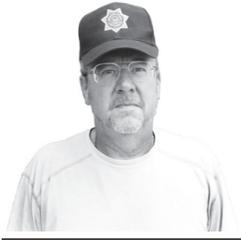


# Add trauma shears to your EDC list



## Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

People can recognize me from a mile away because of my clothing. I am usually clad in a ball cap, t-shirt, and a pair of tactical pants. I wear the tactical pants because of all the pockets. The pockets are necessary for all the junk I carry in them. My wife claims that my pants arrive at the party a full 15 minutes after I do, because of all the stuff I carry with me, but she is always one to exaggerate.

My every day carry equipment (EDC) consists of 2 pocketknives, one is utility and the other is razor sharp. I also carry a Leatherman tool, a flashlight, handgun, extra magazine, holster, tourniquet, wallet, keys, and a pair of EMT shears. While I dispute the claim that my pants are 15 minutes behind me, I agree that I had best not fall in the lake, because I don't carry a life jacket.

I might point out that any outdoor person should have an EDC set up for daily use, not just when they head to the woods. You will find you need the tools, and use them, daily. The more you get used to reaching into a pocket for a tool, the more important it is for that tool to be there. Of all the tools I have for my EDC, I think the knife is most important. I use a knife for everything from opening boxes to cutting string, opening those plastic sealed

packages that everything comes in, to removing splinters.

Probably the 2nd most important tool I carry would be the trauma shears, sometimes called EMT shears. These cutters are not just indispensable in the outdoor world but are useful every day. They are one of those things that you will turn to more often, the longer you carry them.

Trauma shears are a type of scissors used by EMTs, paramedics, and other first responders to cut clothing from injured people. They consist of a heavy-duty plastic handle with a metal blade bent at a 150-degree angle, giving them a "leverage" cutting advantage. Their rugged construction will allow responders to cut seat belts, leather, and the heaviest of clothing.

Because of the strength and durability of trauma shears, they have found their way into the outdoor world. They are used by fishers for cutting the heaviest of monofilament and braided line. Outdoor folks will find a million uses as they cut the thickest materials, even cutting through metals. The first set I owned touted the ability to cut a penny in half. I was able to duplicate this feat, but it was a matter of hand strength as much as the durability of the shears.

I purchased my first set of trauma shears when I completed my Dive Medic classes during my Rescue Diver days. The shears were needed in the event I had to cut dive gear or a wet suit off an injured diver. The shears are much safer than a knife in emergency situations, as the shears have a blunt nose. Using a knife on an injured person, who is wiggling around in pain, can sometimes cause more harm than good, and the shears are

a much safer alternative.

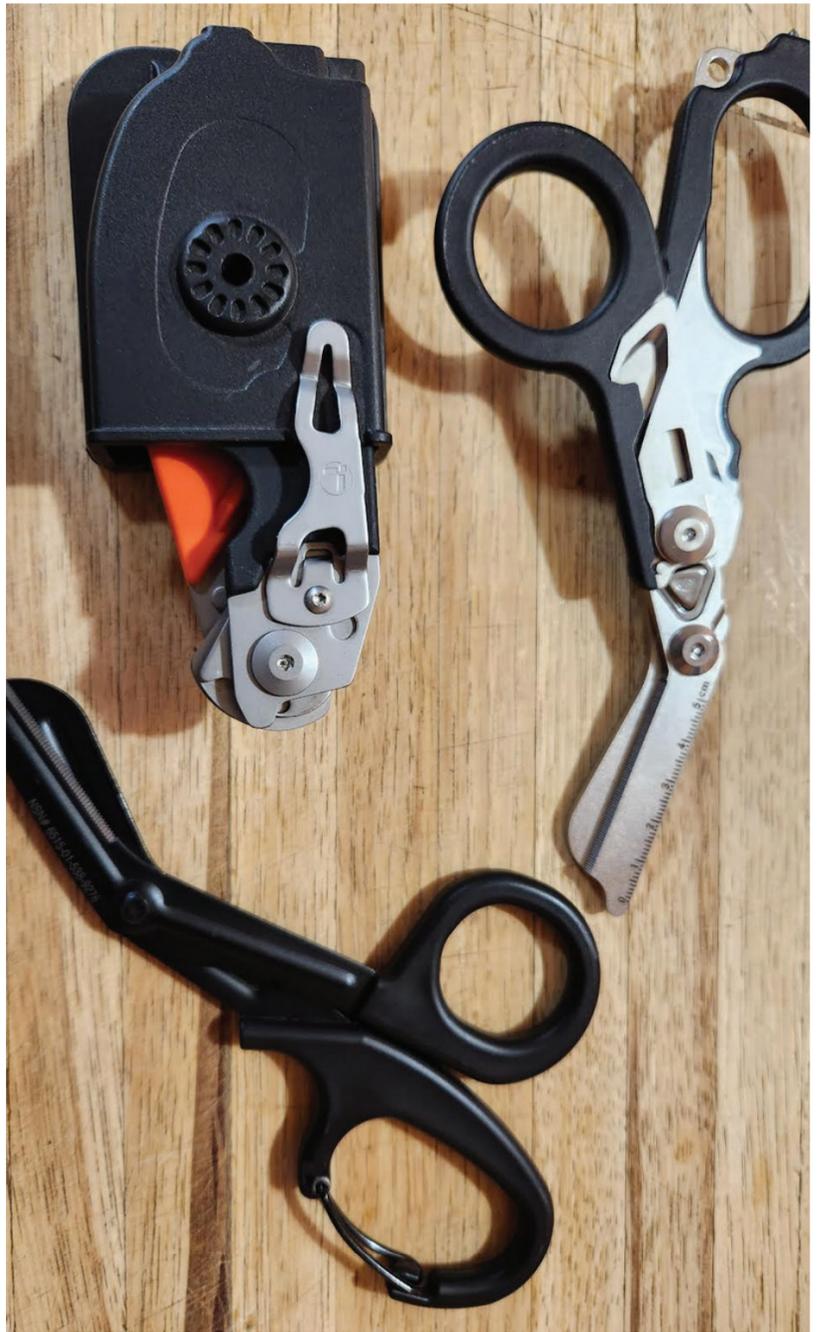
When the first trauma shears appeared is a bit obscured. There is a record dating back to 1956 of Dr. Preston Burnham using an angled bladed pair of scissors to cut through bandages, dressings, and medical gauze, on a patient. The blunt nose and angle allowed the scissors to slip easily under the dressings, thereby preventing accidental injury to the patient.

