



Bay of Plenty

NZDA

New Zealand Deerstalkers Association

APRIL 2024

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
NEW ZEALAND DEERSTALKERS ASSOCIATION
BAY OF PLENTY BRANCH



NEW ZEALAND DEERSTALKERS ASSOCIATION BAY OF PLENTY BRANCH

Our mission statement is to retain, enhance and create opportunities for the enjoyment of legitimate recreational hunting and the sport of shooting, for the members of the Association.

Founded in 1950, the Bay of Plenty NZDA is a branch of the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association.



COVER PHOTO: Summer Deer Hunting, Isabell Zitzelberger & Sasha Haag.
See their Story on Page 8.

Want to feature on the cover?! If you have a photo suitable for the cover, please send it through to: editor@deerstalkersbop.org.nz

PRESIDENTS REPORT: APRIL 2024

The roar has started and hopefully most of us will get out in the hills over the next few weeks. I can hear the stags roaring and I'm excited about the coming weekend.

Over the last month we hosted two shooting opportunities at the range for those wanting to do some prep for the roar. At the start of the month, we held a Field Marksmanship session where members learned about their capability and limitations for field shooting. In the middle of the month there was a Wilkinson Cup Shoot at deer size targets with scoring based around the hilar zone. Both these were excellent pre-roar shooting events designed to help members prep and build confidence in their abilities. All in all, a great success. The range was especially busy this month with a benchrest match and a working bee all falling into the same few weeks. A big thanks to those who attended the range working bee. Many hands make light work and there was plenty achieved in a few hours.

April Club night follows a long weekend and is mid roar so will be a social night for general catch up. Come along to find out about upcoming opportunities and get registered for a club hunt.

We had another successful fallow hunt in Whanganui in March and are aiming for another in April. The April hunt is targeted at NZDA members who are family members or new members and who haven't yet shot a deer or do not yet have a firearms licence. This will be a great opportunity for novice hunters to bag an animal or two and hone their skills.

Good luck for the roar. Stay safe, look after your self and your mates, and I'll see you at a club event soon.

Reuben

MEASURING NIGHT

TUESDAY 21ST MAY



As the stags get into their stride roaring it's a timely reminder that our Annual Measuring night is not far off. For those of you who aren't familiar with Measuring Night, it's the time of year when we bring in all of our trophies to the club and get them Douglas scored for our annual Antler Horn and Tusk Competition. It's important to note that you shouldn't be put off if you haven't got the biggest and best as there are plenty of opportunities that might get you in the running for some silverware even if you aren't expecting it...you may be the only person who enters so bring everything in to be measured!

The trophy categories are:

- **Bay of Plenty Cup** - best Red deer head Donated based on its DS score.
- **H. Seely Cup** - second best Red deer head Donated based on its DS score.
- **Stan Lowe Trophy** - best Kaimai Red deer head based on its DS score. Must be taken within the Kaimai Forest Park north of State Highway 29.
- **Joe Monk Memorial Shield** - classical Red deer head based on visual, as judged by the measuring panel.
- **NZDA-BOP Branch Cup** - non typical deer head (any species) awarded to the most unusual or peculiar head.
- **Jenson Shield** - best Sika deer head based on its DS score.
- **Jack & Ken Barrow Shield** - Best Fallow deer based on its DS score.
- **George Baldock Cup** - Best Fiordland deer head based on its DS score.
- **Stoney Creek Trophy** - best Sambar deer head based on its DS score.
- **Waghorn Trophy** - best Rusa deer head based on its DS score.
- **John Hamilton Cup** - best Chamois head based on its DS score.
- **Neville Hogg Cup** - best Tahr head based on its DS score.

- **Bruce White Shield** - best Goat head based on its DS score.
- **John Dyke Ford Trophy** - best Goat head taken by a junior based on its DS score.
- **Huxtable Shield** - extracted Pig tusks based on its DS score.
- **Joe Malyon Cup** - undrawn Pig tusks based on its DS score
- **Pickering Shield** - best head taken by a lady based on its DS score.
- **Leo Malyon Cup** - best head taken by an under 20 year old based on its DS score.
- **Burr Family Trophy** - best head taken by a junior under 16 Years based on its DS score
- **D'Luxa Caterers Cup** - most outstanding head (all species) based on its DS score Red equivalent
- **Rod Mills Cup** - highest Antler, Horn & Tusk aggregate
- **Knight Trophy** - highest aggregate over all competitions based on AHT, Photography & Shooting
- **Dale Treanor Cup** - best tanned skin of a game animal based on shape, appearance, condition of hair markings and type (species). Skin must be tanned by the entrant and not done commercially.
- **West Trophy** - best Whitetail deer head based on its DS score.
- **West Trophy** - best wild Sheep head based on its DS score.
- **Golden Oldies Trophy** - Best head taken by a member 65 years or over, at the time of taking their trophy based on its DS score Red equivalent

We also celebrate our photographic and filming skills so it's time to dig through the hundreds of photos and videos you've taken throughout the year and submit your best ones for the chance to win yet more silverware.

Section A: Game Animals

Section B1: Other wildlife - birds

Section B2: Other wildlife - mammals

Section B3: Other wildlife - insects, reptiles, and amphibians

Section C: Scenic

Section D: Flora

Section E: Human Interest

Section F: Best colour or black and white print of all sections

Section G: Best Junior colour or black and white print

Section H: Photographic sequence

Section I: Photographic aggregate

VIDEO FILMS

Section A: Training/Promotional

Section B: Hunting

Section C: NZ wildlife

For more information on all of these categories as well as the AHT categories, please check out our NZDA Branch Handbook.

