

The Roar



Australian
Deer
Association

ACT and Southern Regions Branch

June 2020 Newsletter

HUNTERS' PLEDGE

The Hunter should conserve wildlife resources and not exploit them.

The hunter's behaviour should be guided by respect: -

For the Deer and all Wildlife,
For the Land, Forest and Crops,
For the Landholder and his Property,
For Everyone who enjoys the Bush.



'The Roar' is the bi-monthly Newsletter of the Australian Deer Association, ACT and Southern Regions Branch. The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Australian Deer Association Inc. No correspondence will be entered into in relation to anything contained herein. Unauthorized copying or distribution is not permitted without prior consent





The Roar - Australian Deer Association - ACT & Southern Regions Branch

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HUNT COORDINATOR:	Shane Strohfeldt	Ph: 0413 002 700	E-mail: Hunt Coordinator ACT ADA Branch

GENERAL MEETINGS: The ACT & Southern Regions Branch of the A.D.A. meets bi-monthly on the third Thursday of February, April, June, August, October and December starting at 7:30pm, unless otherwise advertised. The meeting place is the [Harmonie German Club of Canberra](#), 49 Jerrabomberra Avenue, Narrabundah ACT

HUNTING, GENERAL NEWS & ADVERTISEMENTS: E-mailed to the [Tom Penders](#) OR [ACT Editor](#)

BRANCH ADDRESS

The Branch postal address is: PO Box 3178, Manuka, ACT 2603. E-mail address: act.pres@austdeer.asn.au

TRADING POST

The '**For Sale**' section within the 'The Roar' is available as a free service to A.D.A. Members for the sale and exchange of personal equipment. All advertisements must include details of equipment, its condition, name of vendor, contact name and phone number/s, ADA Membership number. Advertisements should be forwarded to the Editor. Firearms may not be advertised.

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

HAVE YOU CHANGED ADDRESS? – Notify directly to the National Membership Office on
Ph: 0499 892 320 Fax: (03) 9870-1173/E-mail: natmem@austdeer.asn.au



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Branch News

A Word from the President – David Carter

How pleasing to see easing of the restrictions on our travel and outdoor activities, and the remarkable success of those measures in containing the virus. I managed to keep my eye in over the shutdown by bush walking in some of the ACT reserves. There were some deer prints, a thrashed sapling here and there and on a couple of occasions I got the binos onto actual deer. I bumped a dark fallow buck on a river flat one morning and later four does filed across an open hillside into thick cover. It's always a thrill to see wild deer and know that they are quietly going about their business away from the popular trails.

Our calendar shows that the Annual General Meeting should be held in June. However, this has not been feasible so I want to let you know that the existing committee is happy to stay on for now. I thank them all for their continued service. We will aim for the next meeting to be held on **Thursday 20 August** if all continues to go well with the progressive removal of COVID restrictions in the ACT. At that meeting members will have an opportunity to confirm the committee. As always, we welcome new members who would like to contribute to the branch.

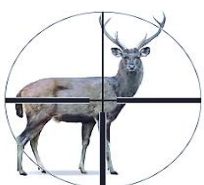
You might have noticed the ADA website is continuing to develop, and our branch tab now has copies of the recent Roars. The renewed membership database is now operating and should greatly improve our communications with members.

I got down to the coast on the long weekend and the return drive over the back road from Nowra to Braidwood was a sobering reminder of the horrendous bushfire season. Along most of the road there was evidence of bushfire, of varying intensity. Some of the landscape looked like a nuclear bomb had gone off. Even 6 months on, there was nothing but bare dirt and rocks and black sticks with scarcely a green leaf or bud.

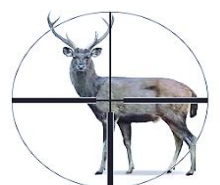
I couldn't help reflecting on some of the alarmist language about deer damage that comes up from time to time. Yes, deer will thrash saplings and some deer species wallow and they all like to graze and browse a variety of vegetation. In some places deer are over abundant and they need to be controlled. But over much of their distribution in the vast forests of south eastern Australia do they really pose much of a threat? How concerned should we be about deer damage compared to the ravages of intense bushfires?

Leaving aside those arguments, the great news is that we still have months left in the season. Many of the forests in our region were not burnt and are opening up to hunters. We might have missed the rut but there's plenty of time to get out there.

Wishing you success in the field and hope to see you at the August meeting.



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Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's Report ADA ACT & Southern Regions June 2020 Out-Of-Session (Coronavirus Edition)

Bank Accounts - Financial Position

ADA ACT & Southern Regions has **\$11,223.40** in funds as at 31 May 2020. Whilst we have a reasonable cash balance the Branch needs to become self-sufficient through fund raising activities (as the Branch is no longer receiving disbursements from National). To date in the 2020-21 Financial Year we have only raised **\$1.81** in total revenue.

