



Australian  
**Deer**  
Association

## “The Rub Tree”



**WA BRANCH NEWSLETTER**

**Issue No 33**

**Summer 2020**

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## **PRESIDENTS REPORT**

Hello All,

Once again Christmas is upon us and another year will be coming to an end. I hope your year has been a successful one. I believe the Branch is moving forward with New Members joining as well as a few past members returning. The inaugural End of Year Dinner was a success, thank you to all who attended and to Tim Hartley and Daren Philippe for organising the event. We will have a few less formal gatherings in the New Year, which won't require booking, just turn up and shoot the breeze events at a Hotel for lunch etc. A WA ADA Events Calendar will be sent out to all Financial Members in the next few weeks.

Game and Feral Animal Control Bill 2018.

I'll take this moment to highlight a wonderful opportunity which is currently before us. Rick Mazza MLC, SFFP Member for the Agricultural Region has recently read into Parliament a Private Members Bill - The Game and Feral Animal Control Bill 2018. This is quite an achievement and represents hundreds of hours put in by Rick, his Staff and the wider Shooting Community.

I would urge you all to write to your local members of Parliament in support of this Bill. For those unsure, we will endeavour to email out a series of letters you may use and send in to support the Bill. For those wishing to write their own, I will provide you with the following points below to consider. Please be polite even if your local member is from a Party you don't think will support it.

Benefits to Environment (reducing feral animals identifying foreign plants & marking locations)  
Cost benefit, to government, hunters provide free service, Lic fees help cover administration costs.  
Utilisation of protein sources otherwise wasted  
Mental & physical health  
Benefit to regional economies  
Eyes & ears for illegal activity  
Planned coordinated approach (not possible with illegal shooters)  
Better training available for firearms owners providing Ethical and Responsible Hunters.

The most important thing is to get a letter of support in and urge your friends, family and fellow countrymen to do the same. There are approx. 80,000 license holders in WA with roughly a 60/40 split Rural/ City respectively. In an open letter published in the Farm Weekly, Trevor Whittington CEO of Western Australian Farmers Federation urged people to back Rick's Bill, this is a great endorsement from the rural sector.

Lastly many of you will know the Rural Areas of Australia are doing it tough , my property for example received about 1/2 the growing season rainfall this year . Many of the rural town businesses are feeling the pinch as well, with sales down etc. If you're planning a trip to the bush to catch up with a cocky or to go hunting perhaps consider buying some of your supplies in the nearest town, beer from the local hotel, fuel from the servo, buy a few extra boxes of 22 ammo from the local dealer. It may cost a bit more than the big city stores, but it will keep these businesses going so they can service the community for the rest of the year. Many of these businesses sponsor local services such as St John's Ambulance, SES, VFF, etc. services you may call upon in an emergency.

All the best for a Merry Christmas, a Safe and Happy New Year.

Blair Montague  
WA President

## HUNTING ABOUT

**The newsletter is what you make it and requires contribution from all members. We need more stories, articles, product reviews and recipes to keep it going. If you have something to contribute please email [andrew.bekle@solway.com](mailto:andrew.bekle@solway.com)**

### Patrick's Stag

This story commenced about 4 years ago when my daughter introduced me to a friend of hers and her husband Patrick. Patrick was a country boy who had grown up with a shooting background. This consisted mainly of spotlighting from a vehicle shooting foxes, rabbits and other vermin in the south of WA. He moved to Perth to finish his schooling and then on to University to complete his studies which allowed him to pursue his career. His career had brought him to Bunbury and hence our meeting.

When Patrick found out that I was a keen hunter it spurred him to reacquaint himself with his previous pastime. His enthusiasm was infectious and he displayed a sense of maturity and understanding that the path to being a successful hunter was going to take. I have had many people ask me to help them be a successful hunter. I find that many have started their lives as vermin control shooters hunting from vehicles with spotlights and really struggle to progress to becoming successful hunters. There is a big difference between being a shooter and a hunter.

Once Patrick had purchased the necessary equipment it was time to get started. Shock number one was when I rang him the Saturday morning and said that I was going to do a morning hunt on one of the properties I had access to on Sunday morning and would he like to come. This was met with a quick yes. So I told him to meet me at my place at 5.00am. There was a brief silence and then the reply, "Are you sure we need to be that early?" My response was if you want to see animals you need to be in place at first light. I only found out later that Patrick had arranged to be in Perth for a party and drove back home at 3.30am, got about an hours sleep and then met Musket and myself at 5.00am.

