



MOUNTAIN ECHO

Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA May 2017

NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

Hi All

Hope you had the chance to get out for a hunt some time over the roar, and if you had a bit of success would be great if you could share with a photo and a few words for the newsletter

Certainly seems to have been more visible animals about, as most people I have spoken to saw more animals than they have in many years. That said those hunting around South Westland where the Waro recovery has never ceased, struggled to find animals in the open.

Earlier thoughts that it would be a good year for antler growth have proven correct, with a number of interesting heads being taken in the general St Arnaud, Nelson Lakes and Murchison areas, and expect one or two of these to be at the head measuring in June.

For those of you who are unaware our branch has a number of members along with Fish and Game who run a Hunts program each year.

While there is a cost to attend, it's quite reasonable and only really covers the costs to run. This covers an introduction to hunting, firearms, safety, bush craft etc.

It is ideal for those people who perhaps don't come from an outdoor family back ground or have mentors available.

These courses have been very well received and attracted quite large numbers of participants in past years. Not sure if it's just a blip, or whether the number of animals about and information now available in magazines, on line and in video format have changed behaviours, but this year's intake is lowest for many years.

So while this year's course is now well underway, something to keep in mind if you know someone who might be interested in the future.

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Next Club Meeting

Tuesday 30 May
2017

7.30 pm

Annual General
Meeting

Fish & Game Rooms
Champion Road

Hunting News

Growing up in Oamaru, with the Waitaki River on the doorstep, summers with my parents were spent spinning lures and drowning worms all the way up the Valley to the Mackenzie Country. When I think of the district, I am likely to recall Salmon, Little Blue Penguins and Greek-style Limestone Buildings. Not a rampant countryside full of Wallabies!

I am new to hunting. Having settled in Nelson it seemed a natural addition to the fishing and diving I already enjoy around the top of the south. The opportunity to get out and experience a hunt is rare for me and I jumped at the opportunity to join Richard Wells on a hunt at a McKenzie Country Station.

The first thing to catch my eye? The stunning alternate route down the West Coast through Reefton (coffee of course) past Lake Brunner, across Arthurs Pass, down to Lake Coleridge and on to Fairlie. Too often travelling to a place the view is lost as you focus on the drive and getting there, but to take in the views of what international visitors gasp at was a refreshing reminder. I rave about what is on our doorstep as Nelsonians and Mainlanders but to see Te Waka in its splendour does the soul good.

Arrival to the station was nostalgic as the last time I was that far up that side of the valley I was probably a teenager. Poplars changing colours, sandy tussocks, bare looking mountains and Aoraki peaking above its peers. Those bare looking mountains and gullies became an interesting illusion over the next couple of days.

After a quick un-pack and giddy to the station manager we headed to the first gully for the weekend. And then the distances and mass of vegetation hits you: from the road a gully of “a few, short matagouri a hundred metres up the paddock” turns into a kilometre plus drive across the paddock and vegetation so thick you could hide a herd of rhinos in it. The distortion of the apparent barren landscape is unique to the McKenzie Country in this way – an almost “Aussie outback” distortion of distance.



As we slowly drove up the field to the base of the foothills and gully entrance the rabbits would flash into view. These weren't your average rabbits. No, these were experienced rabbits that sensed the range of a suppressed .22 and split into 4 separate rabbits running at different angles in the blink of an eye. Darting until they reached either the thick scrub or

120m mark, before pausing just enough to lift a paw in the air with an appropriate gesture and unspoken laugh and vanishing with their cousins into the undergrowth.

Between the bursts of rabbits the target species would appear. Having never hunted these before it was an unusual experience to simply not recognise what I was supposed to be seeing for the first few times. It reminded me of a first timer diving for crayfish – everyone else comes up with 4 or 5 and you never even saw one! The quiet whistle would come from Richard with an associated arm in the direction but that was initially still not enough to identify the dark, small headed, “triangle with ears” that by now had sat watching me for probably a minute. The suppressed .223 (“Gunny”) that Richard had brought for my use was passed over to me and the crack and subsequent drop told the story.



We wandered to the animal and pondered the possibility of a “First kill photo” for my memoirs. The likelihood of that was zero with the realisation of the location of the shot. The unfortunate vermin had an instant death through the immediate loss of half of its head – not exactly the type of photo that would really be appropriate. But the legs were detached via a lesson in meat harvesting and off we proceeded. Credit to Gunny for the shot accuracy – not the shooter! That evening we accounted for another 3 wallabies out of the gully before retiring for the night.