Opening Balance as at 1 May 2020		
Petty Cash	\$8.77	
Westpac - ACT - WORKING ACCOUNT	\$11,213.74	
Westpac - ACT - CASH RESERVE ACCOUNT	\$0.00	\$11,222.51
Add Deposits		
Interest Received	\$0.89	\$0.89
Less Payments		
Nil	\$0.00	\$0.00
Closing Balance as at 31 May 2020		<u>\$11,223.40</u>
Represented by		
Petty Cash	\$8.77	
Westpac - ACT - WORKING ACCOUNT	\$11,214.63	
Westpac - ACT - CASH RESERVE ACCOUNT	\$0.00	<u>\$11,223.40</u>



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2020-2021 - Fund Raising Proceeds	Revenue	Cost	Net Proceeds
Donations			\$0.00
Branch Membership (Voluntary \$20)			\$0.00
R Liscence			\$0.00
Key Note Door Entry			\$0.00
Target Sales			\$0.00
Interest Proceeds	\$1.81		\$1.81
Raffle Proceeds			\$0.00
Total	\$1.81	\$0.00	\$1.81

KEY NOTES

- **National Reporting Obligations** - ACT & Southern Regions Branch Financial Reporting Compliance obligations from Cash Book Complete for the 2019-2020 financial year. The first return that is due for the 2020-21 financial year is 1st Quarter 2021 (due July 2020) ;
- **Gross Fund raising proceeds** - for the 2019-2020 Financial Year are **\$1.81**.
- **Budget for 2020-21** - The following Budget is proposed for endorsement for the Executive for the 2020-21 financial year at the next meeting (currently postponed due to Coronavirus social distancing measurers).

2020-2021 Budgets	Budget	Expenditure	Variance
Key Note Speaker	\$600.00		\$600.00
Range Days	\$300.00		\$300.00
Trophy Awards	\$400.00		\$400.00
Total	\$1,300.00	\$0.00	\$1,300.00

- **Bank Accounts Operational** – David Carter is a registered as a signatory to operate Westpac on-line. Luke Smee is still not registered as a signatory.

Please note:

NSW R-Licence Testing

Please contact our accredited training officer, Russell Stephenson: russell.stephenson@hotmail.com.
Tom Penders is also now accredited: tcpenders@gmail.com



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Latest news from Tough Gear Hunting Supplies

Andrew Paddison

Reminder: Tough Gear Hunting Supplies is an ongoing financial supporter of our ADA branch and you can show your appreciation by shopping with them!

Industry Update

Unfortunately, various factors including the COVID-19 pandemic and the falling Australian dollar have prompted some shortages in imported products lines as well as price increases between 10 - 17%. Products coming out of Europe and the United States have been particularly impacted leaving some products that would normally be readily available on back order with the importers. A shortage of the three most commonly used ADI powders (AR2206H, AR2208 & AR2209) has been an inconvenience and the price of these powders has also increased slightly. We will have a limited number of 4kg containers of all three in stock by the time you read this however.

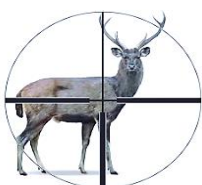
In recent months the NSW Firearms Registry has been particularly slow in allocating registration numbers to firearms which has also had a negative impact on our customers and the industry in general.

It's not all bad news however, there are some great new products coming out including various model 457 rimfire configurations from CZ, new T3X centrefire options from Tikka and we also a few of the new Sako S20 rifles due to arrive shortly. For the pistol shooters amongst us we're selling Australian made Black Widow hard cast projectiles which are excellent quality and very well priced. We will also have a range of Stoney Creek products shortly. Stoney Creek have expanded their range to now include packs, tents, fly's, sleeping bags and casual clothing on top of their wide range of excellent hunting clothing, check out their on line catalogue at www.stoneycreekhunting.com.au

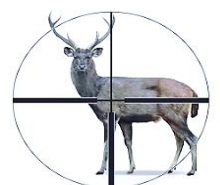
After the shot

Robert Butterworth

The quality of the meat you recover from your deer will depend on how you treat it after it is on the ground. Best results will be achieved by having some basic equipment in the field to achieve a clean field dressing and the ability to hang the animal in a cool, dry environment.



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This article discusses some basic techniques suited for Fallow deer shot in an environment where it is feasible to retrieve the whole carcass and transport it home for hanging.

Hanging meat is a well-accepted method of ensuring that the meat is as tender as possible. For commercial supply, the standards are strict, for obvious reasons. Not many hunters have access to a temperature controlled cool room, but good results can be achieved at home if you are careful and conservative. However, I am not going to give you any specific parameters on temperature and time because I do not want to be responsible if you become ill by following my recommendations.

Best practice in the UK is to skin the animal and to hang it in a larder (i.e. at room temperature) for at least six hours to allow residual heat to dissipate. The following is the link on UK best practice deer guide.

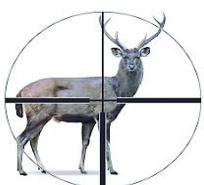
https://www.bestpracticeguides.org.uk/wp-content/downloads/carcass_butchering.pdf

This allows rigor mortis to set in slowly. If the carcass is cooled too quickly it experiences "cold shortening". Cold shortening is a complex chemical process, but the bottom line is that it is not good and can be ameliorated by allowing rigor mortis to set in slowly with the muscles supported by the skeleton. Without the skeletal support the muscles contract and become tough.