The next shock was that we had to leave the car and walk in the cold and damp conditions. This was not just a stroll across paddocks but rather steep country that had a mixture of clearings and thick bush. The property had wild pigs and deer that roamed the hillsides. Not in large numbers and every animal that you got was hard earnt. We walked taking into account the wind direction and spending time looking for fresh sign. I explained the importance of the wind not only from our perspective but also how Musket used it to forewarn us of any animals ahead. We checked on some old pig diggings and wallows that the pigs and deer had been using. Although we did not see anything it had been a big learning curve for Patrick.

Over the next year or so we persevered. There were many hunts where we saw nothing but every hunt added another piece to the puzzle of finding game. Although it was difficult trying to coordinate a hunting trip due to our work hours being significantly different and family commitments on one of the hunts we finally came across a mob of 4 pigs. We stalked to within 70 meters and then I told Patrick that he should close the gap to a couple of trees which would bring him within about 30 metres of the mob while Musket and I stayed put. We could not see the pigs and we lost sight of Patrick at about 50 meters. A couple of minutes passed and a shot rang out and Patrick had taken his first wild pig. Shot in the head the pig dropped on the spot and there was one very happy hunter. Now the hard work started. We skinned and boned out the meat from the pig, put it into bags and then into the backpack and commenced the long uphill climb to the vehicle.

The next significant encounter was the 4 stags in a bachelor herd ranging from a one year old spiker to a 4 year old stag. It was early evening and we were quietly stalking down a small gully that would lead us to an open flat at its base. The flat was surrounded by reasonably thick bush and we were

hoping to catch a pig out feeding in the clearing. Musket was leading the way and at about 50 meters he slowed down, looked back at us and then went into stalk mode. We followed as quietly as possible and at about 10 meters from the edge of the clearing Musket stopped with us behind him. I still could not see what he was stalking as there was some regrowth in front of us and Musket kept looking at me as if to say "What is the problem". As we looked a spiker walked from behind the regrowth only about 5 meters in the paddock. He was followed by another young stag and then 2 more all only 15 meters in front of us. They knew something wasn't right but as we were dressed in camouflage and made no movement they couldn't work out what was wrong. As they cautiously fed Patrick slowly took his mobile phone out of his pocket and videoed them. I whispered to Patrick that they were all too young and that we would not take any but rather find a larger stag that would make a worthy trophy. We thought that we would try to get a bit closer for some better photo footage but as we inched closer they became more aware of us and then they were off and swallowed up by the bush. Patrick was stoked. Not only had he seen deer in the wild but to be so close and have videoed them with his mobile phone was just something else.

Over the next year Patrick's work took him away so when he returned early this year I said to him that it was time we got a good stag. I had been keeping an eye on several good stags over the last few years and knew when the rut was on there would be a good chance to hopefully get one. Pre rut, Musket and I were out checking out all the rub trees and wallows to see what was about. One area showed promise as a new wallow had been created and the rub trees in the area had all been freshly touched up. A plan was hatched and I contacted Patrick to organised a hunt for the following Saturday.

It was 6.00am and the first light was starting to appear in the east as we arrived at the area where we would leave the car. The morning was overcast with heavy skies and as we left the car it started to drizzle. It was just a light drizzle to start with but it gradually became heavier. The wind was from the North West which was in our favour as we crested the ridge. From the ridge we could see to another ridge line in front of us which was open paddock but had a series of folds and undulating ground that could easily hide a deer. The top of the other ridge line was the boundary of the property and was all bush behind. A gully started at the top of the ridge and made its way down to the bush below. Although it was still only half light and the misty drizzle wasn't helping we started to glass with our binoculars and I saw several kangaroo's feeding out on the paddock and what looked like a hind and yearling. I ask Patrick if he could see them and he said he thought that they were only kangaroo's that he could see. I felt sure that they were deer but couldn't be certain in the poor light conditions. The plan was to make for a rocky knoll that would give us a much better view of the gully and what might be feeding in it. With Musket leading the way we started to work toward the knoll using a fold in the ground as cover to arrive at our rocky knoll undetected. We cautiously climbed the knoll to a point where we had a good view of the gully in front of us and a good shooting rest for Patrick. While Patrick got himself set up I started glassing. From where we were the far side of the paddock in the gully was about 300 meters away and it then became bush. To our left about 250 meters the gully dropped away steeply into bush. To the right the folds and undulating ground prevented us from seeing the head of the gully. The misty rain was still falling.

