

THE SOUTHERN HUNTER

Southland Branch NZDA Newsletter

February 2024



Lake Stream Victoria Range North Westland

Monthly Meeting

Monthly meeting 7.30pm Wednesday 21st February at the Branch Club Rooms Longbush Hall McKerchar Road off State Highway 1 between Kennington & Woodlands

Guest Speaker

February's guest speaker is Alison Metherell, an accomplished photographer with a particular passion for wildlife and abstract landscape photography.

Nelson List, Alison's partner and branch member was awarded, 2nd place - Scenic – Veronese Trophy & Highly Recommended – Human Interest – Gore & Districts Branch Trophy in the 2023 National Photography competition.

Alison will cover photography basics such as the use of F stop, the rule of 3rds and other practical pointers.

Whilst Alison's camera of choice is a Canon feel free to bring your camera along to the meeting

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.

**Brayden Holden, Courtney McCorkindale , John Broughton,
Joshua Van Lieshout, Steve King, Simon Bond, Joshua Mason,
Timothy O'Connor, Nathan Insall, Jack Townley,**

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

Executive: Wayne Ashmore, Tony Caldwell, Gareth Coyle, Nathan Dawson, Scott Hall, Dave Howden, Jason Leishman, Jamie. McCallum, Ray Phillips, Ethan Todd.

Life Members (National & Branch) John DeLury, Ray Phillips (National) Roger McNaughton, (Branch), Doug Gordon Dave Howden, Neville Miller,

Sub committees

Rayonier Hunting Liaison Shaun, Luke & Andy

Lodges - (Red Stag & Mavora) Neville, Shaun, Dave

Hall & Library Luke, Jamie & Wayne

Club Hunts Tom, Luke and Wayne

Invercargill Rifle Range Tom, Shaun & Andy Nesbit



I've Also just got back from a Stewart Island hunting trip although no deer were shot we had a great time away. Stewart island is a special place if you ever get the chance to get over there hunting or fishing I'd Hooghly recommend taking the opportunity.

We've got a bit planned for the club this year, we will be running the Hunts course again so if you are keen please get in touch and we can get you on the list we have limited spots available to run the course effectively and offer as much one on one as we can we can only take up to 10.



Spot the deer

Although plenty more I'll leave that until the events are happening but if you do have an idea for an event, guest speaker, hunting trip or want to learn more about what the club and

association can do for you get in touch with any one of the committee members if we don't know the answer I'm sure we'll be able to find someone who does.

As always safe hunting and hot barrels

Cheers Shaun



Editorial

In November last year the NZ Game Animal Council launched a web site 'Better Hunting Aotearoa' (Which you all should have access to via an e-mail I sent you on this subject) But if you have lost it here is the Hyperlink again www.betterhunting.nz. It is worth a good look even for those with some years of experience, you will likely learn a bit. I tackled it over the last few months as I have recovered from a hip replacement. Something to do on those wet and not so wet days, which we have had a few of (no drought cross fingers). So I am now over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way through it, and have slowed down.

I learned a bit, remembered a bit as I went. The odd thing I disagreed with due to my depth of knowledge on some subjects. I was alarmed with the introductory photo in the "Meat Processing" section. Which showed back steak and other cuts on a rock. (It reminded me of the Duley's "Hunter Adventures" and their bad habit of putting meat on rocks and bushes.) The content of this and the neighbouring section on Meat Safety calmed my fears. They talked of placing a plastic sheet between the Meat and NZ to prevent contamination explaining **why!**

I can see something in this course for all hunters none of us are experts in everything. There is always another way to do things that may be better. Definitely good reading for those doing the young hunts course, and their instructors, (can't have the pupils knowing more, need to keep one step ahead).

In the future perhaps a module on photography could be worth adding. Then perhaps not as it's not a core subject?

So make the time some wet day and have a look I suspect you will find something of interest somewhere in it. Even if it is just Identifying the age of stags from the photos,

Enjoy and learn

Doug Gordon

Sponsors

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



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.