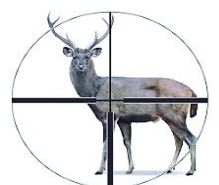
In the UK, a commercial deer carcass will then be hung in a chilled environment with good air flow at between 0 and 5 degrees centigrade for up to ten days prior to butchering. Ageing the meat before cutting it up allows chemical changes to occur that improve the meat's flavour and tenderness. How long you can safely hang at home without spoilage depends on how cool your hanging space is and how hygienic you have been. A higher temperature accelerates the pace of ageing but increases the risk of spoilage.

In the field

With your deer on the ground what you do in the first 30 minutes is crucial. The reason for this is that the rumen will continue to produce heat after death. Any bacteria on open wounds or in the damaged interior will thrive and multiply in the warm, moist environment. Conversely, drying the exposed surfaces and cooling the carcass slows them down markedly.



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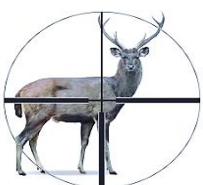


Step one: shoot a good meat animal

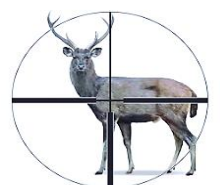


My field dressing kit

The photo above shows everything I take into the field to field dress a deer. You do not need a big knife and it may in fact be an impediment.



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Field dressing involves emptying the chest and abdominal cavity of its contents. This allows the carcass to start to cool. It also greatly reduces the weight of the carcass and makes it easier to carry out.

If the shot was good the contents will be largely undamaged (apart from the lungs) and there will be no leakage of gastric juices or urine that may taint the meat or introduce bacteria. Take your time because a simple mistake with the knife can do a lot of damage that is hard to rectify.

There are many ways to proceed but I try to remove the contents in one piece. This is more elaborate than some recommend but I am happy to spend the time on this part for a good result.

The first step is to position the animal on its back and cut and pull back the skin along the centre line of the paunch and chest. This helps prevent hair and dirt entering the cavity and allows me to see what I am doing.

The anus, urethra/vagina are then loosened from the rear by cutting around them with the knife and tying them off with string. (When the urethra is tied off the pizzle (males only) can be safely detached.) The neck skin is opened from the chin to the chest, and the trachea and oesophagus pulled free, tied off with string, and pulled back towards the chest cavity.

The abdominal muscles are then carefully opened to provide some room to work in the cavity by allowing the stomach and intestines to protrude.

You can protect the contents by pushing them away from the knife point with the back of your left hand and positioning the knife between the index and middle fingers (for right-handed people).

Always cut away from yourself, keep the cut shallow, use minimal force, and proceed very slowly. The fused pelvic joint and sternum are then carefully opened with a small bone saw. There is not much to go wrong on the rib cage but be careful around the pelvic joint to avoid puncturing the bladder. A little downward force on both legs will open the pelvis up when the bone is severed.

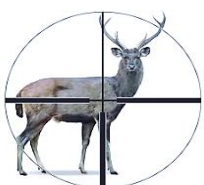
Pull the trachea towards the chest and the lungs and heart will come away rearwards until the diaphragm impedes progress. You will need to take care that you do not damage your knuckles on the cut rib bones as you do this.

The diaphragm is cut close to the lungs on both sides and everything should come out. You may need to cut the connective tissue near the spine behind the liver but be careful not to damage the eye fillets or pierce the bile ducts on the surface of the liver. If you use your left hand as a paddle be careful you do not cut it with the knife in your right hand.

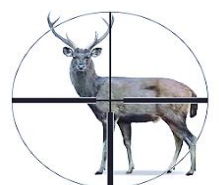
At this point there will often be a release of blood from the major vessels that service the spleen and liver.

All the entrails will then be lying on the ground alongside the deer and should be pulled clear of the carcass.

If there is a pool of blood in the cavity when the contents are removed it can be run onto the ground by lifting the front legs up.



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If all that is a little hard to follow there are many videos on the net. The following is one of the better ones.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EdFtwFN5G4A>

The idea is to keep the carcass on its back and use the skin to prevent the open flesh coming into contact with the grass or anything that is on the ground.

With the pluck out of the deer it should be inspected for any signs of disease. I am not a trained meat inspector, but I look for any cysts or unusual growths, abnormal appearance of the liver or lungs, or an enlarged spleen. Deer in Australia have a lot less maladies than those found overseas but they are susceptible to some of the diseases that can afflict cattle and sheep. If in doubt leave it behind.

I am still in two minds about the gloves. On the one hand they can help prevent me catching diseases like Q fever. On the other hand, I am more likely to nick my left hand when wearing gloves. And, of course, once I cut the glove the protection is lost.

I try to take about 30 minutes on the field dressing because if I make a mistake it is difficult to recover. If I shoot the deer after sunset a headlamp is essential, and I slow down.