Friendly reminder that you need to be a current financial member to enter this competition and at the time of taking either the photo or trophy head.

BOP NZDA CLUB EVENTS & HUNTS CALENDAR 2024

APR	<p>KAIMAI ROAR HUNT Date: 11th - 14th April Organiser: Dan Gallagher</p>	<p>Location: Te Whare Okioki Contact: danielgallaghan@hotmail.com</p>
MAY	<p>OPOTIKI CLUB HUNT Organiser: Adam Fairclough Date: TBC 022 318 3061</p>	<p>PEEKING WALLABY MATCH Date: 5th May Check the club website for more info</p>
JUN	<p>BENCHREST SHOOTING Date: 16th June Check the club website for more info</p>	
JUL	<p>BOYD HUT CLUB HUNT Date: 24th-28th July Organiser: Adam Rusk 021 186 6721</p>	<p>NEW HUNTS COURSE COMMENCES Date: 29th July Organiser: Cath huntscourse@deerstalkersbop.org.nz</p>
AUG	<p>PEEKING WALLABY MATCH Date: 4th Aug Check the club website for more info</p>	
SEPT	<p>BENCHREST SHOOTING Date: 8th Sept Check the club website for more info</p>	
OCT		
NOV	<p>PEEKING WALLABY MATCH Date: 3rd Nov Check the club website for more info</p>	

VISIT: www.deerstalkersbop.org.nz/club-events for more NZDA BOP events and activities.

RANGE NEWS:

PEEKING WALLABY MATCH

5th May, 4th Aug, 3rd Nov - For more information please check the club website.

BENCHREST SHOOT

16th June, 8th Sept - For more information please check the club website.

RANGE MAINTENANCE

Thanks to our members that attend our working bees at the range - as they say, few hands make light work so it would be good to see some new faces assisting at working bees. We have a core group of members putting in most of the hours but we know there are many more active and regular range shooters out there that should be helping.

We are currently working on extending the 100m, 200m and 300m target lines so that each firing position (1 to 15) will shoot more directly straight down the range as opposed to the slight angle that is currently needed. This will require an extension and rebuild to the target lines. Initial earth works have been completed.

RANGE TICKET FEE PAYMENT REMINDER

If you want to keep your access to the range for 2024, make sure you have paid your membership fees (including your annual range ticket) to national office. Range access tags will be disabled in April for members that have not paid. If you pay late, we can reinstate your gate access but you will need to communicate with us to get your tag activated again.

NRO Assessment

We are planning to host an NRO Assessment day on Sunday 12 May (at our TECT Park 300m Range 9am - 3pm). This NRO Assessment training day will be part of the process for our NRO Trainers to come up to speed with the new national NRO Assessment requirements, as such we are looking at completing NRO Assessments for a small group of existing range ticket holder members.

If you are interested in becoming an NZDA NRO register your interest by sending an email to range@deerstalkersbop.org.nz. We will email you back with the relevant application form and course details, if you don't receive anything back from call Royce directly on 021 286 1109.

As an NRO you will be required to assist at 2-4 public days (last Sunday of the month) each year. As an NRO you are able to take non range ticket holders to the range. The NRO Assessment includes both a theory and a practical component and also an assignment that is completed and submitted after the training day on Sunday 12 May. There will be a vetting process for members that are interested in becoming an NRO. We will be looking to hold another NRO Assessment in a few months so if the timing of this NRO Assessment doesn't suit you but you are keen then still flick an email through to register your interest for the next course.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

**DO NOT LEAVE LIVE AMMO AT THE RANGE.
DO NOT PUT LIVE AMMO IN THE EMPTY CASE BINS.**

CLUB BENCHREST MATCH RESULTS, 10TH MARCH 2024 REPORT

Benchrest Group Shoot Results Date: 10th March 2024

Name	100m										Size mm Agg	SMOA Agg	Place
	M1		M2		M3		M4		M5				
	Size mm	SMOA	Size mm	SMOA	Size mm	SMOA	Size mm	SMOA	Size mm	SMOA			
B. Prentice (LV)	7.41	0.267	7.73	0.278	5.11	0.184	12.77	0.460	12.10	0.436	9.024	0.3250	1
S. Bell (LV)	16.40	0.591	9.10	0.328	12.76	0.459	11.63	0.419	8.52	0.307	11.682	0.4207	2
G. Hammond (LV)	17.50	0.630	14.64	0.527	13.40	0.483	7.09	0.255	8.08	0.291	12.142	0.4372	3
R. Neville (CC)	23.93	0.862	64.97	2.340	36.37	1.310	37.49	1.350	44.65	1.608	41.483	1.4938	1

Small groups in yellow

Weather at beginning of event:

Temperature 13°C
 Humidity 69%
 Wind Direction 11 kph SE
 Gusts 22 kph
 Pressure 1029 hPa
 Visual Fine, blue sky

Equipment List Date: 10th March 2024

Place	Handle	Action	Barrel	Stock Mfr	Smith	Cartridge	Bullet Mfr	Wgt	Pwdr	Primer	Case	Scope	Pwr
1	B. Prentice (LV)	Panda	Hart	Kelbly	Kelby	6PPC	Berger	68	N133	Rem 6-1/2	Lapua	March	48
2	S. Bell (LV)	Bat	Kreiger	Blaney	Titheridge	6PPC	Berger	65	N133	RWS	Norma	March	48
3	G. Hammond (LV)	Panda	Kreiger	Kelbly	Titheridge	6PPC	Berger	68	2219	CCI200	Lapua	Leupold	36
1	R. Neville (CC)	Ruger	Ruger	Ruger	Ruger	22Hornet	Hornady	35			Hornady		56

