

THE SOUTHERN HUNTER

Southland Branch NZDA Newsletter

October 2023



Veronese Trophy – Scenic Photos 2nd Place Nelson List (Southland Branch) “Grebe Valley Floor”

Monthly Meeting

Monthly meeting 7.30pm Wednesday 18th October at the Branch Club Rooms Longbush Hall McKerchar Road off State Highway 1 between Kennington & Woodlands

Guest Speaker

Ray Philips on Stewart Island with a Power Point that John Delury presented at Conference, and mentions of Predator Free Rakiura, Branch activities at Masons Bay and the Rakiura Hunter Camp Trust.

Presentation of Certificates from National Competitions at October Meeting.

to recap.

Results For Southland Members from 2023 National AHT comp. as follows.

Mel Larritt Trophy for Red Deer 1st Trevor McMaster Douglas Score 370 1/8

Orbell Trophy for Best Head of All Deer Species 1st Trevor McMaster red deer douglas score 370 1/8

Poverty Bay Branch Trophy - best Game Animal Shot by a Junior Under 19 1st Paige Hodge with a fallow Deer Douglas Score 228 1/8

Z Veronese Cup -- Best Antlered Species Taken by a Junior 2nd Paige Hodge with a Fallow Deer Douglas Score 228 1/8

Kaimanawa Branch Trophy -- Best Game Trophy Taken by a Lady Paige Hodge with a Fallow Deer Douglas Score 228 1/8 (Note Paige is only 13 years of age , pretty good effort .)
Veronese Trophy – Scenic Photos 2nd Place Nelson List “Grebe Valley Floor”

BRANCH FACEBOOK:

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE ON FACEBOOK, , YOU WILL FIND HELPFUL INFO ON THE PAGE . WE ENCOURAGE MEMBERS TO CONTRIBUTE TO IT <https://www.facebook.com/southlandnzda/>

BRANCH CONTACTS

Branch email is: enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz
News Letter douglasgordon@xtra.co.nz
Branch website <http://www.southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz/>

Wanted

Stories, ads, letters to the editor, or whatever for the newsletter, send to or contact the editor. Guest Speaker's needed, Ideas wanted, who do you want, and names needed, suggestions to Executive

Club Hunts

None currently planned, have you anything to offer? Contact Executive members if you have.

All hunts for Southland Branch NZDA Members (with full NZDA membership) as Public liability Insurance required).

NEW MEMBERS

New Members please welcome them.

**Philip Arthur, Daniel Jenkins, Chris O'Connell,
Reuben Northover, Daniel Vigers**

Office Bearers

Club Office Bearers

President: Shaun McKelvie 027 635 0490 **Vice President:** Luke Payne

Secretary Andy Nesbit 021 53 8676 : **Treasurer** Tom Mead 027 847 1882

Magazine Editor: Doug Gordon 216 6383 **Immediate past President**

Membership Andy Nesbit

Huts Neville Miller

With Daylight savings now we've all got a extra hour of daylight after work to sneak out and enjoy the outdoors weather it be hunting it fishing or white baiting. The grass is definitely starting to sneak away on the farm but maybe only just greening up on the high country hillsides if you're out looking for a deer over the next month in the high country the sunny faces should be starting to attract the deer to the fresh growth now. The outdoor area and door repairs have been finished off at the Hall thanks to Dave and everyone that helped him. In look forward to getting the BBQ out there to try it out one evening soon. Rayonier's hunting is ticking along pretty well. Hopefully everyone is getting their South woods permits? I got mine renewed this last week and it went smoothly. Hope to see you all along at the next meeting

Cheers Shaun



Editorial

I have been hearing whisper's/rumours of an up and coming review of Predator Free 2050. Where some would like to increase the list of predators to be eliminated to include our big game animals. This is something we have to be aware of and counter. The current goat hunting competition is a way to show we are active in keeping numbers under control. We need to be pushing for better access to the growing numbers of animals on the Doc estate (currently lacking good access) where good access would be possible if it was only legal. Some are already beating the drums about the damage these deer numbers are doing. They seem to have a lot of media friends. Federated Farmers are reportedly making friends with Forrest and Bird over this, wanting Government money spent. Could they not be better making friends with NZDA and get more hunting on their land, or allow access through their land. A lot of Federated Farmers members are hunters and NZDA members after all! Covid has been blamed for the increase, I still say lack of good access! The seeds were sowed before Covid. This besides appearing in the written News, this was reported TV One 6pm News 5th Oct. Of note neither the Game Animal Council or NZDA appeared why? Further why was the farmer with the goat / Deer problem on the news not asked if he allowed / encouraged Recreational Hunters? This is at the best poor reporting, at the worst a political message on the news! (At no cost during an election).