When the hard work is done the heart, liver and kidneys can be recovered from the pluck. I carry a small bag for these. They need to cool down quickly.

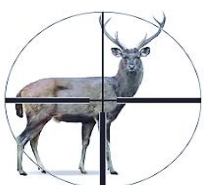
From this point the carcass is cooling to ambient air temperature. If it is autumn or spring and still daylight, the blowflies will start to arrive, and you should try and prevent them getting into the open carcass. I carry an old cotton tablecloth and lay it over the deer.

Getting it back to the car

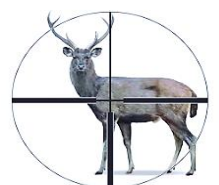
The next step is to move the carcass to the vehicle and take it home. If the hunt was well planned you will have shot your deer somewhere you can approach with a vehicle, preferably from downhill.

A field dressed fallow spiker is over 30kg, and a young doe is a little smaller. So, if you do not have a fit young person with you to carry it out on their shoulders other options are required. If you are a fit young person, the shoulders are feasible, but it is a good idea to put on a light raincoat, so you do not end up looking like a horror movie extra.

I usually go back to the car, pack up the rifle and backpack, and return to the deer unimpeded. When I started out, I would drag the deer on its back by the back legs or antlers along the line of least resistance to the car. Nowadays, I have a small modified toboggan to make the process a little easier. The toboggan remains in the car until required.



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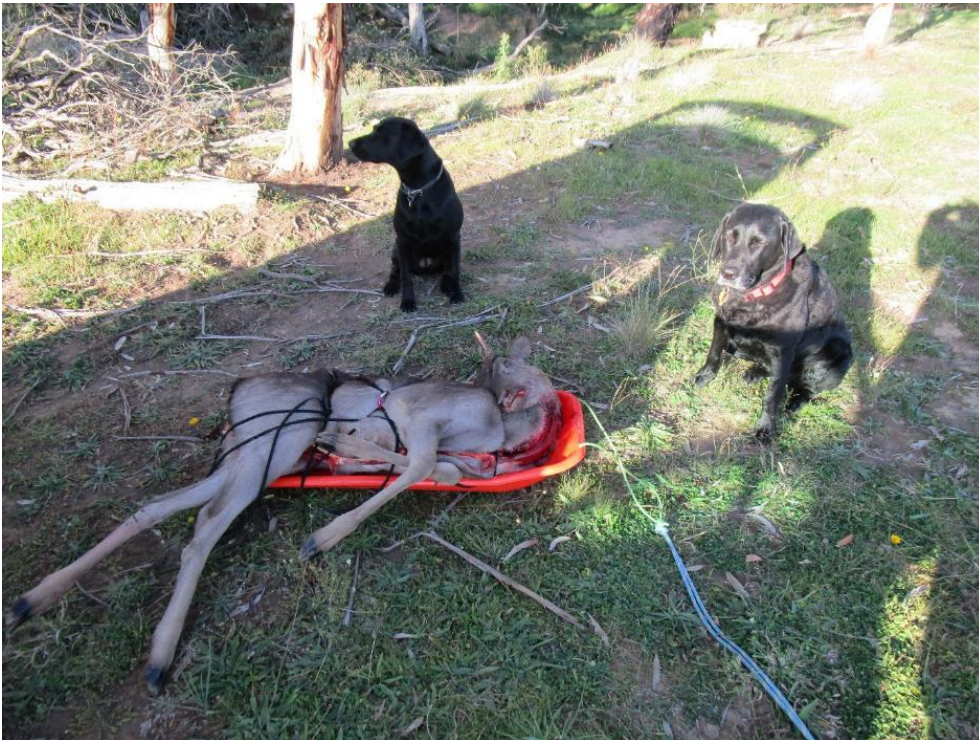




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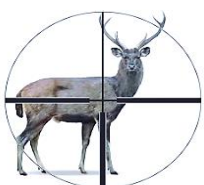


All loaded for the drag out.

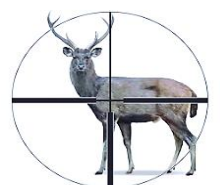


Back at the car ready for the lift.

Back at the car the next job is to lift the deer in. The toboggan helps here too by making the carcass rigid. A waterproof liner in the car is a handy thing to keep the vehicle clean and to cover the deer in case you are pulled over on the road.



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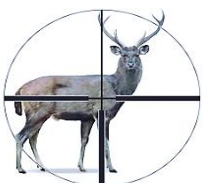


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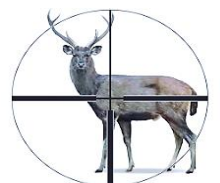
Back at home

Back home the sled can be used to move the carcass to the hanging point. It is preferable for this part not to be visible to passers-by.

The basic requirements for hanging include a strong beam, a small block and tackle to lift the carcass, and a gambrel. The latter can be purchased at a butcher supply shop or you can make one yourself.



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A selection of commercial and homemade gambrels.