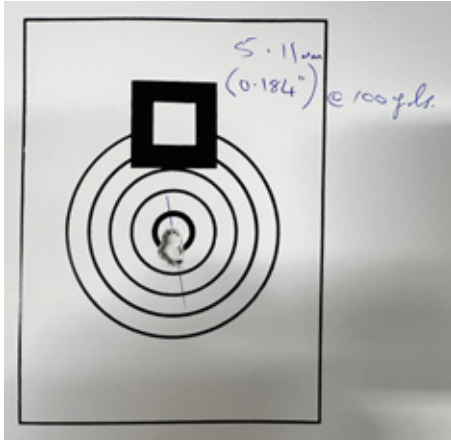
A new 5 shot, 100m club VFG (Varmint For Group) record was set at 5.11mm (0.184 SMOA). Conditions were light with switchy headwind blowing from between 11am to 1pm up the range (pushing left then right). You had to pick your way through. Our range has very volatile winds due to the hills, target lines and baffles. So if you want to understand why your rifle doesn't group the same one week to the next, come and shoot with us!

The next benchrest shoot is 16th June at 200m. Shooters who may want to try NZDA Factory Class or NZDA-BOP Club class stand a good chance of being able to set a new club record for the 200m small group or the 200m 5 target aggregate. There is currently NO club record for NZDA-BOP Club Class at 200m. So you just need to be in to win and shoot for glory! In September we will shoot the same at 300m.



Good luck to those NZDA BOP members heading off to the NZDA Benchrest National Championship match at the NZDA Nelson's Packers Creek range in Nelson at Easter. This is a 3 gun championship if you decide to shoot LV, HV (100/200 yard centrefire) and .22LR 50m on the third day. There are 4 registered NZDA benchrest matches per year. You gain points at each match, which gives you a ranking and possible eligibility to attend the World Benchrest competition. The next world championship will be held in St Louis, Missouri, USA in 2025. That's right...Missouri USA, where the hills come together and a river runs through it!

Keep em' small!



NZDA-BOP Benchrest Records

CF Benchrest for Group

NZDA Light & Heavy Varmint Class Combined

5 Shot groups/5 Target aggregates (*converted to SMOA as per WBSF rules)

Verified with a Moving Target Backer System.

To convert SMOA to MOA, divide by 1.047

100m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes
B. Prentice	5.11	0.184	10/03/2024	

100m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes
G. Hammond	6.762	0.2435	11/06/2023	

200m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes
S. Bell	12.25	0.221	10/09/2023	

200m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes
G. Hammond	8.549	0.3079	10/09/2023	

300m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes

300m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes

*For relative benchrest comparison in yards.

NZDA-BOP Benchrest Records

CF Benchrest for Group - NZDA Factory Class

5 Shot groups/5 Target aggregates (*converted to SMOA as per WBSF rules)

Verified with a Moving Target Backer System.

To convert SMOA to MOA, divide by 1.047

100m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes
D. Wilton	12.41	0.447	11/06/2023	

100m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes
D. Wilton	13.474	0.4852	11/06/2023	

200m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes
B. Cappely	42.25	0.761	10/09/2023	

200m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes
B. Cappely	24.373	0.8777	10/09/2023	

300m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes

300m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes

*For relative benchrest comparison in yards.

NZDA-BOP Benchrest Records

CF Benchrest for Group - NZDA-BOP Club Class

5 Shot groups/5 Target aggregates (*converted to SMOA as per WBSF rules)

Verified with a Moving Target Backer System.

To convert SMOA to MOA, divide by 1.047

100m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes
J. Flude	14.34	0.516	11/06/2023	

100m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes
J. Flude	22.606	0.8140	11/06/2023	

200m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes

200m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes

300m Small Group				
Handle	Group (mm)	Group (SMOA)	Date	Notes

300m Aggregate (average group size over 5 targets)				
Handle	Agg (mm)	Agg (SMOA)	Date	Notes

*For relative benchrest comparison in yards.



SUMMER DEER HUNTING



This Summer we decided to head down South on a hunting trip for the first time. Exciting! I mean, we know that this time of the year it is probably better to spend the hot, sunny, summer days fishing rather than hunting, but we wanted to try it anyway!

We got some helpful hints and information from the North Canterbury NZDA Branch and started our trip at lake Heron - in the Hakatera Conservation area, where we stalked around Double and Manuka Hut, up and down the ridges and valleys - with not a single animal to be seen. A pity, as the area down there is stunning and we really enjoyed the cold river

dips, the breathtaking sunsets and the peaceful time with amazing views over the lake and terrain.

After 3 days we gave up to make our way towards Twizel, where we were hoping to catch our first Salmon, but after 2 days at Tekapo Canal, several hundreds of dollars spent for licences, lines and tackle, we also gave up but didn't want to admit that our skills might suck and we might just not be able to shoot and catch anything!?

No, surely not!

So we changed our plan, and instead of heading up to the "Jolly" the Two Thumb Range we decided to get all the way back to Lewis Pass and head into the Nina River



area. The first night we based ourselves on the Hanmer Springs Campground, where we made a plan enjoying some cold ciders on the hot summers day.