The next morning brought an unusual occurrence in the desert-like Mackenzie country – rain – and the more usual Mainland Weather pattern of “southerlies”. There is nothing like a true South Island southerly. That impossibly chilled wind that lifts straight off the Antarctic and even at just a few knots can find its way through layer upon layer and sap your temperature. Add to it the angled rain just a few degrees above freezing and you are quickly reminded why the top of the south is a far more pleasant climate. I quite like the rain, I don’t mind the cold, but the combination together? No thanks. Suffice it to say, we did not start Saturday at 0500! We took a gentleman’s hours breakfast and instead set off in a lessening drizzle around 9am. Next gully along, the slowing southerly to our side we worked our way across a couple of gullies as the day got further underway. This is where the reality of wallaby hunting started to hit. It’s not a “get to spot A and sit quietly glassing for hours before moving to spot B” type of hunting. It’s walking and shooting and walking and shooting. These things are everywhere. We saw 2 or 3 times as many as we shot at, even with instructions to cull them and taking some pretty long range shots in some attempts, but they are everywhere. And when you think you’ve hunted and cleaned out a gully, turn around – there are 3 more looking at you.



By the end of the evening we had wandered up a river bed removing a couple more from the gene pool. By the time we turned for home darkness was falling and the Southerly was now at our backs. We had another 8 or so confirmed dead and about a dozen legs in the fridge.

The Southerly had eased by Sunday morning and the rain was vertical, a much more pleasant set of conditions. We set out for a more southerly faced set of gullies accessibly easier with a dirt road to walk along for the entire journey. This was when the true scale of the wallaby infestation was revealed.

We had only walked along the first 2 gullies, we had shot dead 3 and scared off at least another 8, including one which appeared to be taunting Richard as it periodically stopped, waited for a shot to be taken, moving at exactly the right instant, to be missed, only to stop again 20m further on. A process it repeated several more times – much to Richards frustration!

We covered the best part of 3km to the start of the river bed, with another 3 staying tantalising out of range at the end before we retraced our path back to the truck. The gullies we had already “cleaned out” didn’t appear to realise we had already been through them as on our return there were as many in them as we had seen coming in. The second to last gully, where we had taken three earlier in the morning had yet another surprise in store as, when we stopped to recover a few legs of the ones earlier dispatched, one, then three appeared but 15 m below us heading over the crest. I “stalked off” quickly after them, figuring I’d have a shot available at the crest of the low ridge they had just headed toward. Following the well-established calf height trails made by the wallabies through the matagouri, I lifted my eyes to the middle distance to re-establish sight of the 3 escapees... only to find they were not interested in going that way, they were charging straight toward me from 20 meters away!

The first shot fired hit and slowed one and by the time I had worked the bolt the group were able to be touched had I the inclination. The second shot was a very “point and shoot from the hip” as the proximity and speed caused a rush of blood to the head. There was that moment too, being aware of where Richard was last viewed at my 8 o’clock that caused me then to stop as they ran past me, open the bolt, and lifted both my hands in the air as I slowly rotated through 180. It was reassuring to me, and I’m sure to him, that even in the middle of

the charge I was fully aware of my companion, his place around me, and that moment that could be tragic: wheeling around with a loaded rifle in your hands.

Having re-established my visual on Richard, in his hi-viz right where he had been, and confirming he was leaving them to me, I followed them back to the gully they had left in time to get one more, the final one escaping to the undergrowth. And yet in all of that, another decided that was the perfect time to try to leave, just to the right of Richard. A poorly chosen moment that Richard ensured the animal wouldn't have the chance to repeat.

Even as we reached the truck, we still had two more reveal themselves. The final one of which we simply watched as it bound with the effortless grace these animals have, covering an extreme distance of likely 5 km plus in our view in what seemed like a minute, his hop covering meters at a time with a simple flick of his feet.

A reminder of their native land and the vast distances covered by these animals for their survival.

The afternoon was another set of gullies out of the incoming southerly. Once we had entered the third the outside of my left leg and right knee were screaming – the symptom of too many hours behind a desk and an historic sporting injury. I choose to sit and watch the gully as Richard proceeded further up it to our right. Even having already dispatched 3 or so from the gully I witnessed another 3 emerge and heard Richard's rifle crack at least twice more.



Even as we reconnected at the bottom of the gully, on the way back to the ute we encountered another 3 or 4 out of the undergrowth. The density of these animals was amazing. They would let you walk right past them, if they had guns, we'd have been in trouble.



Total tally for the weekend: 31 confirmed culled and two dozen legs chilling. A time out of work that felt like a month, the body used the way it should be, tired and sore from the kilometres travelled, a friendship developed and, of course, the world's problems solved along the way.

It is opportunities like this, a wallaby cull, and a goat cull organised by Richard Waite for our branch 18 months ago, that have enabled me as a person new to the sport, with limited knowledge and access to places like these, to gain confidence, experience, knowledge and meat! Learning from experienced, welcoming and friendly hands. I can't thank those of you who extend your offers enough and encourage all of you to keep inviting the new guys like me along.

Safe hunting.