Then there is Health and Safety a lot of Farmers are afraid of having anybody near their property because of this. They don't want to be a test case they can't afford it. Should not the Government pay for such cases where they want to test the law?

Unfortunately, some hunters have in the past abused access to, or over private land, or for that matter Doc land. The recent closing of Eyre Creek in the Eyre Mt's is an example This has to change for starters, if improved access is to be achieved. Hunters need to behave, those who don't should no longer be hunters.

Currently we have a good way available to us to influence what is to happen. That is to put into government the right people at the election.

The current list of predators on the 2050 list are the unwanted ones, nobody likes them. Rabbits and hares don't even make this list. Personally I would like to see Feral Cats on the list. But they have too close a relationship with and can be confused with the domestic

cats. This is too much of a hot potato for most who are elected or want to be, too attack!
How many have a pet cat or two!

What ever remember the continuation of hunting in New Zealand has become political.,
and has been for some time.

Doug G

Sponsors

Southland Branch would like to thank its regular sponsors
and recommend them to its members.

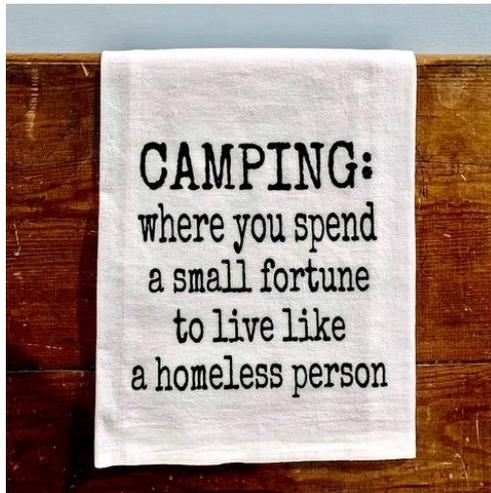


National Competitions.

Following the success of Southland Branch members at the NZDA National Competitions this year - Trevor McMaster who won the Orbell Trophy - Best of all Species with his Red Deer and Paige Hodge Best Game trophy by member under 19years and best trophy by a woman member with her Fallow buck, I checked what Southland members have been successful at National Competitions in the past. Not too many. I have added a page on the Branch website <https://www.southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz/index.php/new-newsletters/winners-at->

[national-level](#) With the number of members in this Branch we are sadly under-represented. Maybe the success of these two members will encourage a few more to enter the National Competitions. John DeLury

JOKE FOR THE MONTH



Mason Bay – Stewart Island Rat Trapping

Since 2006 Southland Branch has undertaken a pest control program at Mason Bay on Stewart Island targeting rats and cats. We have 309 rat traps and 14 cat traps spread over 14 kms of tracks. We send six trapping parties to the area each year by aeroplane. We are generously supported by Invercargill Hunting & Fishing store with their sponsorship toward flight costs.

Team 1, August 2023

John, Mike & Allan carried all our gear from where we got dropped by the plane on the beach to the hut in one go. It was a bit of struggle but as our average age is 72, understandable. Spirits were brightened as we arrived at the old woolshed just on dusk in time to see a whitetail jump back in the scrub. 10 minutes later we were unable to get into the hut as the door mechanism had failed. We knew about it and had a replacement but as it was a bit mission as we had to force the door to be able to access the internal screws. Got in, got that job done. A big day followed with 309 rat traps to be cleaned and reset. These traps had last been checked in the previous December. Clearing the tracks and traps we removed 56 rats that were either seriously decayed, mummified or in a couple cases just skeletons. One more deer seen by Allan. We could not get all traps checked on the first day and the second dawned as an absolute freezer. The water tank was frozen, and two bodies wouldn't get out of bed until the fire as lit and some heat generated. By 10am the sun was doing what it does best, and the frost was gone. We set off to complete the first round of traps. Then followed three days of what could only be described as marginal weather, wet, windy, cold. Evening hunts were miserable affairs, and no deer were seen. The last full day checking all traps for the second time resulted in 25 rats killed, pretty low numbers really, but we also accounted for three trapped cats. One of which was the biggest cats I have ever seen was caught in a kill trap at the old deer shed. JD



Team 2, September 2023

The white knuckles of the pilot gripping the top of the dash as we bounced around between the low cloud and rough seas made me briefly reconsider my confidence in his skills but the landing on the smooth sands of Mason Bay was textbook perfection.

The three of us, Gareth, Cole and Greg, here for a week of trapping rats and hunting proceeded to trudge our way inland to the hunter's hut, wishing we had taken a moment or two more at the airport to sort and pack our gear properly.

A quick recce of the area and some instruction from Gareth on the where's and why's of the rat traps and we split up to check a few lines as the cloud lifted to reveal a spectacular day. Mason Bay and the land inland from it that used to be farmland is an incredibly beautiful place and apart from a bit of a blow and some showers mid-week we were treated to excellent weather.