New Years eve! In the morning after an amazing breakfast in Hanmer we made our way into Lewis Pass, where we parked the car at Palmers Lodge (a very nice little lodge, maintained and owned by the NZDA Canterbury). Lots of other cars were parked there and we realised that Kiwis love to spend their New Years in Huts amongst a lot of other keen hikers or hunters to enjoy the outdoors together. That's pretty awesome to be honest! We meet a few other outdoor enthusiasts at the car park, who start their journey in the pouring rain! Of course it had to start raining...not a single day of rain so far, but of course on the day where it counts. Well, with everyone else leaving the car park there was no excuse for us to wait until the weather might get better and so we started our trip (luckily by then just a bit of drizzle) up Mount Norma Access Track. Not an easy task with 2 big packs, packed for a 4 night mission!

The track is steep and it is very humid. Half way up the track the rain kicks in again and we are getting drenched! It is a downpour like no other! We keep pushing upwards, until the hail sets in and we decide to pitch the tent right up the top and wait until the weather settles at least a little...

Well, we weren't lucky! With a pile of wet clothes, wrapped into the sleeping bags while the rain is roaring outside... the next day we peel ourselves out of the sleeping bags - the rain has stopped and the wind got up, so we can hang our wet clothes outside to give a little dry before we head further up the ride. The plan is to get to a little lake further along, where we would base ourselves for the next few nights.

The views are stunning - Lewis Pass very little on the bottom of the mountains, cars passing through, no rain in sight! But also no deer so far...We stop for lunch, glass around the area and enjoy the day.

After half an hour or so, we keep pushing along to the ride, keep glassing down and scanning the area. But hold on - what was that? 3 deer all the way down in the valley! Wow! Amazing! We are super excited! The first South Island deer for us!

We decide to leave the back packs on the ride, to give us more flexibility and start sliding down the steep faces of the mountains. The tussock is high, the ground is muddy. We slide more on our bums than walk! Down a waterfall, up another little ride, always careful to not be sighted by the two deer sunbathing next to the river. After around an hour we reach a little forest and can now pick up the speed. So much sign in here though! We are excited! We can't see the deer anymore, but they surely are still around...if we are not too loud, and if we are careful enough to work with the wind...the heart rate is up and surely not only because of the long journey downhill.

Finally on the bottom we hop over a little creek, crouch down, push forwards - and here they are! 2 beautiful deer right in front of us! Heart attack! Excitement! And a missed opportunity. A typical beginner mistake with the scope fully zoomed in, creates the impression of the hindleg being

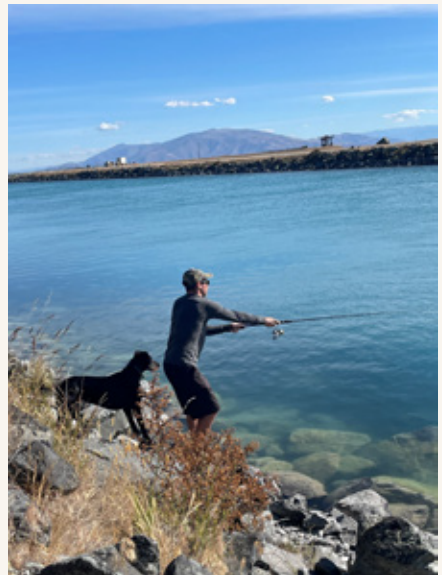
the front leg and even after an almost perfect shot in the "shoulder" the deer started running away. WTF? How?? What happened?

I am still sitting there trying to digest what just happened...why did it not drop dead? Why is it still running? What did I do wrong? In the meantime my partner has overtaken me...he is running, shooting, missing. Oh my god we are almost a bit embarrassing. After his gun jammed and I finally got to him and the deer, we can shoot one of the two in the river. Phew! A perfect shot into the hindleg, which made it not being able to run far, but this should have been the shoulder...we're happy about our deer, but not really happy on how it all went...we could have done better!

Anyway, we got a deer - our first Southland deer, our first deer in 2024, our first deer at Lewis Pass. A lot of firsts ticked off here. We butcher the deer carefully, put the meat in pillow cases and hang them up into a tree. The worst part is done...oh well, is it? Our backpacks are still on the ride...a loooooong way up and it is pretty hot now as well.

So we are crawling up the steep faces again to get back to the top in around 1700m to get our bags. What a mission. It is hot, steep, muddy, soggy...but hey, it's hunting not shooting right? After around 2 hours we are back down in the valley to try and find a spot to stay the night before we want to head out the valley in the morning. Unfortunately we can't find any flat ground to pitch the tent. It is either too muddy, or to uneven...I am over it! I am hungry, wet, tired, exhausted and we are stuck in the middle of nowhere and can't find a spot to sleep.

After an hour wandering around we finally do (and I have to admit we have absolute incredible views!) and almost fall a sleep straight away! What a day! The next morning we start our journey to Nina Valley Campground where we want to stay the night before we head back out. After we collected



our meat and re-packed the backpacks (probably easily 40kg with all the meat) we start making our way through the valley. But it is a steep valley! Full of waterfalls, so we have to walk around it - thick Manuka bushes, mossy and unsteady ground and deep georges don't make it easy! Every step takes time, every branch need to be broken to create a way through the thick south island bush!

8 hours for 2.5km! Unbelievable! Such an exhausting journey. But the deer and the experience was worth it! (Afterwards!) After a quick wash in the river, one million sandflies, some nice yarns with other around a campfire finish the trip and the story how we got our New Years Deer!

A summer hunt I will surely never forget! But I think I will go fishing again next year!