As I glassed to the left I noticed movement on the edge of the bush in the little creek that ran through the gully. It was a hind and was soon followed by another 5 hinds and 5 calves. They started to feed in the paddock on the far side of the gully about 200meters away. Patrick and I watched the for several minutes and when nothing else appeared I said to Patrick that we should take a yearling for meat as there appeared to be no stag with the hinds. Patrick took a rest to line up on one of the yearlings when they walked between a tree and us and that hid them from view. I told Patrick to wait until they walked out the other side and then take one. As I finished saying that a hind and calf appeared from the right behind the undulating ground that hid the head of the gully and made their way toward the rest of the herd followed in hot pursuit by the stag. "Stag" I said to Patrick. "He is the one we want. You can take him if you like". I don't think Patrick thought I would ever say those words.



By now they had met up with the rest of the herd and some animals fed in the open however the stag and several others were still behind the tree that was blocking our view. I told Patrick to be patient and that the stag would show himself for a shot. He was to wait for him to be broadside on and preferably standing still. The range was about 200 meters. Sure enough the stag walked out from behind the tree heading down the gully toward the bush. About 20 meters from the bush he stopped and looked back at the hinds and yearlings. This gave Patrick the perfect shot and at the sound of the shot he took off into the bush at the bottom of the gully.

From the view I saw through the binoculars as the shot went off I knew that the stag had been hit hard and would not travel far. He bolted down the gully and disappeared into the trees on the edge of the bush line. The hinds and calves took off up the gully and we lost sight of them as they disappeared behind the undulating ground. I told Patrick that the shot had looked good and that he should not have travelled far. We took our time and waited for about 5 minutes before walking toward the spot where I had seen the stag disappear into the trees. As we crossed the gully creek Musket picked up the scent of the stag and disappeared into the trees. We followed and some 10 meters inside the tree line lay the stag.



The 180 grain bullet from the .300 Win magnum had taken the stag just behind the shoulder and exited on the other side. The lungs had been totally destroyed. The stag was dead on his feet but still managed to travel 30 meters before expiring. The drizzly rain was still coming down as I congratulated Patrick and gave him some time to soak in what had just happened with his stag. We took the obligatory photos and then went to collect the vehicle to recover the stag. The rest of the day was spent removing the cape and butchering the stag for human consumption and dog's meat. The cape was salted and skull boiled. The cape and skull with antlers are now with the taxidermist waiting to be mounted. It was a long time in the making but I am pretty sure that this will be the first of many more to come for Patrick.



P.S. - This was to be one of Muskets last stags. He passed away 3 months after this photo. He was instrumental in many hunters firsts, from pigs to deer. A truly wonderful hunting companion.

Joe Estermann



# Beer Braised Venison Neck

Sourced <https://www.foxvalleyfoodie.com/beer-braised-venison-neck/>

Beer braised venison neck renders a traditionally tough cut of venison into a mouthwateringly tender roast with a rich silky gravy.

Servings: 6

Author: [Fox Valley Foodie](#)

## Ingredients

- 1 Venison Neck
- 2 tablespoons Cooking Oil
- 2 medium Carrots (chopped)
- 1 large Yellow Onion (chopped)
- 2 stalks Celery (chopped)
- 4 cloves Garlic (chopped)
- 3 cups Low Sodium Beef stock
- 18 oz Stout Beer
- 2 tablespoons Tomato Paste
- 2 tablespoons Brown Sugar
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 2 sprigs fresh Thyme
- 1 sprig Rosemary
- 2 Bay leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon ground Black Pepper
- Parsley for garnish



## Instructions

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
- Ensure your neck roast will fit in your pot or dutch oven, cut it in half or trim it down as needed. The neck of a young deer should fit well, larger mature deer may need to be trimmed.
- Heat oil in the dutch oven over medium-high heat and sear the venison neck on all sides until browned.
- Remove the neck, add additional oil if needed, and saute the carrots until they begin to tenderize, then add onion and celery and cook until all vegetables are tender and beginning to brown. Add garlic and saute for an additional 1-2 minutes.
- Return venison neck back to the pot and add remaining liquids, seasonings and herbs.
- Cover dutch oven with a lid and place in the oven, checking on it hourly and rotating the neck to ensure even cooking.
- Neck roast is done when easily shredded with a fork. about 4-5 hours. Add additional liquid to the pot if too much evaporates.