PARTY 5 Rat Program Trip Report - Homestead Block, Mason Bay, Stewart Island 4 – 11 November 2023

Author – Tony Caudwell

Craig Cunninghame, Glenn Wallace and I made up the team doing the rat trapping on the Homestead Block at Mason Bay on Stewart Island for the period 4 – 11 November 2023. Although weather for the flight over on the 4th of November was a bit stormy with strong westerly winds and showers, the pilot managed to get us safely on the beach not too far south of Duck Creek. From there we made our way past the DOC hut and historic Homestead to Homestead Hunters Hut, our very comfortable accommodation for the week.

As I hadn't done the trapping before Glenn showed me the ropes, which included our first rat for the trip from the Duck Creek line. That evening with a strong Westerly still blowing we hunted Mutton Flat, which resulted in me spotting and shooting our first whitetail for the trip at 150m, a yearling buck.

We counted ourselves as lucky to achieve this on the first day, as Craig hadn't seen any deer on his previous trip. And lucky we were, with fine weather, more deer, rats and even a cat for the whole trip:

- 1x Cat
- 2x Red Deer (1x hind, 1x stag)
- 4x Whitetail Deer (1x buck, 3x doe)
- 13x Ship Rats

In terms of the bird life we were trying to protect, we saw lots of Tui, quite a few Kiwi and Kakariki and lower numbers of Bellbird, Robin and Tomtit. With regard to the Kiwi, although we saw around 10 birds in total, almost every Kiwi track we saw on the sand dunes had cat tracks trailing them, which was concerning.

This is a great trip to volunteer for, with the opportunity to visit Mason Bay, conserve its native birds, have an opportunity to hunt Whitetail deer and make new friends with some good buggers. I was very lucky to go with Craig and Glenn, benefitting from their knowledge, previous experience and island routine:

1. Get up at 5am and go hunting.
2. Come back for breakfast at around 8am.
3. Go trapping till lunchtime.
4. Sleep the afternoon away.
5. Head out hunting at around 7pm.
6. Return 10pm to 11pm, cook dinner and go to bed after midnight.
7. Repeat daily.

A big thanks to the branch, Rakiura Hunter Camp Trust and Gerald at Hunting & Fishing Invercargill for helping to fund these trip



Rat in trap,



Tony with red stag,



Craig with whitetail doe,



Glenn with red hind.

Mason Bay – Stewart Island Rat trapping

Rat team 6

We went to Mason Bay on the 25th of November and returned on the 1st of December. Our normal crew is Andre (me), Steve and Cameron. Unfortunately, Steve hurt his back 2 days before we were due to fly out, so it ended up being just 2 of us going.

We landed on the beach at about 4.20pm with great weather, that was the best weather of the trip.

Walk in was good only 1 trip and we landed right by duck creek.

We did 2 rounds of checks on the traps and got only 8 rats in total all on the first round. We set the cat traps but had no luck. Saw plenty of deer and shot 1 red on the edge of the old airfield. We saw about 8 Whitetail and maybe 5-6 reds. Plenty of Kiwis around and lots of bellbirds and bush pigeons.

The tracks were all well maintained but will need a few spare traps for next year.

We fixed the door to the cabinet using a piece of plywood, glue, and screws – hopefully it does not get broken again by some idiot. We were the first to write in the new hut book.

All the cat cage traps were collected and stored in the old hut for next year.

We emptied the 9kg gas bottle and brought it back, had to walk to Martins Creek for pick up due to lots of gravel on the beach. We had a great trip – thanks to Hunting and Fishing for their support and JD for organising it all



A short Summary of the Six Trapping Teams for 2023.

A very low number of rats were killed at 153, this was our second lowest total ever. It seems to be that rats are in low numbers following a high number killed the previous year.

Southland Branch has been organizing 6 teams each year since 2006 and in that time we have accounted for 6008 rats. The teams also caught and killed 5 cats. We have been targeting cats as well in the last 7 years and our total so far is 31 cats.

All of the participants saw or shot animals, some saw their first whitetail deer.

The Branch is very appreciative of the support we receive from Gerald at Invercargill Hunting & Fishing store.

Young Kids Hunting & Fishing Competition Wyndham Show

Hi All the team from the Wyndham A&P Show Kids Hunting and fishing Competition would like to Thank all our generous Sponsors without all of your support we could not make a event like this happen, The kids and their parents were all blown away by the generosity of the prizes that we were able to present to the kids and their entry packs for all the children who got involved. We are very grateful.