When you fit the gambrel the skin around the tarsal joints on the rear legs should be removed before you insert the points of the gambrel. It is hard to remove the skin from around the gambrel with the weight of the carcass on it.

I skin the carcass as soon as it is home to hasten cooling.

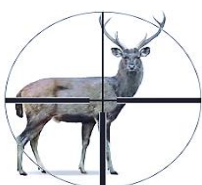
Carcass care

The carcass should be inspected and cleaned before it is put to bed for the night.

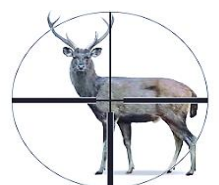
I wipe out the interior with a paper towel to remove any blood on the surface. I then carefully cut away any damaged tissue from around the bullet exit wound and free up any broken bone fragments. With good shot placement this can be extensive. The legs should be sawn or cut off neatly at the hocks.

I then wipe the carcass all over with wad of paper towel soaked in white vinegar. The white vinegar kills any surface bacteria and mould spores that might otherwise grow on the meat. This will also help remove any loose hair that may be adhering to the surface.

I then pull a deer bag over the carcass and secure both ends to deter flies and say goodnight.



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After the rub down



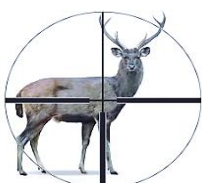
In the deer bag

My garage temperature is around 6-10 degrees Centigrade in mid-winter and I let the carcass hang for around three days. This is an observation not a recommendation: you will have to make your own judgement.

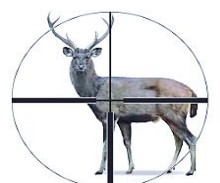
I inspect it daily and pull the deer bag away from the surface to encourage drying. If it is warm and/or humid I set up a household fan to blow on the carcass.

The best insurance against spoilage is to use your nose on a regular basis and be conservative. When the carcass is dry bacteria will not be able to live its surface or get into the meat. A deer carcass has a distinctive smell, but any sweet or sour odours are a sign that the hanging should cease.

Watch the temperature and when you are ready, butcher the meat or break it into primary cuts and continue the ageing in the beer fridge. In the fridge there will be little airflow so rotate the primary cuts and use paper towels to keep the surfaces dry.



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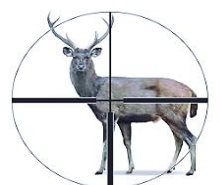


The primary cut containing the rib racks after a few days in the fridge following hanging. Note the dry firm surface.

The hanging and ageing will make the meat tender. It will also be firm and easy to cut cleanly. The surface will be hard but most of this will be removed and cut up for the dogs when the cuts are separated. It will also be necessary to remove any badly discoloured meat. The discolouration is just presentational, but it is important to present the chef with an appetising joint or cut of meat.



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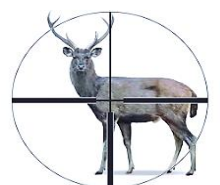
Keynote Speaker Evening (part 2)

Photos by: Trevor Vivian

Editor: Paul Boag from 'Paul Boag's Outdoors' was the guest speaker at our Keynote Speaker evening and awards night earlier in the year. There were a few issues with damaged cameras and COVID 19 and photos taken at this event but with time, effort, technical assistance and patience Trevor recovered the photos.

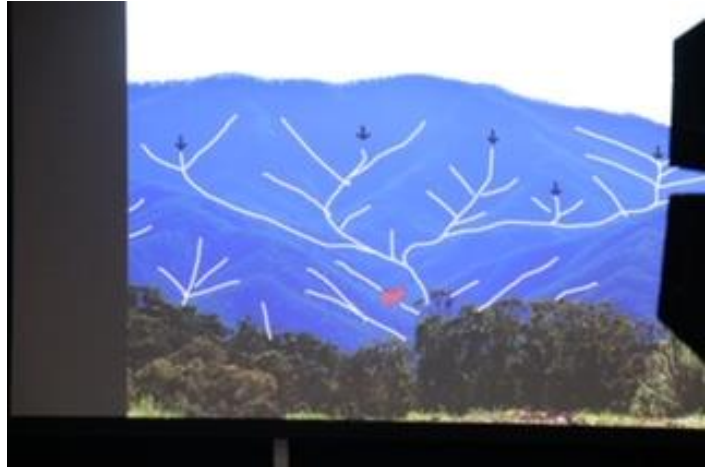


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As the COVID 19 restrictions are lifting Paul is back in business and the 2020 season is fast disappearing so if you are looking to go on a course or have Paul take you out hunting now is the time to contact him and get it locked in.

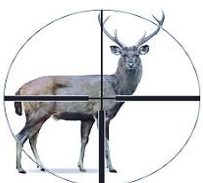
For those of you who haven't checked out Paul's website and his YouTube channel they are both well worth a look:

<https://www.paulboagsoutdoors.com/>

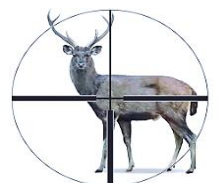
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyZVshZzLqG1k35LApzn0uA>

Ergonomics and the bush hunter or 'Bush rifles' – who needs them?