## Notes

If too much moisture evaporates the neck can dry out and you won't have a gravy to serve over it. If the liquid is getting low just add more water, however adding additional broth or beer is fine too.



## Chamois

### ***An introduction to the animal and a few hints on hunting them in New Zealand***



Prized as a sporting animal in their native Europe, chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra*) were introduced to New Zealand in 1907 in order to provide good hunting, especially for tourists. Chamois increased rapidly in numbers and distribution and at present occupy most of the alpine country in the South Island.

At first they were protected, but their rapid build-up in numbers and effect on their habitat caused concern resulting in the removal of protection in 1930. Chamois have not been successfully introduced anywhere other than to New Zealand.

#### Description

Chamois are similar in appearance to goats, but have longer legs, a more erect neck, pointed ears, and differ in shape and curvature of the horns. Adult males (Bucks) have a shoulder height of up to 36 inches. Adult males do not often weigh over 100lbs, while adult females (nannies) seldom exceed 80lbs.



*Chamois in summer coat*



*Chamois in winter coat*

The overall colour of the coat varies seasonally, and while there is considerable variation between individuals, tends to be brown to almost black in adult males in winter to a brownish fawn in summer.

A dark strip extends along the mid-line of the back from the neck to the base of the tail. On the ventral surface and hindquarters the brown colour is lighter in summer, becoming almost white.

The head is pale fawn in colour with a dark band beginning near the nose, surrounding the eyes and ending at the base of the horns and ears. The colour pattern of the young is generally lighter

than that of the adult. The hooves, which reach a length of three inches in adult males, are similar to those of tahr. There is a soft central pad surrounded by a hard rim.

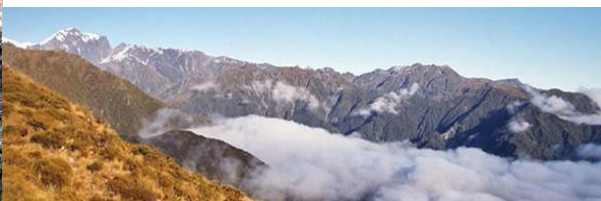
The horns, carried by both sexes, are the most characteristic feature of the chamois. Growing upwards from the head they are almost vertical, curving near the end to form sharp posterior hooks. The horns diverge at the point where they curve, often considerably in the female chamois. The male chamois have heavier horns than the female. As with tahr the horns are measured from the base to the tip along the outside of the curve, and the circumference of the horn at the base is also usually measured (Douglas, 1959). A good pair of trophy horns are those over ten inches in length; an exceptional pair may exceed fourteen inches.

Chamois have a well-developed sense of smell and very good eyesight. As discussed in a previous article on tahr (Christie and Andrews, 1964), chamois appear to rely on their eyesight for warning of any disturbance. The alarm call is a sharp whistle, often accompanied by the stamping of the forefeet; normally chamois are silent. Young chamois may bleat occasionally. Chamois are particularly agile in rough, broken country and are seldom defeated by the steep bluffs which they climb, often at remarkable speeds (Christie, 1964).

### Social Characteristics

As with tahr, the chamois bucks usually separate from the nanny (adult female) and juvenile herds when they become fully mature adults at two to three years old. The rutting period appears to be later than for red deer, taking place during May and June. During the winter chamois are confined to steep bluffs where snow does not accumulate or to the scrub belt which may be extensive on the western slopes of the Southern Alps.

Chamois prefer swards of shorter grasses, preferably with rocky outcrops nearby where they shelter during periods of bad weather.



*Chamois resting in typical habitat – steep guts with scrub*

*Typical habitat in Southern Alps*

Young are born in December and January. Asdell (1946) gives the gestation period from 153-210 days. Usually one kid (young chamois) is born although there are reports that in Austria twins are not uncommon. Even shortly after birth the kids have great agility, and in most cases show no difficulty in keeping up with the parent.

Although there are a number of predators of chamois in their native habitat, there is no predation of chamois in New Zealand, other than by man. The precipitous nature of their habitat does, however, lead to a number of accidents, and avalanches probably claim a number of victims.



## Hunting them

**Gear:** You need a flat shooting rifle - .243 and up is OK. Chamois are relatively small soft skinned animals - so a rapidly expanding bullet is required. Good binos and you need to be prepared to possibly climb high early in the day and glass for them. Being in the Alps you need to be prepared for any kind of weather at all times of the year, so a good day pack with all your gear – including a rain coat and apart from gear you need to be reasonably fit if hunting on the higher areas and especially on the West Coast.