Brian Hore

CLUB SHOOTS AT PACKERS CREEK RANGE.

NELSON DEERSTALKERS – PACKERS CREEK RANGE PROGRAMME 2017

Please note on these shoot days range gate will ONLY be opened at 9.00am.

You are still welcome to come and sight your rifles in as shoot does not commence until 10.00am. And after that if not involved in competition use the 50 metre range across the creek. Exit as usual at noon

Sunday May 21st - 10:00am Rimfire: Silhouette targets at 50m Centrefire: 10 rounds, Thar target

Sunday June 18th – 10:00am Rimfire: Silhouette targets at 50m Centrefire: 10 rounds at 200m target

Sunday July 16th – 10:00am Rimfire: Silhouette targets at 50m Centrefire: 10 rounds at 100m targ

Queens birthday weekend 3 -5 June, Range will be closed as Bench Rest Zuppa shoot will be in progress over that weekend

Club Nights

Next club night is our Annual General Meeting. Tuesday 30th of May 7.30pm usual venue, Fish and Game Rooms, Champion Road Richmond, 7.30pm this is your chance to get involved, help set direction and have your say. If interested in the committee let us know on the night, or give Warren a ring and he can give you an overview of what is involved. Phone 03 5479143 or email plumstone@xtra.co.nz

Annual Head Measuring and Photo entry evening Tuesday 27th of June, same venue and time as above.

As already mentioned, have heard of a few Red stags being taken, but Nelson members have not just been chasing the local animals. Several Nelson hunters have been fortunate enough to bring home nice 8 point Sika stags this rut.

Please find entry forms for competitions attached at the back of this newsletter

For those of you who are holding club cups and trophies from last year, would be appreciated if you could return to Warren Plum at one of the next couple of club nights

Bits and Pieces

For those of you who know, our Past president Morgan Rogers moved to the Bay of Plenty a bit over a year ago. Family commitments work and a new Daughter have kept him busy, but as you can see in the photo attached you cannot keep a keen man down .Evidently roared in from a considerable distance.



Morgan with sika stag

Committee & Coordinators Contacts

- President:** Greg Couper terminatorproducts@xtra.co.nz
- Secretary:** Warren Plum ph. 547 9143
<plumstone@xtra.co.nz>
- Range:** Graeme Ching <graeme-doreen@xtra.co.nz>
- Newsletter:** Any items for publication please forward to the secretary
- Membership:** Graeme Smith ph. 544 7138
<LVHVBR@gmail.com>
- Hunting:** John Noakes ph. 0274464413 noakesjc@gmail.com
- New Members:** Warren Plum ph. 547 9143
<plumstone@xtra.co.nz>

Red Deer Lodge

Information on costs and bookings of the Red Deer Lodge at Lake Rotoiti

Contact the Calders: info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Use the website at www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Saying you're a member

Minutes May Committee Meeting

NELSON BRANCH NZDA MAY COMMITTEE MEETING.

7.30pm Tuesday 2nd May, Warren Plums Home Stoke.

Apologies: Richard Wells, Don Harris

Present: Warren Plum, Immo Neumann, Greg Couper, Graeme Smith, Graeme Ching, Alistair Ching, Bill O'Leary, John Noakes

Last Minutes accepted as sent. Warren / Greg

Inward Mail: Newsletter from National office, distributed electronically to committee

Range declarations being returned completed. Wild tomato magazine request for help with contacts etc. regarding feature on hunting planned for June issue. Waikato newsletter x 2. National office items relating to National Conference. Bank statements.

Outward: Items: to Accountants. Card to family, Morgan Rogers on loss of his Dad. Newsletter to printer.

Accepted: passed W Plum / B O'Leary

Range. Organized shoots. Details provided for inclusion in Newsletter. Next ones Sunday May 21st, Sunday June 18th and Sunday July 16th.

NOTE RANGE access will be limited to 9.00am only on those dates. Discussed possibility of BBQ etc after club shoots, decided to delay that until spring when it's a bit warmer.

Held a working bee on Anzac day, and had opportunity to put up target frames and do some work on levelling. Still to do the 200 metre. Still need to paint club house. Thanks to Greg and partner who have cleaned up the water supply.

Graeme advised the World Bench Rest mid Championship function will now be held at the Golf Club in the valley.

Wasps still an issue. Still to implement the items below agreed at last meeting. RANGE SIGN. Agreed that the old sign at entrance with letters falling off in orange be removed, as untidy and confusing. Need to get a copy of standing orders laminated and put up in area with book at Range.

Queen's birthday weekend 3 -5 June, Range will be closed as Bench Rest Zuppa shoot will be in progress over that weekend.

Greg has been in contact with Forestry company and believes some progress is being made in relation to our access and license concerns. Discussed mowing of range, and possibility of new mowing equipment.