Chaz Forsyth



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Editor: Chaz Forsyth is a prominent member of NZ Deer Stalkers, a prolific writer and firearms enthusiast. Chaz is our 'New Zealand correspondent'

Introduction

A recent hunt where I anticipated hunting a bluffed area overlooking low scrubby regrowth, but upon getting there I found a vehicle already parked forced me to hunt very dense bush as my plan B. Without a spare rifle, I took the one I had with me into the tight stuff. Despite it being (theoretically) an 'open country' rifle with a long (25", 635 mm) barrel, we got along fine although no deer sign was found. It led me to wonder if I had any need for my 'bush rifles'.

Much is made of 'bush pigs', rifles thought to be suitably short and handy for use in bush hunting. As one who likes rifles, I had long supported that idea, although I was also aware that 'the man who has one rifle' probably knows how to use it better than the guy with a cupboard full of them. However, the realities of being able to use just one rifle at a time, and that was the one with me dictated I had to make do. This article confirmed the impression that I would get by, as we all must.

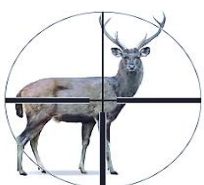
Rifles for courses

Long standing theory has it we need short rifles for bush hunting and longer rifles for the open country. We inherited these ideas from American writers who make such distinctions, yet who are afflicted with relatively short deer hunting seasons of approximately two months, when many hunters descend upon the areas and ballots are routinely needed (along with hunting licenses) for lawful access.

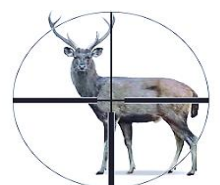
In New Zealand, with our mainly year-'round hunting, no such restrictions prevail. And although we might wish for a shorter rifle when indulging in bush hunting, if you are in the sort of forest cover where you can move quietly, it should be sufficiently open to allow the use of a rifle of any length and with a noise suppressor ('can') fitted, if you have one! Let's reflect on this some more.

What is it that makes a rifle a "bush" rifle? In theory, it's got to be handy, meaning short and light, easy to carry (that is, not too thick through the carrying part of the rifle, usually at its balance point), be chambered in a calibre capable of downing a game animal quickly, be easy to operate (and fire, of course), and its muzzle blast must not be too loud. This explains the popularity of lever-action rifles for American forest hunters, but few of them it is suspected move around discreetly as we do, hoping to see game before it sees us. Much American hunting during the deer season is undertaken from high seats. Chamberings suitable for most forest use need not be of the magnum type either – smaller cartridges (I did not say "bores") such as .30-30 WCF and .44 Remington Magnum are fine, just as our .303 British was in its heyday. In New Zealand, bush hunters often hunt with their dogs, whose hearing is very much more prone to damage than our is from shot firing, so these days, sound suppressors do a lot to help maintain dogs' hearing.

A characteristic attributed to 'bush rifles' is the notion that certain calibres and bullet styles resist the deflection imposed after leaving the muzzle when travelling through intervening leaves and twigs before reaching their target. This refers to an imagined reduction in deflection of the bullet from its intended (= hoped for) flight path and is a completely mythical characteristic (Lyman, 50th Edition). In short, all



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bullets are deflected by intervening branches and so there are no cartridge or bullet combinations which resist deflection.

The bush rifle idea has long been supported since the days of our deer cullers of the 1950s and 1960s who strongly recommended the use of SAKO Vixen .222 rifles as 'bush rifles'. Bullets from that cartridge have almost no ability to resist twigs and leaves, yet these professionals found the rifles a delight to use in their line of work. This is because they were capable of placing a bullet to avoid these twigs and leaves, yet still shoot through 'holes in the bush' to get their deer. Without exception these guys were highly capable bush hunters and there were a lot of animals around.

Long and short rifles

The terminology is rather loose here, because carbines are also short rifles! 'Long' rifles at the beginning of the twentieth century had barrels of 700 mm or more in length, 'short' rifles had barrels approximately 600 mm long, and carbines usually had barrel lengths of less than 500 mm. The longer barrels achieved two things; it got the muzzle blast further way from the shooters' ears, and provided a longer sighting radius for the open sights of the time.

The general pattern was for rifles to become shorter as the military realised that battle ranges no longer extended beyond 500 metres, being were much closer for riflemen (artillery and machine gun units dominating the longer ranges), so the need for long barrels waned as the 20th century progressed. There were some exceptions of course, as arguably poorer nations retained their infantry rifles with long barrels well into World War II, such as the Imperial Japanese forces and those of the Soviet Union.

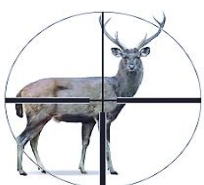
Ergonomics – the study of human factors in their environment

We are bipeds, meaning we walk upright most of the time on our hind legs. In open country, this gives us an edge over quadrupeds because our eyes are farther from the ground, ensuring our 'horizon' is generally further away. However, in forest environments, we often wish to be able to neatly fit through a deer-or goat-sized hole in the scrub even though it is most difficult to use a shoulder arm under those conditions. This is where "ergonomics" comes into play.