**When?** May is a good time as the Bucks are active in the rut. I love hunting them in summer in North Canterbury – nice weather and plenty of time to cover the country and get onto them and you don't have to put up with camping in brass monkey conditions

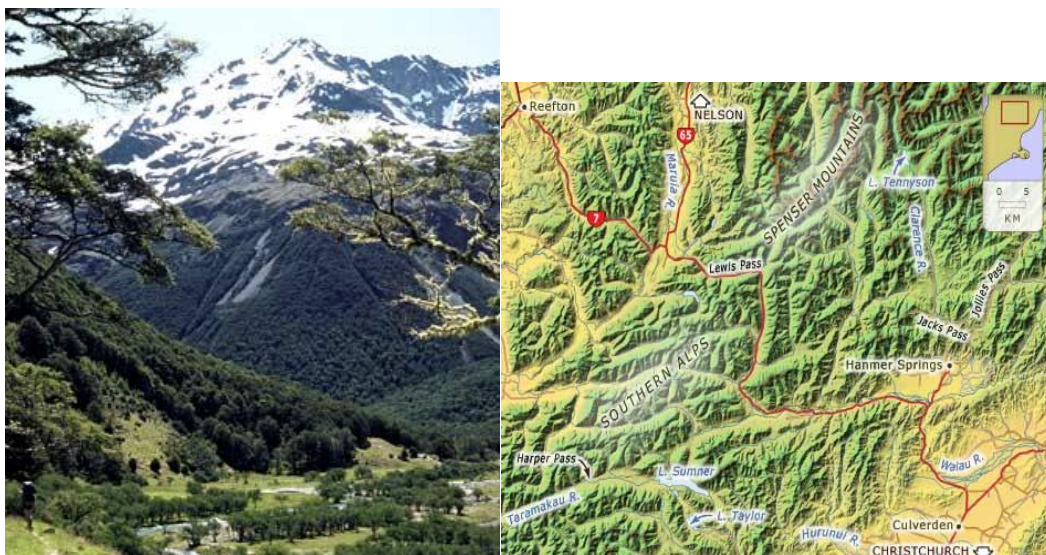
**Where?** Most of the high country in the Southern Alps is potential chamois habitat. – One point to note chamois will move out of areas where there are high populations of tahr.

Chamois can be found in open tussock country if they haven't been chased by the choppers for a while – but steep gutty country with alpine scrub is a good place to look. On the West Coast you will find them on the slips and in the creeks down to low levels – even on the river flats of the Taramakau River and other big rivers.

A GOOD HINT IS TO CHECK THAT THE AREA HAS NOT HAD A RECENT 1080 DROP FOR POSSUMS. The 1080 carrots for possums cleans up the chamois as well. Check the DOC website - they list the planned ops for each year – call the local DOC office to confirm.

**Weekend hunts.** If you are in Kiwi and want to try a couple of easy hunts for chamois – possibly try these –

**East Coast.** Hanmer Springs area – try Jacks or Jollies pass for a couple of quick day hunts – check with DoC for the exclusion areas in the Hanmer Forest – But you can hunt off the roads in the area and you can get in there by 2wd. The St James Station has recently been acquired by DoC as well and there are some nice streams over in the Molesworth River area.



The Lewis Pass can also be good day hunts – Waterfall Stream is worth a look – bit of grunt getting up to it.

If you want to go in for a few days think of the Hope River – you can get a chopper in from Hanmer to drop you off in the Hope / 3-Mile area – heaps of country to cover.

## West Coast

Wanganui River; going up the Wanganui River to the Twister which comes in on the True left. You can hunt the slips in the creek – chamois can be quite low down.

Victoria Ranges (near Reefton); You can do a day trip up on to Mt Haast via the Mt Haast track– or you can get dropped off by Alan Rosonowski to the Vic biv – good hunting from there – very short chopper flight and you get in high into the area.

