

The Southern Hunter

Southland Branch NZDA Newsletter

November 2025



Sunset over South West Arm Paterson's Inlet.

Monthly Meeting

7pm Wednesday 19th November
Social BBQ everyone welcome
BYO Beverages we'll sort the rest

Branch Club Rooms
24 McKerchar Road off State Highway 1

Presidents Report



Hi all I hope everyone weathered the Storm and weren't without power for too long there was along of trees down and power out over the whole of Southland like we've never seen before. Big Thanks to everyone that worked some 24hrs and over without breaks to restore power, clear roads and tracks and keep everyone going. The clean-up for some will be ongoing for sometime yet .

If you're out hunting be mindful of windfall and down trees if it's in a forestry block don't attempt to remove it yourself let the appropriate people know and three professionals can deal to it.

On a more positive note the Wyndham A&P Show Kids Hunting competition is coming up on the 6th of December watch this space entries will be out soon,

Be great to see a few new and old faces at the BBQ this month

Cheers Shaun

Editorial



The usual unsettled southland spring weather has been limiting the hunting opportunities lately, however Andy Jamie and I recently got out for a quick evening hunt and managed to get 3 deer on the deck.

One had taken off after a heart shot and with minimal blood to track it wasn't looking hopeful we would find it, however with the help of Andy's dog Frankie who tracked it down to where it had expired in some thick cover.

For me early October and heading into summer is a time of year when I spend a bit of time fishing (when the river levels allow). it's a great idea when heading out hunting to throw a rod and a few soft baits or lures in the pack.



A recent trip to the Mataura saw around 30 trout to the net between 3 Anglers



Hopefully everyone managed to hunker down in the high winds and haven't got too much damage!

With the November meeting BBQ coming up it's a great opportunity to catch up for a few tales of success and even more hard luck stories, I hope to see you there!!

Happy hunting,
Luke.



On the Snowline

With Doug Gordon

The winds and rain have stopped (for present). Time to be out there doing something. Under two months left of the year. Only one newsletter and one meeting left before Xmas.

At the end of each month National Office produce the monthly newsletter. This is a vast improvement on what was communicated a few years ago. I have found that if you have a quick read, you miss a lot. Need to get into the hyperlinks to find some of the interesting stuff. I was disappointed that I could find no update of the situation regarding the poisoning of Stewart Island, did I miss something? I would have thought progress would be reported on monthly like Herds of Special Interest.

What I did find though two hyperlinks down under DOC's Wild Animal Management report the "Wild Animal Management Summary 2004/25". In it an article on working with others. This is a trial that has been conducted in Fiordland where WARO operators were paid \$80 per head for deer shot and recovered, and Doc used the same amount (I assume) to go on search and destroy. The search and destroy shot more Deer per square Km at less cost, \$63 per deer. It is believed that a low demand for carcasses by the Game Processors may have contributed. Is things going to change with more processing plants currently on the way?

What the Information does not state is if both parts of the trial were conducted in the same part of the park. (If not, one is comparing apples and oranges). For the last decade plus the WARO operators have only gone as far as necessary to collect the carcasses required to fill the orders they have. (The shooting to order is a big change from last century where they shot as much as they could find and just delivered it to the operators to cope with.) These days the demand for carcasses is dependent on what the processors require not what the WARO operators can supply. If the WARO operators did the same as normal and shot the handy deer due to less ferry time. (In the areas more commonly hunted by recreational hunters). While the search and destroy headed to the remote Southwest part of the park naturally the kill rate they achieved would be higher. Is this trial and report objective or pointed to a planned outcome the areas hunted by both not mentioned?

This report also brought back memories of a failed Branch trip of the mid 1990's (weather) that only go as far as the Wapiti Lodge. The plan was to hunt the Coal River area that was reported at the time to have large numbers of deer, after a down turn in the venison industry. This area was seldom ground hunted due to a lack of trophy potential and being remote. The plan was for the helicopter to take one load of hunters in from Te Anau, while the rest boated across Lake Manapouri. To be taken in on a shorter trip from West Arm thus reducing helicopter costs. There was no second attempt to carry out the trip, from my fading memory the price of venison was back up by the next year pressure back on the area. I wonder what the cost and interest there would be in such trips now 30 years later. Prior to this the Branch organised two trips into the Kaipo Valley by fixed wing is there fixed wing operators available to do this again now.

Get out while you can time changes everything, take care go safe and return well. Have a good festive season catch you next year

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 advised,

If there is anything you are interested in doing please contact a member of the executive

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

New Members

Please welcome them.