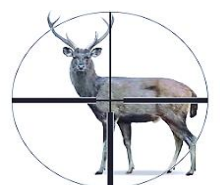
This term originally relates to the study of workers and their working environment, which may seem odd when I am discussing recreational hunting (Waite, 2013). Ergonomics features here in two ways however; we mostly hunt successfully when we can move quietly when in a forested area, and we tend to use firearms which fit our bodies, in other words their stocks fit our limbs and when we shoulder them preparatory to firing, our eyes align with their sighting system. So in at least two ways, this 'wheelbarrow' word is highly relevant in this context.

There are no simple answers here, but for most of us, avoidance of the 'tight' stuff is mandatory, particularly if we wish to move quietly with minimal noise. Shorter people may be at an advantage here, and for some, having a short rifle is useful for this too. But is it?

The overall length of rifles is dictated by handling considerations to fall within a fairly narrow range of overall lengths and greatest all-up weight. These factors in turn dictate barrel length and its ballistic performance. However, the standing height of the shooter obviously counts for something, and so does the density of the bush in which s/he is hunting. Dense bush, such as accumulated slash from pruned pines, or shoulder-high coprosmas are almost impossible to move through quietly, although these patches are often loaded with animal tracking and droppings, showing they've been there. A better



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solution may be sit around on the outside of these patches, downwind of course, alerted by the noise a moving animal makes, hoping to ambush it as it emerges to become visible.

Denser forest tends to contain less undergrowth because less light penetrates the canopy, but when a canopy tree collapses to create a natural light well, expect considerable fresh growth in the vicinity. If this new growth contains adventive plants which have been dormant in the absence of light, and provided they are palatable, expect to find deer, or at least sign of deer in the vicinity. Again, sitting waiting, having figured a good wind position and suitable uphill placement for firing is vital for success. Returning to my recent hunting experience with a long rifle in tight scrub, I was surprised to find little disadvantage when manoeuvring through very tightly spaced kanuka regrowth with my 635 mm barrel 7 x 57 rifle. Clearly, it was difficult (average space between stems was approximately 400 mm) and patches of it were impenetrable because of wind or snow-throw (the stand was some 6 m high, having been under reserve status for more than four decades). Provided I kept the rifle vertical, parallel to my body as I moved, there was no snagging and of course, if I have spotted something, I'd have been able to rotate the rifle to the horizontal discreetly and quickly. Did I find anything – nope, and what sign I found was very old pig rooting, although I knew of fresh deer droppings when walking along a track a year or so earlier.

I am around 1.8 m tall, and while people of lesser height might well find it easier to sneak quietly through smaller gaps, taller people find it easier to handle rifles with longer barrels when hunting. Provided you carry it vertically (muzzle upward works for me), and if you turn your entire body, not just your head, you'll have almost no disadvantage should you see an animal because you'll already be facing it, or almost facing it so you can readily bring your rifle up onto it. Naturally, safety must not be ignored because with the rifle vertical, your head is quite close to the muzzle, but you keep the rifle in a safe condition, right? Keep it pointing away from you always!

If you choose to carry the rifle horizontally, things become much more difficult because the rifle length sweeps and inevitably snags across many of the stems and branches you are trying to avoid.

Conclusion

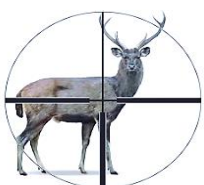
If you like rifles (as I do), and enjoy getting to know them, even handloading for them, then you'll probably have more than one. But if you choose to save your money, and use just one rifle for all of your hunting, in my view I doubt if you'll be at all disadvantaged in your hunting. You may have to refine your technique (who doesn't need to do that?), but a 'bush rifle' is not essential for successful bush hunting of deer. (Of course it is a different story if you are a pig hunter, where mobility assumes far greater importance, but that is not the point of this article).

[1749 words]

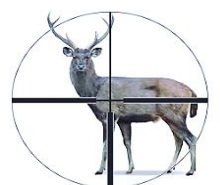
References

Griffin, T.J (Ed.), 2016 , Lyman 50th Edition Reloading Handbook. Connecticut, USA: Lyman Products Corp. (528 pp.).

Waite, M. (ed.)(2013), The Pocket Oxford English Dictionary Eleventh Edition. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press. (1086 pp.).



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COVID 19 – hunting within the restrictions

Tom Penders

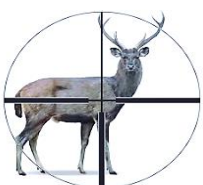
Given the COVID 19 restrictions limiting opportunities for hunting some of our members have been out and about hunting in the Branch area.

Not quite sure what to make of the hunting locally. It seems a little patchier than in past years with some people reporting success and others (like me) struggling to see any deer. Still hearing reports of the odd sambar and red deer in areas where they haven't been seen before. There is also some shooting for the chiller and pet food continuing in the local area as well as culling of deer with helicopters.

