

THE SOUTHERN HUNTER

Southland Branch NZDA News Letter



Wattie Smith Blue Mts

December 2020

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

Monthly Meeting
6.00pm at Custom Guns 420 Dee Street
@ Herbert Street Lights

FACEBOOK:

AS YOU MAY KNOW THE CLUB HAS MOVED WITH THE TIMES AND NOW HAS ITS VERY OWN FACEBOOK PAGE FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE ON FACEBOOK. CHECK IT OUT, YOU WILL FIND HELPFUL INFO ON THERE AND IT WILL HOPEFULLY ENCOURAGE NEW MEMBERSHIP AND CLUB INTERACTION. WE ENCOURAGE ALL MEMEBERS TO CONTRIBUTE TO IT

Guest Speaker Greg of Custom Guns on Reloading

NEW MEMBERS

New Members please welcome them

Allan Agnew, Ethan Todd, Cameron Fleury, Joel Yates, Ewen Rodway, Montgomery Douglas Williams, Ezekiel Maheno, Anton Robinson, Tony Briggs, Jacob Smyth, Jayden Goble, Jack Burgess, Ryan Mawdsley, Jared Nielsen, Daniel Beckingsale

Working Bee Firewood

Hi all on the 8th of December 6pm onwards we are going to have a \evening doing firewood as a fundraiser for the club and the Rayioners funds at Rodger McNaughton's place 168 Walker Road which runs off the Morton Mains - Woodlands Road .

It would be great to have a good turnout also if you're interested in hunting Rayioners it would be good to come along and contribute. Bring your chainsaw log splitter or just yourself see ya there 😊.

Cheers Shaun Mckelvie 0276350490

Club Hunts

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

Wallaby Hunt

No Wallaby hunts before New 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.



Presidents Report



Hi all with Xmas drawing closer things will no doubt be in full swing hopefully you've been more organised than me and had time to get out and about for a look to fill the freezer up

is a pretty busy time of year for most. There's plenty of deer out there from what I'm being told so get amongst it.

Hopefully, we see a few of you at the Wyndham A&P Show we will be in the Hunting and Fishing Gazebo running the weigh in from 12noon to 2pm.

Thanks Very much to Gerald for letting us use their gazebo and they have also kindly donated the prizes for the Kids hunt that we are helping to run with the Wyndham A&P Society to. So, make sure you get on and support them as they support us and many other community events where else do you do Xmas shopping anyway 😊🐾.



Also, Another Stewart Island Rat programme has almost been successfully completed one more group still to come out, to date with 61 Rats taken 6 Cats taken Thanks to all the volunteers that take time off to go over and run the trap lines. And Big Thanks to INVERCARGILL HUNTING & FISHING for their ongoing support with the Rat Programme.

XMAS Meeting 6 Pm at Custom Guns 420 Dee St

Come along and have a look through the new shop Greg has it really well set out and has lots of room now to have everything out displayed. He is going to have a chat to us about some reloading gear and then afterwards we will have a BBQ and a chin wag out the back of the shop.

We now have 8 members certified range Officers and we have been Orientated around the Invercargill Rifle Range we will be kicking off in the New Year helping run the Tuesday night sighting in shoots. We will have more information to come The Range is capable of use out to 600yards so it'll be a great chance to get along with some of the experts and see how its done.

We are looking for expressions of interest in a Pre ROAR Fitness boot camp \$10 a session running for 8 sessions over 4weeks in February every Tue Thur @ Queens park we have J&T Fitness Studio lined up to run the sessions it'll be a great way to get out and get fit before that big roar trip and meet new people. If you are Keen let Tom or me no. Tom 0278471882 Shaun 0276350490

Any ideas for the upcoming year would be greatly appreciated hunts you'd like to help organise. Deer Thar goats Wallabys. Do we want a Stewart Island club trip?

See you At the Meeting Cheers Shaun



Editorial

Thirteen parties have been charged under the Health and Safety at Work Act. In relation to the disaster on White Island just a year ago. We don't know the details yet but already, it is beginning to sound like another Cave Creek. We know now how that affected how things are done on the far side of the black stump. The people in charge of Doc taking no chances, as they don't want to be held responsible for anything that goes wrong. Who can blame them? If in doubt don't take a chance. The question needs be asked but by whom? why are Health & Safety themselves not on this extensive list, for failing to find all these party's alleged unsafe practices prior to the incident?