WE NEED YOU KAIMAI HUT MAINTENANCE

About: Did you know that the Bay of Plenty Branch has a long history of undertaking important maintenance work on huts in the Kaimais? Together with the Kaimai Ridgeway Trust, we're responsible for maintaining the Te Whare Oki Oki, Mangamuka and Hurunui huts - all of these are vital for accessing important hunting grounds. In recent years, a handful of members have been largely undertaking this work on their own, but the hills never get smaller and we find the list of jobs are always increasing. For this reason we'd need your help.

What's involved: There's numerous ways you can be involved so we're looking for expressions of interest in helping out. These jobs can be completed at any time but some may require support from helicopters so we're especially looking for people who are available during the week. There's a never ending list of small maintenance jobs around these huts - pruning overhanging trees, painting, plumbing, minor repairs etc. Then there's the occasional bigger jobs like replacing toilets or flying in

firewood. We're also looking for people who can simply walk in, check things out, and report back. All of these jobs will be appropriately supported and funds are available for materials, we just need some volunteers!

What do you get in return: A fun day out in the bush, an occasional helicopter ride, and free accommodation in the huts.

Get in touch: If you have time available and would like to get involved with this rewarding work in the bush, please get in contact with Stan Lowe to register your interest **027 667 1140**



KAIMAI ROAR HUNT

11-14 APRIL 2024

Aren't we all excited for the Roar?!
Book your spot at Te Whare Okioki for the chance to get a stag this year!

Dan Gallaghan is organising this club hunt.

Dates are 11th - 14th of April, but you are most welcome to travel in your own time. Car pooling will be discussed in the Whats App Group of the Hunt.

We are going to stay at Te Whare Okioki and the hut can sleep 12 people. The hut is already booked and paid for, so the event fees cover your 3 night accommodation.

You can choose different walks into the hut - pick your own matching your fitness levels. Here is the link for more information about hut and track: Te Whare Okioki: Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park, Bay of Plenty region (doc.govt.nz)

Closer to the time we will start a What's App Group to plan and chat about the hunt and weekend in general, but you will get given Dan's contact details for any questions prior.

Dogs with a DOC Permit are allowed and you need to get your open Hunting Permit sorted aswell.



HUNT BOYD HUT

24-28 JULY 2024
KAIMANAWA FOREST PARK

Maximum 6 hunters
(3 hunters have confirmed already
so only 3 spots still available)

We will be flying in via HeliSika
www.helisika.co.nz

Doc Hut Tickets and Permits
Required via EventBrite.

Contact Adam:
021 186 6721



 HydraPak

THE TRAPLINE

As I swung the car through the windy road to the Kawekas, neither Joel nor I said much. It was good to be getting away into the hills. Just over a year ago, my son and I volunteered to help with the Save Our Kaweka Kiwi project. We maintain a small trapline that protects Kiwi and their habitat from their predators - ferrets, rats, stoats, weasels, and possums. Today we were heading up to clear and re-bait the traps.

We travelled in silence, and I worried briefly that I should be saying something. But it was a still quiet that was born from familiarity. The familiar drive. The familiar sights along the road. This familiarity was good for us, providing us with a reason to get away, together, and to shift from the hurry of school and work into the patient wonder of our native forests. As we approached the hills we drove through mist that wrapped the bush with enchanted fingers of white. "Wow!" Joel said.

I nodded. We parked, and since we would be wearing our rain jackets, left the pack in the car, instead filling our pockets for the work. In our left pockets we put the trapping tools - a toothpaste tube loaded with peanut butter for possum bait, the bag containing the cubes of dehydrated rabbit, the screwdriver and lever tool for arming the fierce jaws of the steel traps. I squished my Hydrapak Flux flask into my right pocket, and slipped in a couple of energy bars. We were off. The bush embraced us with air thick with scent and moisture. The track beneath our feet squelched and oozed, and every bush we brushed against deposited water on our clothes until we were wet through.

The rhythm of the trap work ate away at the minutes and the metres. We paused occasionally, looking around to appreciate the

surroundings. Within a couple of hours, we were done, back at the car and ready to move on having played a small but significant role in the ongoing care and protection of our national icon. Joel looked at me, and we exchanged a fist bump. I treasured the moment, knowing that these moments may be familiar, but wouldn't last forever.

Luke Buxton and his son Joel are one of many everyday heroes who donate their time and skills to protecting our native wildlife. Save Our Kaweka Kiwi (SOKK) engages with iwi, DoC, school and community groups, and the general public, advocating for kiwi protection and conservation in general. SOKK is focused on the Kaweka Forest Park, situated in the central North Island between Hawke's Bay and Taupo. It contains a mixture of beech forest, kanuka, and manuka scrub with pockets of podocarp forest and alpine tussock at higher altitudes.

By Luke Buxton
Facebook @saveourkawekakiwi
www.ecoed.org.nz



ELITE WANGANUI FALLOW HUNT



I WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO HAVE MY NAME DRAWN OUT FOR A FALLOW HUNT IN WANGANUI AT THE MARCH CLUB NIGHT AT HAMILS.

The draw was a blatant attempt to encourage prompt payment of subs and worked a treat. A number of members bailed before the draw was held and missed out on a spot (you know who you are).

Friday arvo saw an elite group of hunters heading south to the secret destination known only to everyone in the club who wants to know. An uneventful drive ensued, broken only by counting the numerous goats between Raetihi and the station, probably could have knocked a few over with the door as we drove past they were standing that close to the road. Looks like to DOC goat killing competition could do with a reboot in that area.