A physician named Scott Forman, and a materials engineer named Mark Reece, got together, and redesigned the bandage shears to create the trauma shear as we know it today. Their design incorporated a carabiner, allowing the shears to be clipped to a belt or pack, and adding serrations to the blade, making them sharper and giving the ability to cut heavier materials with ease.

In the outdoor world, without the shears, you will be using your knife to cut anything that needs cutting. Not only is this practice dangerous, but certain materials will rapidly dull the edge of your knife. I have used the shears to cut canvas, belts, leather, ropes, heavy fishing lines, barb wire fence, bailing wire, and pieces of tin. Around camp, they are indispensable.

Trauma shears are one of the few pieces of outdoor equipment where I don't necessarily advise you to buy the most expensive pair. I found an add on Amazon for a 12 pack for less than 20 bucks. There was a 2 pack that had a carabiner built into the handle for 6 bucks. At those prices, you can scatter them around in your outdoor gear, and have a pair for your EDC.

There are several pairs that cost more money, and perhaps made with



This is a selection of the trauma shears I carry with me and in my pack. (Photo/Mark Rackay)

better materials. I would save those for the professional first responders who use them all day long. The cheaper sets will work fine for our purposes in the outdoor world, and at that price, the kids can even borrow them.

I carry a set as part of my on-duty gear. Over the decades, I can't tell you the number of injuries I have seen involving individuals under stress using a knife to remove clothing or gear from

an injured person. The thought makes me cringe to this day. The shears, on your belt or in your pocket, for just that reason, is enough for me.

I am home now, and my wife is waiting at the door for me, probably with some nefarious chore that needs doing. My pants, with all the tools I will need, should be coming along shortly.

Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press, Delta County Independent, and several

other newspapers, as well as a feature writer for several saltwater fishing magazines. He is an avid hunter and world class saltwater angler, who travels around the world in search of adventure and serves as a Director and Public Information Officer for the Montrose County Sheriff's Posse. Personal email is elkhunter77@icloud.com For information about the Posse call 970-765-7033 (leave a message) or email info@mcsppi.org

## GOCO board awards a \$40K grant to help permanently protect 684-acre ranch near Ute, Colorado

SPECIAL TO THE MDP

The Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) board awarded a \$40,000 grant to Colorado Cattlemen's Agricultural Land Trust to help conserve Ute Ranch.

The grant is part of Keep It Colorado's Transaction Cost Assistance Program (TCAP) that re-grants GOCO funds to nonprofit land trusts to help cover the costs associated with conservation easement transactions. It helps landowners who have urgent op-

portunities to conserve their properties, but face financial barriers to completing the transaction, to conserve land more quickly.

CCALT will support a Montrose County landowner with the permanent protection of Ute Ranch near Ute, Colo. Located within the Uncompahgre National Forest, the 684-acre property has roughly 100 acres of stunning irrigated hay meadows and is leased for grazing to a local cow-calf rancher. Its reservoir provides water for both cattle and

wildlife. Conservation of the property and its water rights allows continued agricultural use and supports healthy river ecosystems.

Historic structures on the property, including a former Forest Service ranger station, postmaster's station, and cow camp, showcase its varied uses over time. Now retired from local government service, the landowner invites third-grade students from Naturita Elementary School to the ranch for an annual day camp where they learn about local land

history and develop connections with the landscape.

"This property is the quintessential image of what we should be protecting, said CCALT's Senior Conservation Manager Erin Quinn. "This ranch serves as an integral part of a local grower's operation while quilting together the larger landscape of natural resources. Thank you, GOCO and Keep It Colorado, for your support."

Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds

to help preserve and enhance the state's parks, trails, wildlife, rivers, and open spaces. GOCO's independent board awards competitive grants to local governments and land trusts and makes investments through Colorado Parks and Wildlife. Created when voters approved a constitutional amendment in 1992, GOCO has since funded more than 5,800 projects in all 64 counties of Colorado without any tax dollar support. Visit GOCO.org for more information.



10 SOUTH SELIG AVE MONTROSE, COLORADO 81401 970-249-4226