

I have a variety of different mineral or salt blocks out at a number of different properties, all with varying results. I have certain locations that get some sporadic activity, and others that have animals visiting it daily for months on end. I have had the odd location that for whatever reason gets little to no activity and you may find this, but for the most part they are a great addition when hunting.

When looking at what to use, I use a variety of different blocks; from small hunting specific blocks, to bags of mineral powder to 50# mineral blocks from a local feed store. A couple of the ones I have had more success with are the Deer Cane Black Magic block, and the Sugar Beer Crush block. I have tried a variety of other flavoured ones, and they all seem to work, but these are two that seem to consistently produce, and it seems the deer just can't get enough of them. These are both smaller 4lb blocks and are quite compact making them simple to bring in to some out of the way places, or places only accessible by foot. I have setup some of these blocks on stumps or on the ground, and have had deer visiting the site the following year even, well after the block itself is gone.

The other option is using a 50lb mineral or salt block from a local feed store. This is something I regularly do as well, and have several sites that I keep a block like this at. There are a few options available, but I have always gone with the red trace mineral block, and found it

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provides consistent results, and the moose, deer and even bears seem to like it. It seems every year I go to my mineral sites, and find my 50lb block laying on the ground beside the stump, or flung into the woods by a bear. I have multiple photos of bears checking out the salt block, and almost every time they seem to take offence to it, and send it flying. These larger blocks are nice as they are relatively inexpensive, and last a long time. I usually put out a new one every year, and sometimes they last longer, depending how much activity they get or how exposed they are to the elements.

As far as where to put them, I prefer leaving the blocks sitting on top of a stump, and try to find a stump that is starting to rot; not a stump that will fall apart when you give it a kick, but one that is a bit weathered. I find when using stumps like these, moose and deer will eat at the stump itself as it becomes saturated with the salt or minerals, even after the block itself has vanished. Placing them right on the ground works just fine, or you can try digging a small hole or depression in the ground and placing them in it. I like to put them near a game trail, and set them up near or just inside the edge of the woods, either on the edge of a field, clearing or cutover, somewhere animals will likely use them in daylight, having some cover nearby.

When using mineral licks, having a trailcam on them is also a great idea, giving you an indication of how much activity it's getting, and what kind of animals it's drawing in. I have recently been having some problems on one of my mineral sites, as a bear seems to have taken a keen interest in my salt block and in my trail camera, and this fall, over the past month the 50lb block has been knocked off its stump countless times, and my camera torn off the tree several times as well. Thankfully the

UWay camera I had on this site is built strong, and is still going, despite multiple encounters with the bear. It has captured some interesting photo and video though, usually with the sequence of photos ending with a large black mass of hair, and then a shot of the grass on the ground where it lays. Despite these abnormal problems I have been having, setting up a trailcam is a great idea to figure out what's going on at these sites and try and pattern game that's visiting.

You will find that activity increases and decreases certain times of the year; I usually see the activity peak during spring and early summer, especially during times of antler growth, but I generally have consistent activity on these sites year round, and again using cameras is a great way to monitor this, and see what kind of trends you see year to year. I consistently have activity on them right through hunting season and into the winter. I have had some animals that just never seem to want to leave, and have had pictures of moose laying beside the salt for hours on end, licking away at it, and even appearing to bed down and sleep beside it, only to wake up and go back to the salt. One thing I have noticed, and it may be a common trend, but I have found it takes some time for a mineral site to get established in some locations. In some spots, I'll put a block down and deer are on it within days, but there are some sites, some of which are my most productive sites that didn't have any activity for the first year, and until the 50lb was nearly gone, but once they began using it, they haven't stopped.

If you hunt private or public land, it doesn't matter, finding a location to put a mineral site is simple and can be an effective way to target moose and deer. Go down to the sporting goods store or feed supply store, get yourself a mineral block, and add a hidden gem to your hunting area.