Steve and I arrived at the hut at about 5pm, well when I say hut, I mean an amazing farm cottage, beds, hot water, showers, a full kitchen, fridge, freezer, oven and a dishwasher! Pauline the farm owner had even baked some chocolate chip biscuits for us to nibble on, I think they lasted a couple of hours.

With instructions not to hunt on Friday, the early arrivals decided on a recce in the paddock behind the cottage. Peering through the scrub to the to the hillside opposite we immediately started to pick up animals. 4 - 6 - 10 or so at first count. Moving on up the paddock we spotted more and more animals on the face opposite and then much excitement as a large mob were spotted in the scrub almost within knife work distance, but with Reubens lame arse no hunting instructions they were well safe from us, things would get noisy pretty quickly in the morning.

That was followed by a short interlude where we learnt that the deer would bed down in the waist high reeds and hide if you tried to sneak up on them. Did you know that in flat out running race, a deer in waist high reeds is only slightly faster than a Scotty? Well now you do.

Heading back to the cottage to re-hydrate after exertions we counted another 21 deer on the other side of the farm. Ohh yeah. By now most of the party had arrived and we organised the various hunting blocks on the farm. Being quadless and the eldest, Steve and I claimed the area close-ish to the

cottage and got some excellent advice from Reuben about where the deer would bail out into the forestry once the shooting started. Just before dawn Steve and I headed down the track and past the old derelict homestead to hunt the faces opposite pausing for 15 mins to let the day lighten so we could navigate our way safely. That 15 mins proved crucial and right when shooting started mobs of deer speed past and into the forestry right where Reuben said they would, but we were too far away to shoot. There were some ones and twos still filtering past when we got into position and Steve knocked over two hinds and I nailed a yearling. We decided not to process them at that point and keep hunting our area. As we left our position and continued to glass and hunt the farm, we could hear shots ringing out from all over the place, the others were certainly getting amongst it.

Coming out of the next gully we spotted two decent sized animals just over the boundary, it looked like they were going to jump the fence in which case we would have nailed them but turns out the grass was greener on their side and they stayed where they were, and temping as it was, we let them be... aaaand immediately saw four more on our side and sacked them all. We gutted three and hung them on a fence in the shade, the fourth Steve just took the hindquarters and backsteaks but due to a mix up later, managed to loose both backsteaks and one leg. Don't ask!

At that stage we were pretty much at the furthest point in our block and all the time we could hear shots ring out across the farm. We headed back to process our first three and then back to the cottage for lunch at about 1pm. The guys started dribbling in at that point, everyone having shot multiple animals and the quads were laden down with deer.

That evening Steve and I headed to a gully just below the main farm house and immediately got onto some animals but couldn't get a shot away, soon enough another deer arrived and I nailed it, a second followed that Steve sacked and then I picked up a last one for the evening. Our total for the trip was ten deer down less two backsteaks and one hind leg.



A pretty weary couple of hunters arrived back at the cottage for the evening festivities but first a shower! What a luxury.

Steve and I didn't hunt Sunday morning as we were breaking down deer and as we were doing that, hunters started coming back with more deer on their quads.

So all in all, about 80 deer were shot by the crew that weekend, with a lot of younger animals taken which is what Pauline wanted. The chiller was just stacked with deer, it looked like something out of the early venison recovery days. Top tip, take some insulation tape with you to tag your deer cause they all look the same stacked up in piles. It's a long drive down there but you will generally take multiple animals which makes it worth it. I can't recommend this place enough, the location is incredible, lots and lots of deer and very comfortable accommodation. If you get an opportunity to head down, you definitely should.

And finally in the spirit of what goes on tour stays on tour we will not mention:

- The live capture and release caper
- The getting a borrowed quad stuck debacle
- Fried deer testicle hors d'oeuvres experience (tasty)

Iain MacAulay

NZDA HUNTER NATIONAL TRAINING SCHEME

The NZDA Hunter National Training Scheme (HUNTS) was first launched in 1987 and has since helped thousands of hunters gain the skills needed to hunt big game safely and responsibly in New Zealand.

The HUNTS course is delivered by NZDA branches at a local level where instructors teach the HUNTS syllabus under the guidance of a National Coordinator.

Trainees learn about hunting in New Zealand's unique conditions and develop essential bushcraft and shooting skills for use in the outdoors.



GENERAL COURSE STRUCTURE

The theory aspect of the course generally occurs over eight 2-hour evening sessions covering 9 learning modules.

The practical training consists of 3 weekend sessions, made up of:

- 1 full day of practical training in range shooting.
- 1 full weekend covering equipment, food, bushcraft skills, travel, navigation, survival & river crossings.

1 full weekend completing an overnight camping/hunting trip.

HUNTS MODULES

The topics covered by HUNTS include:

- Ethics, Ecology & Regulations
- Equipment & Food
- Backcountry Travel
- Navigation
- Firearms Selection, Safety & Marksmanship
- Big Game Animals
- Hunting Techniques
- Meat, Skins & Trophies
- Outdoor Emergencies & Survival Techniques

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LOOK AFTER YOUR BEST FRIEND IN THE ROAR

Photo: Tracker Don Schwass, his son Adam (left) holding their thermal drone, and their dog Piper.

