanging them, preferably upside down, you're allowing the air to circulate through them keeping them dry and supple.

Years ago I returned home from a duck hunting trip, my wet waders were stored in the boat along with my decoys. I had forgotten about them. Two weeks later when I went to put the decoys away, there my waders were, already showing signs of rot around the leg seams. I cleaned them up the best I could, but needless to say, they never made it through the next season.

In September, after my last cast of year, I prepare the waders for winter storage. The process is a simple one.



- 1) Heavily sprinkle the inside of the waders with either baby powder or talcum powder. This application will absorb moisture throughout the storage period.
- 2) I crumble up old newspapers and stuff the legs with them. This allows for continuous air circulation and helps the waders to retain their original shape.
- 3) I hang them upside down on wader hangers. Several models are readily available and are inexpensive.
- 4) I completely cover the waders with a large cloth sack, which my wife made for me. It not only keeps the dust off, but helps protect the wader material from deterioration from light exposure.



Take a look at these old 'Red Balls' --- they're over 25 years old! They are as good now as the day I bought them!

See you on the water.....

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