To all of the volunteers from the Gore & Districts and the Southland NZDA Branches Thanks for all of your time organising sponsorship and putting together all the prizes and entry packs for the kids. It's pretty cool to see their reactions and hear their stories of their hunting and fishing adventures. Most of all I think it's great to get families out and spending time together outdoors whether they were successful in their hunting & fishing or not it's a memory and experience the kids will have forever.

We had 42 juniors enter and 19 Seniors. 61 in total

The Senior Prize winners were

Heaviest Hare Ben Geary 4.41kg
Heaviest Possum Jessica Pire 4.0kg
Heaviest Rabbit Mikayla Renton 3.86 kg
Heaviest Fish Carter Dudly .85kg



Senior Prize winners

Junior Prize winners

Junior Prize winners were

Heaviest Hare Zander Templeman 5.44kg
Heaviest Possum Harry McRae 4.0kg
Heaviest Rabbit Zoe Heaps 2.22kg
Heaviest Fish Joel McLarn 2.29 kg
Southern Adventure Senior Spot prize went to Hannah Pire
Invercargill Hunting & Fishing Spot prize went to Ida Rabbage



Junior spot Prize winner

Under 7 Possum throw Duncan Welsh

Junior Possum throw Toby welsh

Senior Possum throw Fletcher Morton



Possum throw winners

Thanks Again All Involved until next year

Regards
Southland NZDA Kids hunt team.



The following is the first of a series of articles on hunting in New Caledonia written by John Berry (who has had to sadly give up hunting due to old age) and provided to me by his friend Geoff Jukes.

The Beginning

New Caledonia lays some 1200 kilometres due east of Rockhampton Australia, forming the Eastern border of the Coral Sea.

James Cook was the first European to sight it and as the bush covered mountains reminded him of Scotland he named it **New Caledonia**. He failed to land, as the island is almost completely surrounded by coral reefs and lagoons.

In fact the Lagoon at Noumea is said to be the largest in the world. It is certainly large, as the Armande Lighthouse, that marks the entrance to Noumea harbour, is only just visible from the nude beach on the waterfront. Although my friend Kevin Rayner (SCI Australia) probably could see it well when he went down there with his spotting scope!

Anyway, the island was finally claimed by the Frenchman Laparouse in 1778. The sneaky devil found a way through the reefs to land. At various times it has been a source of slaves, a penal colony, a source of nickel, a base the forces of New Zealand, Australia and the USA during WW11 and the support base for France's nuclear program in the South Pacific.

Rusa deer were introduced in 1870 and along with Turkeys, Pigs, Rabbits, Pheasants and Largemouth Bass, they thrived to form what was (is?) the premier herd of free range Rusa in the Pacific.

It was my privilege to hunt them over many seasons, with a number of hunters seeking their Trophy Rusa.

Bob Penfold of Hunt Australia had hunted there privately and then decided to setup an operation for guiding. He ran this operation out of an abandoned homestead on the Deva station until in 1992. At that point I was asked to manage the operation and so over the next 10 or 11 years I spent up to 7 weeks a year, mid-July through August, in New Caledonia.

The operation stayed at Deva, close to the village of Bourail until about 1997, then it moved to the village of La Foa, due to the interference of the local government officials.

In La Foa we worked out of the village hotel, which had several advantages as far the camp logistics went – food was provided in house, (the sea food was excellent). Beer was on tap

and there was no shortage of water, so it was not necessary to suggest showering with a friend.

During those years I saw and heard a lot of funny things, some of which I have tried to record here, I have also included some short chapters on various hunts. We did after all harvest a hell of a lot of stags.

Most of the hunts were unremarkable – the client came, hunted, shot and left, those recorded here stuck in my memory for various reasons. We carried heads, skun trophies, salted head skins and generally enjoyed hunting with lots of deer and great weather. The staff were always keen to go and escape the New Zealand winter.



Firearm registration progress January 2024

The Police have widely reported that over 100,000 firearms have been registered since the inception of the new firearms registry in June last year.