Having lost my hunting dog Millie, a Vizla X on the 42 Traverse in National Park last year, my heart went out to Tim Taylor when I saw his post on the BOP NZDA Facebook page last month about losing his GSP Cooper. Tim had previously lost his dog Scout to a hit and run and Cooper had come into his life as a rescue. Tim said he's full of energy and in need of some training but has fast become his sidekick. A friend of Tims was visiting from overseas and he had promised her a few adventures so he had headed out on a day hike in the Kaimai's. Due to a nasty forecast, they only planned on doing a short trip up to Sentinel Rock so had packed lightly. Cooper was joining them and loving the adventure, he was wearing a training collar which Tim uses for the vibrate function to keep him close, the same collar I was using when I lost Millie on the 42nd.

On the way up the track Tim had noticed fresh pig rooting in one particular spot so as he returned he kept him close but before he knew it, he had disappeared. Unsure of what direction he had taken, he stopped and listened, soon hearing barking way down the ridge much like a pig dog bailing. Initially pissed off as his pointer was barking, he soon realised he had got himself



Photo: Cooper Taylor

lost. The weather was turning nasty so Tim instructed his friend to continue following the track whilst he tore off down the hill, following Coopers barks. Unfortunately they were getting further and further away, and through the wind

and rain he could barely make out what direction they were coming from. Soaked and getting cold, Tim realised he was getting deeper into the bush without adequate gear and started to worry about his friend who only had a vague idea of how to get back. Eventually he made the hard call to turn around and head out.

Tim and Coopers story were only too familiar to me with my dog Millie having chased after a rabbit over a steep cliff at the headwaters of the Wanganui River. She too could be heard barking in the distance for a short time before she was drowned out by the roar of the river and the strong wind and rain that had started to fall. Just like Tim I had to make the hard call to put my own safety ahead of my dog and make my way out of the bush, electing to regroup and come back more prepared tomorrow. The days that follow after losing your dog are full of worry and stress. The bush is a hostile place and both Cooper and Millie weren't experienced hunting dogs so both Tim and I had little hope of either of them finding their way out. Tim and I recounted endless days searching back where we last saw our dogs both with very similar strategies.

TIMS SEARCH PLAN:

- I reasoned that if I were to charge around I'd be leaving sent lines through the bush which might ultimately confuse Cooper if he came across them.
- I chose to use the tracks as boundaries - a lot of people use them so they already smell like human and they all lead somewhere. I ran or walked these every day just wanting to leave my sent he could follow out.
- I left a jersey or t-shirt at the start of the track, replacing it every day to keep my sent fresh.

- I posted on social media - this got a huge amount of attention so if he showed up, someone should recognise him. I even had some very generous people see these posts and help me with searching, thanks guys.

- I made up some flyers with my contact details and laminated them. I then pinned them up near the start of a couple of trails with the hope that any people out walking would ultimately keep an eye out.

Whilst I followed a similar strategy to Tim, I also reached out to Don Schwass a well known Dog Tracker out of Nelson. For the past several decades, Don has used his skills as a tracker to find missing dogs throughout the country. Don is a whizz on Google Maps and really understands the behaviour of lost dogs. Using both these skill sets, he helped me narrow down my search area and made me slow down instead of panic searching which is an easy trap to fall into. Guiding me over the phone and over Facebook Messenger Don was a huge support and a wealth of knowledge during the 4 days we searched for Millie.

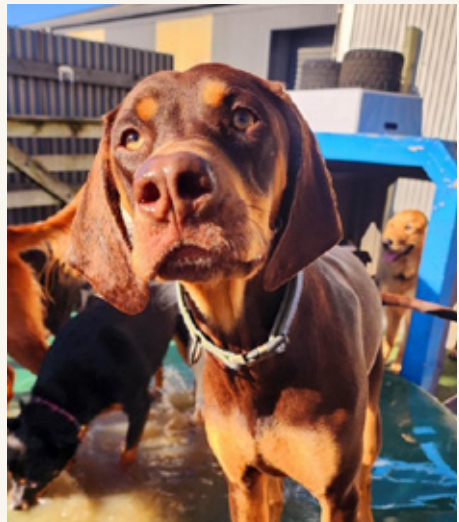


Photo: Millie Batchelor



After 6 days of searching, Tim had all but given up hope of finding Cooper, that was until he received a phone call out of the blue. An awesome couple had seen his flyer at the start of the track and found Cooper heading towards the carpark less than 5 minutes in. They called his name and he ran straight to them, obviously relieved to be found. They were so excited about finding him, they cancelled their walk and called Tim straight away offering to bring him home. After 6 nights in the bush Cooper was skinny but in otherwise good condition so it was a great outcome. Sadly Millie was not so lucky, we eventually found her on the riverbed of the river, not far from where she had gone over, she had died from the injuries sustained from her fall but despite this it was a huge relief to know what had happened to her.

Having shared such a similar and harrowing experience, Tim and I both agree that a GPS collar for our hunting dogs is a MUST have in the bush. But if the worst happens, stay positive, dogs are much harder than we give them credit for and can literally last for weeks in the outdoors even in bad weather. Look after your best friend this year, keep them close if you don't have a GPS collar, get one! They are worth every cent.