Good luck BB

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## **"The RUB TREE" NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL**

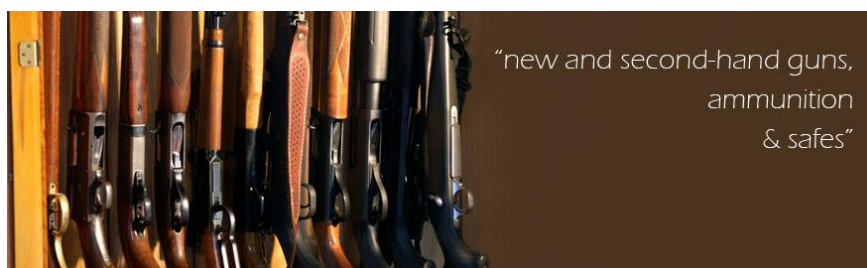
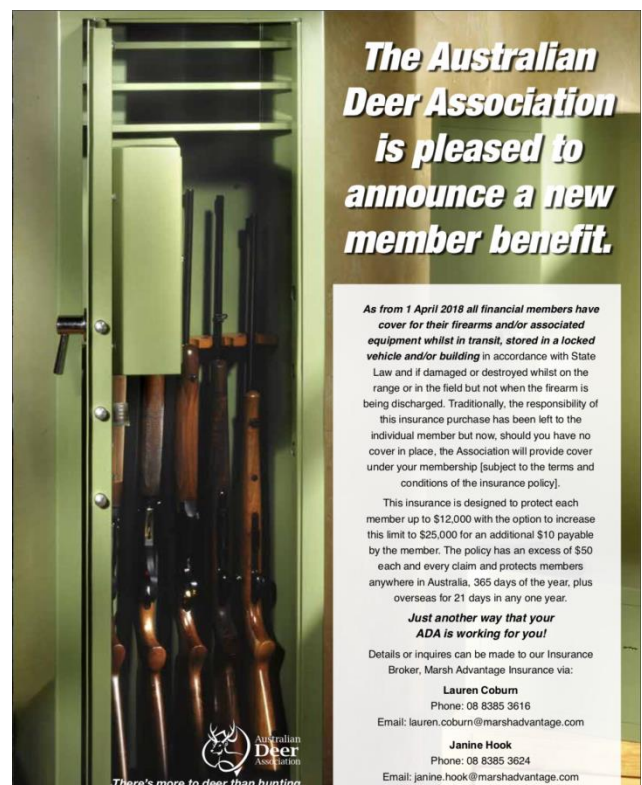
Our newsletter – "The Rub Tree", is posted to all members who wish to receive their copy in the mail. However, we will be able to reduce costs if we can limit the amount of copies that require printing and postage. If you have access to email and wish to receive your colour copies of "The Rub Tree", please make sure any changes to you email address are sent to National Memberships

## **ADVANTAGES OF ADA MEMBERSHIP**

- Receive on a bi-monthly basis the prestigious journal *Australian Deer* keeping you factually informed on the Australian deer-hunting scene.
- Meet interesting and experienced guest speakers at Branch Meetings.
- Receive branch newsletters that provide you with up to the minute information on local events.
- The opportunity to make local, interstate and overseas contacts.
- Meet and talk with other members at meetings and obtain information on where it is best to hunt and when.
- The opportunity to voice your opinion at regular meetings and give support to a political voice for deer and deer hunters in Australia.
- Trophies can be entered in competitions and the internationally recognised Australian Antlered Trophy Register.
- Test your skills by competing in photographic competitions.
- Participate in conservation, research and management projects in your area, which will help ensure the future of your hunting.
- Branches conduct hunting activities where members and their families can learn from experienced hunters and share the camaraderie of a hunter's camp.
- Member Insurance – ADA has a \$20 million public liability insurance cover that protects its members from legal liability that may arise out of any activity endorsed by ADA, including hunting on public or private land anywhere in Australia.
- Members are also covered by personal accident (voluntary workers) insurance at authorised functions such as meetings, working bees, disaster relief; property based game management projects and target shooting events on recognised firearm ranges.

For further information regarding the Australian Deer Association, please visit our website at:

[www.austdeer.asn.au](http://www.austdeer.asn.au)





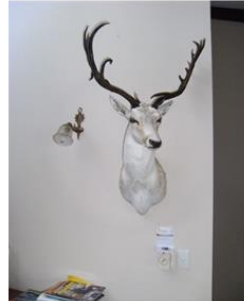
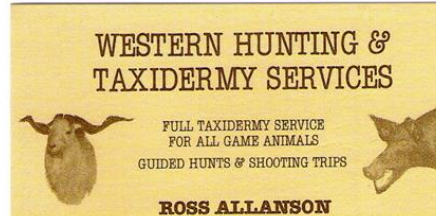
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