Land owners have followed that lead using Health and Safety as an excuse to denigh access to their land for hunting. Schools not taking any risks with their pupils on school trips. Pupils get less practical training in how to handle the outdoors. The great out back of New Zealand that we have enjoyed for so long just got another step closer to being out of bounds. Where will it end? In a hundred years one may be charged with trespass if one walks of the marked track in a National Park.

Just this month there are reports of farmers restricting what was access to the Ruahine Ranges, besides the sad run of abuse of such privileges by the normal low life's. One farmer was reported for an animal welfare issue by visitors that turned out to be nothing more than routine acceptable farm practice. Think it won't or can't happen. I recently heard of a lifestyle farmer near Invercargill, who dug a hole to bury a dead sheep. Started to drag it to the hole and found his alarmed grandson on his cell phone reporting him for animal cruelty. Yes being cruel dragging a **DEAD** sheep. Such situations are the result of not getting a robust education in the realities of live (and death). Too much of a cotton wool life, something the trend exhibited by some of the above prosecutions will likely only encourage. One or two being prosecuted for white Island yes maybe but Thirteen? New Zealand will in time fall apart if we are wrapped in too much cotton wool. Our educators have to wrap their charges in cotton wool, as to do other is not worth the risk to them as Teachers.

Doug Gordon

Sponsors

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



Branch Trophies

This is a series of articles on the branch trophies as found in the club rooms, with two other at Wapiti Lodge. (*Note I thought there was only one trophy at the Wapiti lodge until staying at it this year*)

Robert G Shearing Fallow

Cullens Gully Blue Mountains 1930's



Photo Hazeldines Studio

Before the start of dinner. Left to right: A. H. Hamilton, Branch Patron and Life Member N.Z.D.A., R. G. Shearing, an octogenarian and Life Member Southland Branch, D. B. Banwell, Branch President, Gilbert Buchanan, well known Southland stalker and an early wapiti hunter, R. J. Blue, Branch-Vice-President and L. J. Bellaney.

Robert Shearing was born in Crookston in 1881 and lived his life in the district and hunted extensively throughout the Blue Mountains. Shearing knew the location of this buck and set off before daylight. The buck was located lying in full view and it took a while to get in safe range and was dropped with one shot. Shearing was a life member of Southland Branch NZDA and the Red Deer and pig tusks below are displayed in Wapiti Lodge. The fallow buck if the same as on the wall above the guests at this 1960's deerstalkers dinner.



For an article written by Robert Shearing on his hunting life see New Zealand Wildlife 1965 issue 10

Branch Tops.

We are organizing branch tops with our logo on them. They are going to be a Hunting and Fishing fleece bush shirt. The cost of these will be around \$40 Men's and Women's styles are available. To do this you will need to place an order we will process these once a month. To place and order please contact:

Thomas Mead 027 847 1882 or enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz



Pink

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Available at a great price to Branch Members Contact Gus
Ronald gus.ronald@xtra.co.nz for a price list

A Round of Firsts – Mason Bay 21st – 27th October 2020

Scott Cameron

21st October and it was time to meet John and Mike DeLury at Invercargill airport. After sorting out the extra items into the three packs we checked in, I didn't need to get on the scales to know I was the heaviest but it's all part of the process and after a couple of jokes we were loading into the plane and ready for take-off. # 1 First – flying to Steward Island, I have been by boat a number of times but this was such a great way to get there because as you fly down the coast line you realise the true size of the island with all the beautiful beaches, bush covered hills and sharp cliff edges. I could believe this is where I was going to be for the next 7 days.

First # 2 was a real buzz, the landing on the Mason Bay beach. As you come in low for the first pass being close to everything and banking around over the DOC huts, tracks and Mutton Flat (I found out later the first pass to make sure there is nothing on the beach to tip us up) all I could see was sand dunes and gully's that seemed to swallow the bush. Next thing you know your racing along the beach turning around and heading to Duck Creek.

Unloaded from the plane as the wind was wiping the sand all around us we started the trek to the hut following Duck Creek into the dunes, sad to say the first track we found in the

sand were those of a cat. On to first # 3 where from the Duck Creek hut (DOC) to the hunters hut we set cat traps and checked all the rat traps along the track. I was having a great time and was trying to take it all in from John as to where I would be checking traps later but due to the environment I was now in, I was slightly distracted. So much to take in and this was just the walk to the hut past the old homestead and the woolshed. Once at the hut we set up bunks and a quick hut inspection and a couple of repairs required for the flu on the fire place, nothing some wire and tin foil can't band aid. (Later it was decided the fire needed to be replaced) A cup of tea and confirmation of who was doing what tracks and we were out the door for the first round of traps.