Financial. Financials received from Accountants, agreed on company to audit, and after meeting instructed that to occur. Reimbursed W Plum \$17.00 and R Wells \$156.23. Items for Range and health and safety. Banked \$130.00 in subs, then sent chq for same sum to National office. Discussed balance of account. 00 \$79314.25 and 02 \$6386.07 Moved by G Smith and seconded by G Couper that \$50,000.00 be moved from the 00 account to a Term Investment account with Westpac for a 180 day term. Passed.. W Plum / G Couper

Next club nights. Tuesday 30th May. AGM, Tuesday 27th June Head Measuring night.

Health and Safety. First aid kit has been purchased and now placed at Range. Agreed standing orders would be put in place by Greg. No other issues brought up.

News letter. All consider working well. Warren still seeking items of interest to include.

CLUB HUNTS. Agreed a priority, need to get going again. Hopeful can get some one involved with AGM. Eg trips to Lake Rotoroa, Wallabys.

Membership: Welcome along to new members. Wilma Noteboom-Van Gunst, Jense Noteboom, Amanda Riedel and Greg Sheppard.. Approve W Plum / J Noakes

Training. Hunts course underway. Low number of trainees this year. Unsure why, same amount of advertising as usual, and high numbers the two previous years..

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. Discussed filling positions, need for additional committee members. Who will stand, who can we encourage to become involved. J Noakes advised will be away so put in apology and advised would like to continue on committee.

General Business: National conference, Richard Wells and G Couper to represent. To be held in Christchurch 14-16 July.

Next committee meeting: Probable venue the new small bore shooting complex at Saxtons field. Warren will advise exact date and location closer to beginning of June to committee.

Warren Plum Secretary

Websites of Interest

National Deerstalkers' Website

<http://www.deerstalkers.org.nz/>

Like the NZDA National Heritage Trust Facebook page for great historical deerstalking photos:

<https://www.facebook.com/nzdaheritagetrust?ref=bookmarks>

Department of Conservation Information

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/>

DOC maps. You can select a Topo view and to have DOC hunting areas highlighted

<http://maps.doc.govt.nz/mapviewer/index.html?viewer=dto>

DOC hunting permits can be applied for at:

<https://huntingpermits.doc.govt.nz/huntingpermits/start>

Game Animal Council

<http://www.nzgameanimalcouncil.org.nz>

Walking Access

<http://www.wams.co.nz/>

Walking Access Maps

http://www.wams.org.nz/wams_desktop/index.aspx

Walking Access Mobile Maps

http://www.wams.org.nz/wams_mobile/index.html

Kea Sightings

www.keaconservation.co.nz

South Island Kokako Sightings

www.southislandkokako.org

Wasps

<https://www.merchento.com/vespex.html>

NEW ZEALAND DEERSTALKERS ASSOCIATION NELSON BRANCH PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

COMPETITION ENTERED FOR (Please tick)

- A: Tantrum Cup (Wildlife Game animals) []
- B: Worsley (Stalking Country) []
- C: Livingston Cup (Native Birds) []
- D: Hunting Memories []
- E: Tex Stratford Memorial Trophy (Under 18) []
- F: Other wildlife mammals []
- G: Other wildlife, Insects reptiles []
- H: Flora []
- I: Bob Baigent Memorial Cup. (DVD / Video) []

Wildlife cup. Best overall photograph. All entries are eligible for this cup, and are automatically entered.

Name.....

Address.....

Description of entries (limited to 3 in each category) Ph

1.....

2.....

3.....

Where taken and when

1.....

2.....

3.....

Member at time of taking signature.....

Date.....

NEW ZEALAND DEERSTALKERS ASSOCIATION NELSON BRANCH ANTLER, HORN AND TUSK COMPETITION

Competition entered for (Please tick box)

- A Sports Dept Cup Best Chamois []
- B Bob Baigent Cup Best by junior, under 18 []
- C Bob Baigent Trophy Horned game other than Chamois []
- D Whitcombe Challenge Trophy Best NZ Deer Head []
- E Peoples Store Trophy Best Nelson Deer Head []
- F Williams Cup Best Pig Tusks []
- G Rakiura Cup Best Whitetail head []
- H Shuttleworth Trophy Best Red Deer head []

Note all entries are eligible for the Eddy trophy, for best head overall on Douglas score conversion

A separate entry form is required for each entry competition entered for. Heads to have been taken in period since clubs last head measuring event, and competitor has to have been an NZDA member at time of taking

Name.....

Address.....

Email address if you have one.....For ease of contact
recovering and returning trophies if presented.

Date shot.....Locality.....

Brief account of actual stalk and securing of
trophy.....
.....
.....
.....

.....The information above is correct .I agree to be bound by the
rules of the competition, and I understand the decision of the judges is final.

Signature.....Date.....

For Branch use.

Douglas score..... Measured by.....

Assisted by.....