BRANCH CONTACTS



enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz



<http://www.southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz/>

Branch winners at National competitions

Office Bearers

President: Shaun McKelvie 027 635 0490

Vice President: Luke Payne 027 828 2619

Secretary: Andy Nesbit 021 53 8676

Treasurer: Scott Hall 027 859 3533

Membership: Paul Fitzek / Jason Leishman

Newsletter Editor: Luke Payne ssj4_luke@hotmail.com



Southland branch has registered for the National Goat comp this year.

We will have measuring days at our monthly meetings

Last for the year November 19th

At the Branch Hall 24 McKercher road 730pm. Or if you can't make a meeting Invercargill Hunting and Fishing are also accepting entries

Anyone questions get in contact

enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/events/national-events/national-wild-goat-hunting-competition/>

We're proud to be supported by a number of generous sponsors who help make our club activities and events possible. Their backing plays a vital role in keeping our community strong and ensuring members can enjoy the outdoors.

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Better Hunting education

The Game Animal Council has an online hunter training platform, Better Hunting. It is free to use for hunters and other backcountry users wanting to develop their hunting and outdoor skills.

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[Go to the Better Hunting platform.](#)

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 .22LR)

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

26th November Wayne Ashmore 027 810 1814

3rd December Doug Gordon 0276372206

10th December Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

17th December Wayne Ashmore 027 810 1814

4th February Doug Gordon 0276372206

11th February Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

25th February Wayne Ashmore 027 810 1814

4th March Doug Gordon 0276372206

11th March Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

25th March Wayne Ashmore 027 810 1814

1st April Doug Gordon 0276372206

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

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

Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

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.

Full summer calendar at bottom of newsletter

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.**



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2025 Summer Shooting

Important: Range Re-certified – Make sure you check the new Range Standing Orders. All shooters must validate zero at 100M before shooting further back.

All shooting subject to the presence of a Range Officer. RO's may arrange shooting any day of the week outside the schedule below. RO's please note new range book format.

All shoots are open to casual or prospective club members – please come along and shoot - \$20 unless otherwise stated! Shoots start at 1.00 PM unless otherwise noted.

Most Wednesdays	5.30 pm	Focus on rim-fire shooting and center-fire Sight-in, 100M
Occasional Saturdays	Validation and Sight-in 1.00pm	NZNRA or Hunter style shooting, Range and targets at RO's discretion
Sundays	Validation and Sight-in 1.00pm	As per below, otherwise PRS/Hunter Shooting, range and targets at RO's discretion
Precision Series – Various gong shooting matches at ranges up to 600Y, Dot Shooting, "Eric Cortina", "Texas Plinker" and "Long Gong" Plates, suitable for all reasonably accurate CF rifle types. About 20 rounds per day. Hunter Class (scope set to max 15x, rig under 5 Kgs) and Open		
Hunting Rifle Days – For hunters wanting to sight in and validate rifles - with a focus on extended hunting distances. All welcome		
Rim-fire Series – "Long Gong" and a new "Dot" challenge series, suitable for any rimfire, about 50 rounds per day.		
5 Oct 2025	22 Dot Challenge - Bring your 22 or other rimfire and 50 rounds ammo for a NEW challenge	
19 Oct 2025	Hunting Rifle Day – to 500	
22 Oct 2025 5.30 pm	Range Officers Course at Custom Guns	
2 Nov 2025	Precision Series – Texas Plinker at 600	
16 Nov 2025	Introduction to Positional shooting for Hunting /PRS	
30 Nov 2025	Precision Series – Eric Cortina Rack at 500	
6/7 Dec 2025	Southland Champs NZNRA – NRA and F-Class shooting to 600 – if you are serious about shooting and accuracy come along and prove it, or watch and learn!	
14 Dec 2025	Club Hunter/PRS Shoot Positional shooting match – all levels catered for	
21 Dec 2025 11.00 am Start	Club Day Novelty Shoot and BBQ – Bring a rim-fire 50 rounds and precision centre-fire 20 rounds, course of fire to be advised	
4 Jan 2026	One on One Rim-fire Speed and Accuracy Match – If you can beat another shooter to get 9 shots on 3 targets then this is as much fun as you can have with your pants on. 50 rounds. Separate classes for semi's and bolt guns.	
18 Jan 2026	One on One 223 Speed and Accuracy Match – Time to get serious now. 20-50 rounds. 200M. Unlimited rounds but they need to hit to count! Bring out the Straight pulls and see if you can beat the bolt guns!	
1 Feb 2026	Precision Series – Small plate Long Gong at 300	
15 Feb 2026	Hunting Rifle Day – to 500+	
1 Mar 2026	Rim-fire Finals - Long Gong and Dot Challenge. 100 rounds	