



Outdoors-Magazine.com

<http://outdoors-magazine.com>

Fat and resinous wood

Taky

- Skills and guides - Bushcraft and Survival -



Publication: Friday 26 September 2008

Description :

Ever since I've discovered the firesteels, I've been dependent on natural tinder to light fires.

Copyright (c) Outdoors-Magazine.com under a Creative Commons

Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike License



I don't really subscribe to cotton balls impregnated with petroleum based something, as is not much different than a lighter and fire starter from the supermarket, and the autonomy it offers is pretty limited. With care and technique a ferro rod is capable of years of daily use as long as you are able to find something to catch the spark.

I tend to carry a small tin where I keep the natural dry tinder that I find along the way, but as backup I've settled on fat wood. Is impervious to water, hard wearing, smells really good and catches reliably a spark that bursts on to fire. It doesn't need a container or anything like, just a bit of drying so it doesn't stick to much. If the wood is wet, you can always cut small pieces that will prove invaluable to light your fire. At night it makes a really good torch that sends a lot of light.

You can buy it, force a tree to produce it, or you can harvest it on any commercially grown pine forest.



Just look for old stumps that are half rotting away, but that seem to keep intact areas. I tend to walk around with a small axe, and lightly hit the stumps. If the axe bounces you are on business. Roots are rich on resin too, but they are much harder and I tend to keep them to light the fire place.

Fat and resinous wood

you see the small corner that shows some yellow/orange clear wood... that is fat wood. This small and very rotten stump is easy to unearth, and is waiting now to be split on small bit to light the fire place.



A second one very promising, the axe bounces hard, and once the top layer cleared, you can see a good piece of fat wood. this stump is not yet rotten and I don't have a shovel, so I just harvest the easy bits with my trusty cegga axe.



I less than 1hour I have 10kg of fat wood[:)]



Now I just need tinny shavings, scraping very gently holding the knife edge a 90° to a piece of fat wood, and then

Fat and resinous wood

dropping a few sparks using only the tip of the ferrocerium rod. No need of a huge shower of sparks, just a few are enough to have fire. I keep two halve firesteels, one on my pack, one on my pocket with a piece of fat wood on a string that goes through a small loop of sewn rope, that way I can't lose it!