Only a couple of months ago I was unaware that my local NZDA branch ran a comprehensive trapping programme here but having answered a call for a volunteer, here I was, part of the team hitherto to be remembered as Rat2, 2023.

The work is not arduous but the traplines do cover a large area and so there is a fair bit of mileage involved in the two-line checks required during our weeks stay at Mason Bay. The happy kiwi, kakariki, makomako and other birdlife seen whilst there made it apparent how worthwhile the program is.

We had been asked to reduce the number of Red Deer in the area as their increasing numbers results in competition for feed with the smaller whitetail deer that inhabit the coastal blocks.

With this in mind, it was exciting to see a red hind moving out in the open sand dunes midmorning of our first day. She didn't live till lunchtime.

An easterly wind gave us an unusual opportunity to hunt an area usually difficult to approach with the prevailing westerly. Taking full advantage of this a very tasty whitetail yearling buck was procured on our first evening. Not much of it made it to our meat safe however as I called in to the old Homestead for a chat with a team from Otago University and gave away the hind quarters in the process.

Two more reds were spotted the following evening and assuming they would appear in the same place the next day paid off with two more culled reds just on dark. 3 more whitetails and 2 more reds were seen during our visit.

Overall we caught 22 rats and 1 cat. The cat numbers appear to be high with lots of sign and tracks everywhere but they are a very difficult animal to trap or shoot.

The three of us had not met before this trip and yet a better team dynamic would be hard to imagine with all doing their part and working together. Greg even showed the younger guys how to cook scones in a camp oven without burning them. They were very yummy. Volunteering for this or any other activity that our branch is involved in is a very rewarding experience and I encourage all of you to make the time to do so at least once. Our plane arrived on time on our departure day, and we enjoyed a clear sky flight home over the centre of the island with only a few nervous moments as we sought the origin of a sudden loud banging and rattle from the right wing when high over the peaks of Rakiura. It turned out to be the hip belt of my pack which had been shut in the door. Greg Wilson.

We acknowledge the generous financial support of Invercargill Hunting & Fishing Store for their assistance with flight costs.



The dunes where most of the deer were seen. Still early spring there was very little sign inland. (Greg)



A good frost outside the hut heralding a beautiful day.(Greg)

Wapiti Hunting Ballot Key Dates

Ballot Open 01/10/2023 – 30/11/2023 – 5:00pm

Wapiti ballot drawn 4/11/2023–5:00pm

Ballot periods

1st period 20th March – 29th March 2024 – Briefing 19th March 6pm

2nd period 30th March – 8th April 2024 – Briefing 29th March 6pm

3rd period 9th April – 18th April 2024 – Briefing 8th April 6pm

4th period 19th – 28th April 2024 (ALL BLOCKS) – Briefing 18th April 6pm

Young Hunts Course 2024

This course is for anyone young or old.

**Includes Firearm safety, Navigation, First Aid, Bushcraft,
Equipment and trip planning, Meat processing and more
Current planning is to run a course Around February 2024**



**Looking at expressions of interest in this course to Shaun
Phone 0276350490**

How much scope magnification?

Introduction

As a frequent visitor to a local shooting range near Dunedin, I get to see what the local hunters (mostly non-members of NZDA) are using on their 'hunting' rifles. The swing is definitely to variable power scopes, and they tend towards the higher-magnification options.

We need to consider what things glassware (as in telescopic sights) does and doesn't do.

What a scope sight does

They've come a long way since their first deployment in the American Civil War (1861 – 1865) (and no thank you, to the comedians out there who think I was there!). They were about a metre long, were hideously expensive, as rare as rocking horse manure, were probably neither fog proof nor watertight and probably very difficult to adjust for sighting-in.

Now, they are generally waterproof, fog proof, adjust reliably and are generally affordable. Their light transmission is usually excellent (tends to degrade with age though) and distortion of any images are minimal. Most that are sold today are of variable magnification which besides giving the user something else to fiddle with, practically guarantees you'll have it set at the high end of the magnification (zoom) range when an animal erupts from under your feet and you have trouble fitting it into the limited field of view. (For that sort of situation, you only need 2x to 4x, more is just an embarrassment).

Scopes also add weight, bulk and expense to your shooting rig. I think you can overdo a scope.

What a 'scope sight won't do

In a nutshell, a scope sight will **not** make you shoot better. Scope sights aid vision and aiming, **not** your shooting! Remember, as the magnification goes up, the field of view goes down.