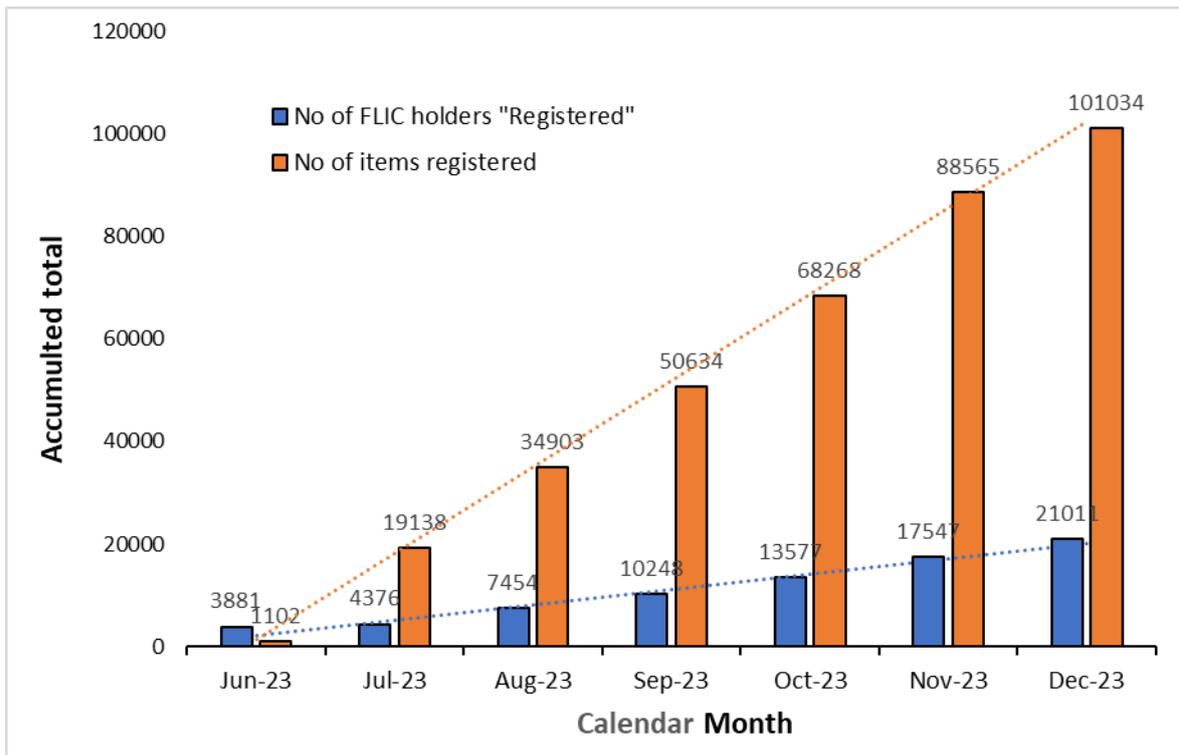


Figure 1: Monthly results from the Firearm Safety Authority.

Comment

The Police annual report for the year ended 30 June 2023 advises that 225 extra staff have been added to the police strength for the management of firearms. Elsewhere they have advised they have 70 full-time equivalent staff (EFTS) working in the registry.

The average number of firearms per month so far is just over 16,600, which suggests that each of the 70 staff are handling approximately 235 firearms per month per staff member, or (assuming 20 working days per month), 12 firearms per day per staff member. I have timed the length of time to register each firearm for a fairly large sample and it averaged 2.4 minutes per firearm.

Given that the police have estimated there could be as many as 48,000 firearms held illegally, it is reasonable to surmise that none of these feature in the firearms shown in the graph (Figure 1).

We can only hope that at least some of these will eventually become registered. Is that too much to hope?

Chaz Forsyth

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

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.

14th February Nathan Dawson 027 235 8063

28th February Tom Mead 027 847 1882

6th March Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

13th March Doug Gordon 0276372206

27th March Nathan Dawson 027 235 8063

3rd April Tom Mead 027 847 1882

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

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(If unable to do online banking contact Tom 0278471882)
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The advertisement is set against a background of animal skin with a radial pattern. The text is white and bold, with the main title in all caps. The contact information and address are in a smaller font, and the promotional offer is at the bottom.

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