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University of Iowa is Training Students, Staff to Survive Violent Incidents

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Pennsylvania May Change Date of Deer Rifle Season Opener

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Malaysian Woman Saves Husband From Tiger With Soup Ladle

Rare but Real: 8 Mountain Lions in One Trail Cam Photo

Montana Bill Would Allow Firearms in Student's Vehicles During Hunting Season

Oklahoma City Woman Shoots and Kills 2 Attacking Dogs

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Field Notes

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January 25, 2010

Chad Love: The Invasive Species Cookbook?

It seems, at least judging by most of the responses to last week's [blog](#), that most guys take the "hey, if they're here might as well hunt them" attitude to invasive species.

Then I saw [this story](#) and decided to take the question one step further. What invasive species would you consider turning into table fare?

From the story:

The chef who tried to get us to eat the nutria turns his attention to the invasive carp. Will people buy it?

Invasive species are not, by any means, a new problem on American soil. From zebra mussels to boa constrictors, they've been pushing out indigenous animals for centuries. Louisiana chef Philippe Parola, however, has an unusual strategy to get rid of them: putting them in our stomachs. (His oh-so-subtle eating philosophy: "You've got to have balls.")...

In 1998, the flamboyant Parola was involved in the notorious (and unsuccessful) attempt to make the *nutria*, a large aquatic rodent pest, into a nationally popular meat. (It probably didn't help that the animal looks like that giant rat from your childhood nightmares.) Now he's turned his attention to another invasive species, the Asian carp. The large fish, which can reach up to 30 pounds, has muscled out indigenous fish in American waterways, including the Mississippi, and has the dangerous habit of jumping out of the water near moving boats (to see them in terrifying YouTube action [click here](#)). Now, working with the state of Louisiana, Parola is hoping to curb its numbers by marketing the fish as a menu item. As part of his outreach, Parola will be promoting the fish to the 1,500 members of the annual National Grocer's Association convention in Las Vegas.

I'm a pretty adventurous eater, so given the right chef, I wouldn't hesitate to give Asian carp a gustatory chance. It's pretty much a given they're here to stay, so surely there's got to be some commercial value to the damn things, right? Considering the way they're spreading, we may not have a choice. So I commend Chef Parola for thinking outside the box. But I have to ask, has anyone ever actually tried Asian carp or nutria? Python? Snakehead? Everyone wonders what the face of hunting and fishing will look like in fifty years. Maybe we should instead be asking what our wild-game cookbooks will look like?

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