Tricks to get the best from your 'scope

1. Keep the lenses clean with a proper (dedicated) scope lens cleaning cloth, NOT your shirt-tail which has probably been dragged through the mud and will scratch the coatings on the lenses, and may even scratch the lenses!
2. On a hunting rifle (even for open country), low power is good because a) you have a wider field of view, b) the wobbles don't look nearly as bad at a low power setting than when magnified (that sort of thing interferes with your peace of mind, essential to avoid when shooting) and c) lower power scopes are smaller and lighter than monstrous ones, are cheaper and are easier to carry around when hunting!
3. Very basic this, but the number of people who try to use their scopes when various screws are loose amazes me. Starting with the firer (yep, s/he needs to know what they're about too), the rifle action 'king' screws, the scope mount screws, the screws on the scope rings, all need to be firmly tightened but not over-tightened (some manufacturers specify torque settings, follow them if they do).
4. Trying to make the animal look bigger by using a high power setting will not reduce the 'ground shrinkage' after your trophy has fallen!

Best, Chaz F

Invercargill Rifle Club **Cobb Road Rifle Range**

As honorary members of the Invercargill Rifle Club, Southland Branch members now have the opportunity to use the Cobb Road Range for sighting in of rifles and also participating in programmed Invercargill Rifle club events.

You will need to bring

Firearms Licence and Deerstalkers membership card.

Ear and eye protection

Target capable of being stapled to the target frame

Rifle (bolt out) + ammo – Up to and including .308/7.62 calibre Bipod or other front support and rear support.

The range will be operated by a designated Rang Officer who will make themselves known at the range.

General format will be

Allocation of target frame

Validation of rifle being able to hit target at 100m

Shooting 200m and beyond after validation

Dates: The range is not for casual use but is available for use on the following dates:

Currently over the Summer Range is available Sundays (except over Xmas) 11am to 1pm, 100yards to 200 yards After which there is a NRA style shoot at longer ranges Range fee is \$10.00

If you are interested in attending and for further details please first contact

Andy Nesbit 0215 38676

Shaun McKelvie 027 635 0490

NRA/F Class shooters – make sure you arrange someone to pull targets and RO, you may be the only shooter at the range.

We hope to have the 500 and 600 yard mounds operational by November

Casual user questions – Message through the FB page or you can call Ben 0272247119 or Foster 021516342

NZDA Members – You have affiliated membership and can shoot for \$5 per session, contact Tom 0278471882 or Andy 021538676

Rifle Sighting In At Invercargill Pistol Club

With the start of daylight saving the Invercargill pistol Club range will be again available. To Financial Members for the sighting in of Rifles on Wednesday nights from 5.30 pm finishing 7pm. At the cost of \$10 per person. Ear & Eye protection required Bring one's own targets with staple gun or on cardboard box.

Please Note with the changes to the Law NO Semi Automatics allowed. (Other than .22R)

To use this facility you MUST contact the roistered person in charge **no later** than the previous Sunday night.

11th October Nathan Dawson 027 235 8063

25th October Tom Mead 027 847 1882

1st November Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

8th November Nathan Dawson 027 235 8063

22nd November Tom Mead 027 847 1882

29th November Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

Electric Range for sale X Wapiti Lodge

Fisher and Paykel model Paprika four plate manual range. In reasonable order,

however bottom of oven has been damaged by overheating due to aluminium foil being placed on bottom over the element.



Please phone Dave Howden 0274537026

Wapiti Lodge, & Red Stag Lodge Mavora



Wapiti Lodge



Red Stag

Bookings to
Neville & Carol Miller
Phone 03 216 8654 Cell 02108219528
e-mail nandc43@gmail.com
or 43 Bain St Invercargill

Please Note the Red Stag Lodge is on Doc land a hunting permit is required to have firearms at the site. **Deposits for any bookings to be received within seven days or bookings will be cancelled.**

Southland Branch Polo Shirts



The following are in stock and available for purchase @ \$35 each
Sizes Medium, large, Xtra Large, and XXL.

Available at Branch Meeting or by emailing
enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz

Subject line Polo Tee Shirts

Payment prior to delivery by online banking to the Branch Account 06-0925-0270758-000 with details of *your name Polo Shirt and Size*.

(If unable to do online banking contact Tom 0278471882)

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Purchase Back Country Cuisine freeze-dri meals direct at special prices, email Tony on info@bcfoods.co.nz to order or find out more information.

Swap gathering 21 JANUARY 2024
0900 to 1400 (ENDS ABOUT 2 PM,) at
61 Victoria Road, DUNEDIN
(UPSTAIRS)

FOR Licensed firearm owners ONLY

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BONDING, TRADING, BUYING, SELLING,
SWAPPING Firearms and accoutrements.

[If it fits through the doors, you can bring it!]

You can also exchange tall stories, keep the company of like-minded, fit & proper people and enjoy ***NOT*** being demonised, marginalised, abused and derogated by the negativism of politicians, the mass media and other hangers-on.

You *will* need your firearm licence, and \$10 to contribute to hire of venue.

Endless tea, coffee available

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