

SITKA: CLOTHING BECOMES GEAR

Today's hunting clothing is undergoing a revolution with new fabrics and by incorporating more technology. Leading the new era is Sitka, a company that's transforming clothing into gear.

"Our products are for the very serious hunter, and we build our gear for discerning hunters where performance is a significant factor in their gear," said Jonathan Hart, Sitka's founder. "Sitka spends a lot of dollars on the fabric and trims it uses, and all those important details that most users never see are more expensive. The old boxy fit of most garments are noticeably absent. Our products fit and move with the body, and the garment becomes an extension of the experience and not a barrier to it."

Since the founding of Sitka (www.sitkagear.com) in 2005, the company's clothing line has expanded to more than twenty high-tech styles. Last year Sitka gear was released with Optifade, a new digital concealment pattern. At the heart of the Sitka system is the platform of layering systems designed for extreme moisture management. The technology keeps the moisture moving outward from the hunter, not just away from the skin. This creates a versatile system of components designed to hunt anything and anywhere.

"Sitka garments use bi-plated fabric with hydrophobic systems to push away water," continued Hart. "This effort increases the surface of the water and increases the evaporation. The hydrophylic design sucks up water from the skin's surface." Sitka clothing also incorporates silver ions and fibers for scent control, and this technology is not based on chemicals that wash out. Another component in some clothing pieces is Primaloft, small thin polyester fibers that create a lot of airspace without creating loft.

Recently, Sitka released the Artica technology. This system is a portable power unit and built into clothing that generates power and offers a USB port to charge electronics like a cell-phone, GPS, etc. A by-product of power generation is heat, and this system helps the wearer stay warmer. The Artica system will run for three to eight hours and can be recharged in two hours.

"Most mountain hunters should look at versatile, lightweight, breath-

able, and packable clothing that also offers protection from the elements," says Hart. "After the base layer of shirt and vest plus pants, add an outer Windstopper layer when stopping to glass. Then shed that outer layer when you start moving again."

Michael D. Faw



Sitka's Celsius Jacket is an example of its high-tech clothing, which has been a hit with mountain hunters.