Tim Taylor and Matt Batchelor

VENISON AND RED WINE PIE

INGREDIENTS

10g dried porcini pieces
200g small shallots
50g plain flour
2 x 300g packs diced venison
2 tbsp olive oil
1 x 160g pack Taste the Difference smoked bacon lardons
1 tbsp chopped thyme leaves
2 bay leaves
4 juniper berries, lightly crushed (optional)
375ml red wine
1 beef stock cube, crumbled
1 tbsp light brown sugar
1 x 300g pack mini portabella mushrooms, halved

FOR THE SUET CRUST

1 medium egg, beaten, to glaze
300g self-raising flour, plus extra to dust
150g beef suet
1 tsp chopped thyme leaves
½ tsp fine sea salt

Recipe by Tamsin Burnett-Hall
www.sainsburysmagazine.co.uk/recipes/mains/venison-and-red-wine-pie

METHOD

- 1 Start by putting the porcini in a small bowl and covering them with 150ml boiling water. Set aside to soak. Put the shallots in another bowl, cover with boiling water and leave to stand for a while, as this will loosen the skins and make peeling easier. Preheat the oven to 140°C, fan 120°C, gas 1.
- 2 Mix the flour with a good amount of seasoning, and toss the venison in it to coat. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large frying pan, add half the venison and brown well over a high heat, about 5 minutes. Transfer to an ovenproof casserole. Repeat with the rest of the oil and venison (keeping any flour that remains in the bowl). Meanwhile, drain the shallots, trim away the root end and peel off the skins.
- 3 Once the venison is all browned, add the bacon lardons to the frying pan; cook over a medium heat until the fat starts to render out and the bacon starts to crisp, about 4-5 minutes. Lift into the casserole using a draining spoon. Brown the shallots in the bacon fat, over a medium heat, about 5 minutes. Tip everything into the casserole and mix in any remaining flour. Cook for 1 minute.
- 4 Add the thyme, bay, juniper, if using, and the porcini plus their soaking liquid (don't tip in the dregs, as they may contain grit). Pour in the red wine, crumble in the stock cube and add the sugar; season. Bring to a simmer, cover with the lid and cook in the oven for 1 hour.
- 5 Stir in the mushrooms, replace the lid and cook for a further 30 minutes. Remove and discard the bay leaves and then leave to cool to room temperature. This is your pie filling. You can either continue from this point, or cool and chill the filling to bake as a pie later.
- 6 Set the oven to 200°C, fan 180°C, gas 6. Tip the cooled filling into a 1.5-2 litre pie dish and brush the rim with some beaten egg.
- 7 For the suet pastry, mix the flour, suet, thyme, the salt and 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper together in a mixing bowl. Add enough cold water to bind as soft but sticky pastry - about 200ml. Pinch off some bits of pastry, roll into thin sausages and press onto the rim of the pie dish (this will help the pastry lid hold on). Roll out the rest of the suet pastry on a floured surface to roughly the shape of the pie dish - it will be much thicker than shortcrust, about 1cm. Lift on top of the pie dish, press down the edges to seal and trim off any excess if you wish, or simply leave it overhanging. Brush the top with more beaten egg, cut a steam hole, the bake on a tray for 35-40 minutes until golden brown, crisp and piping hot.



HUNTING GEAR FOR SALE

**GOT SOMETHING TO SELL OR ARE YOU
WANTING TO BUY?**

We are introducing a new section in our monthly newsletter called The Trading Post. Simply email a photo, a few words, the price and your phone number to editor@deerstalkersbop.org.nz and we will be sure to publish your listing.

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RAIN





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CHILLER USE RULES

- Chiller use is a privilege that may be removed if access is abused or rules not adhered to.
- Clean up after yourself, every time you access the chiller.
- Use a fish bin or other suitable container to catch dripping blood etc. and remove from site when you take your meat away.
- No skinning or butchering on the NZDA premises. The chiller is for hanging only, no processing of any sort is allowed.
- All waste must be removed from the premises when you take your meat away, including any part of an animal, blood, and all wastewater.
- All animals/meat must be tagged with a label denoting the date hung, name and contact number of the person who hung it in the chiller. Any meat without a label will be considered a donation to the club.
- The maximum time for hanging any meat or animal is 10 days.
- Do not hang any foul meat or contaminated carcasses.
- Take care not to contaminate anyone else's meat with hair, blood, dirt etc.

It is preferable to hang all carcasses with the skin on and to hang any partially processed meat in a breathable bag or muslin cloth. Hanging carcasses and meat should not touch the chiller walls or they may (partially) freeze.

Respect the facility and other members meat.

For more information or if you need to report any issue, misuse, or abuse of the facility you can contact Reuben on **027 482 8969** or at reuben@deerstalkersbop.org.nz.



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5. Pay a \$10-20 donation per trip, on return, for hire of the unit.

Hire will be on a per trip basis, based on a maximum of a 21 day trip. The units will not be insured because of the cost, so any damage or loss will be payable by the user (approx. \$640).

There is no cost for the renewal of the unit if it is used in an emergency but if possible we will need it returned. Any costs incurred for rescue by emergency services or false PLB activation will be the sole responsibility of the user.

BRANCH PLB CUSTODIANS:

Dean Maisey, Welcome Bay
07 544 2207

Keith Theobald, Greerton
07 578 1195



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Patron	Keith Theobald	07 578 1195 027 693 5445

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Eastern Fish and Game Council Member	Mike Jarvie	mikejarvie09@gmail.com 021 808 899
Accountant	Cam Graham	
Grants Coordinator	Peter Setz	

CLUB NIGHT:

First Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.
Doors open at 7pm if you want to come early for a chat!

COMMITTEE MEETING:

Second Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm.
All correspondence to be sent to secretary@deerstalkersbop.org.nz.

NEWSLETTER:

Deadlines for newsletter contributions is the 20th of the month. Opinions and views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the branch, its executive committee or the national association. All newsletter content to be sent to editor@deerstalkersbop.org.nz.

*Formed in 1937,
the New Zealand Deerstalkers'
Association is New Zealand's
recognised National body
representing and speaking
for hunters generally. The
fundamental aim of the
association is to ensure that the
organisation and management
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