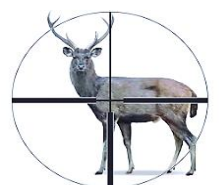
The best fallow buck that I know about taken locally during the 2020 COVID 19 period was taken by one of our members Malcolm Buckley.



Beautifully coloured buck that will make a nice mount.



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Branch Trophy Competition



GET YOUR HEADS MEASURED FOR 2020 - Must be received by the Branch Measurer no later than 31 December 2020.

Branch members are encouraged to submit their heads shot in 2020 for scoring as they will be automatically entered into our Branch Trophy Competition. The score sheet for all heads shot in 2020 must be received by the Branch Measurer no later than 31 December 2020 to be included in the Branch Trophy Register or to be eligible for our Branch Trophy Competition (note both unmounted and mounted heads will be accepted for scoring into the Branch Competition).

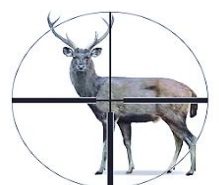
How our Trophy Competition Works

Note our Branch Trophy Competition has three tiers.

- **Tier 1 – Annual Trophies:** The first tier is for the highest Douglas Score relating to Fallow Bucks, Sambar or Red Stags shot in 2020.



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- **Tier 2 – Top Heads:** The second tier is for exceptional heads in any of the six deer species that are either a new Branch Record or a score that would rank within the National Top 50 heads. The current scores required to receive a Top Head Trophy are identified in the table below:

Deer Species	Douglas Score Required for 2017
Fallow	242 1/2
Red	279 5/8
Sambar	205 7/8
Rusa	235 1/8
Chital	173 3/8
Hog	101 7/8

- **Tier 3 – Master Hunter:** The third tier is for a branch member that achieves an exceptional heads (Top Heads in all of the six deer species that are either a new Branch Record or a score that would rank within the National Top 50 heads. This accolade is yet to be achieved by any member.

Heads may be taken to our bi-monthly general branch meeting for collection and subsequent scoring. The heads will be subsequently measured at accredited measures homes and will be returned at the next general meeting (or earlier through negotiated arrangements). Non-Branch members will incur a \$20 administration fee. To make a reservation contact:

Trevor Vivian
Branch Measurer
Phone: 0418 248 063
E-mail: act.treas@austdeer.asn.au

For a head to be included in the National Trophy Register and the National Trophy Competition it must not be mounted and must be scored at least 60 days after it was shot to allow for the antlers to dry out.

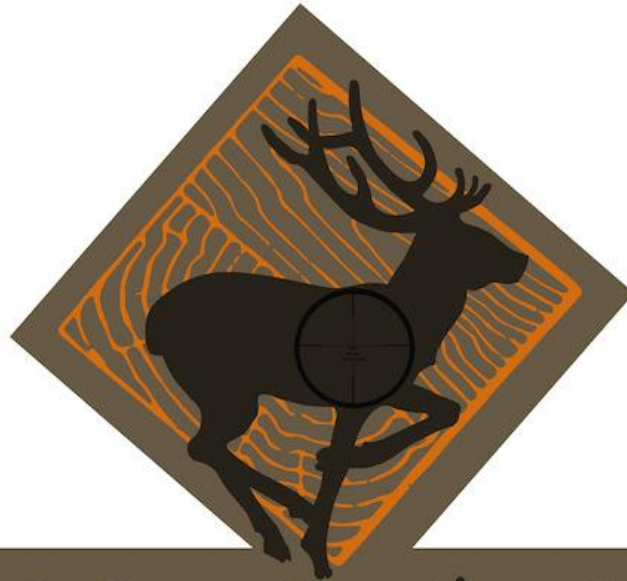


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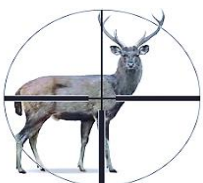
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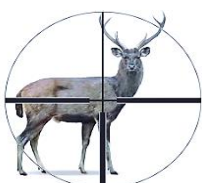
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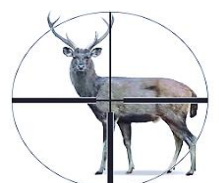
Email: jimsleather@grapevine.com.au

I have had the occasion to visit Jim's Leather Craft in Latham and found that the work he did for me was excellent.

If you need a knife sheath, a sling, a purpose built dog lead or some repairs done it is well worth putting you work to supporting a local business.



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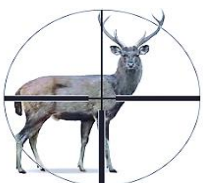
Stone-Free International - John Bladen ACT-FDL N0001802D,

jb.stonefree@bigpond.com , Ph; 0427 257 338.

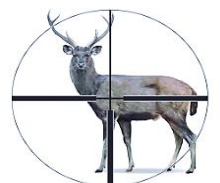
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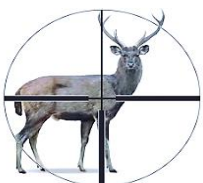




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