First # 4 was a rat in the Duck Creek line second trap, I think it was a Norway rat but the main thing it was dead, quickly followed by first # 5. While I bent down to inspect bait on the fourth trap of the line I found myself less than 10m away from the first deer for the trip. I'm not sure who got the biggest fright but the red deer bolted like a freight train and I froze like a rock. What a buzz and I bounced my way around the rest of the traps on a high.

After completing a couple of lines we all caught up back at the hut and had a count up of numbers and it was good to hear the number of rats around this year were well down on last year's efforts. We had an early tea and set out for an evening stalk.

John and I went one way with Mike heading another to cover more ground. It was exciting as we took our spot looking over a small gully only to be surprised by first # 6. I lay eyes on a Stewart Island Whitetail. It was feeding in the next gully over from us and we decided to cut the distance between us by creeping through the bush and scrub to a great vantage point only to see that the deer had moved on. We waited less than ten minutes to be confronted by a pair of red spikers in front of us. Keeping an eye out for the white tail, John got some good video of the reds and the call was made to have a crack. I didn't want to miss in front of my new hunting partner and as I took the nervous shot the echo rang out all around us, the chosen deer fell to the ground and I could now breathe again.

I didn't take long being more like a bulldozer pushing through the scrub and bush to get to it. I was able to confirm first # 7, the first deer for the trip. Due to the fact I was still buzzing, John's expertise at butchering saw us hitting the bush back to the hut just on dark.



slept well that night and I think I should have offered John and Mike ear plugs but I didn't learn this until morning. It was a great breakfast (all week John was the lead on the cooking and all I can say is that I was well looked after) and then a lesson from Mike on the art of boning out, he makes it look so easy and I was trying to be a sponge absorbing all the tips and tricks.

Back around the remaining rat trap lines to complete all the circuits and the numbers remained low. Plenty of bird life around from Tui's, Fantails, Tomtits, Bellbirds to hearing Kiwi pushing through the under growth. Again it was back to the hut for tea and out for another hunt, this time I went with Mike and the wind was not our friend though. First # 8 however played out with the sound of Kiwi calling and Mike explaining how another one will call back and sure enough on cue it did, I'm sure it would be a fright if you were near them in in the bush when they did that. John however, managed to get more photos of deer in the same place as the night before.

Friday found us doing odd jobs around the hut, checking cat traps (got one for the trip) and enjoying the environment we were in. Again evening hunts were on and I went with John to see if 3 times a charm in the same place but it wasn't to be. Mind you we did see a red deer when we got there and John got video of a Whitetail doe and her young one but all too far to have a crack at. Here's a Youtube link to what we were watching.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMAKWIPXGnY&t=38s> We even spooked some in the dark on the way back. We found on our arrival back to the hut that Mike had been successful with bowling over a Red deer. He was happy to inform us he was back at the hut before dark.

Saturday found us well and we knew it was going to be a fine one so I decided to go for a stroll out to the Sand Pass. When I first got out to the dunes it was like walking out into a

different world, no human tracks, just Kiwi and deer tracks to keep you on edge. Even though I didn't see any live animals for my 5 hour stroll the whole time I was sure I was going to walk into one. It was so weird to be standing on a high peak and seeing the next load of people coming into the DOC hut in the plane to land on the beach and you're at the same height as them. I pushed through bush gullies and travelled across sand dunes until I was at the North end of Mason Bay where I finally dropped down onto the beach, after finding a way down from the bluffs I was on. I decided to go for a dip and stripped off to cool down in the surf (later to find out it was 23 degrees at the DOC hut). It was a 45 minute walk back to the mouth of Duck Creek where we had started only a couple of days earlier when getting out of the plane. I was hanging out for a cold drink by the time I got back to the hunters hut and Mike and John had this covered.

We had made a plan to complete another full round of the rat traps on Sunday to beat the forecasted rain but I wanted to make the most of the good morning and waking up early I went for a hunt. An early start and I spotted a Whitetail (after it had seen me first) within minutes from the hut putting me on high alert and this paid off because you guessed it, first # 9 – I shot my first ever Whitetail deer and all before 6.30am.



Back to the hut and I couldn't stop smiling for the rest of the day. It was time for breakfast and I found another use for a sleeping bag liner, it was now a deer bag to keep the flies off. Away around the traps and Mikes parting comment about rain this afternoon was bang on the money. Mike and I missed it but the start of the down pour got John enough to look more like a drowned rat when he walked into the hut. Good thing we had the billy on. The rain stayed steady for the night so it was a good hut night but my out of character snoring was back to the delight of the other hut dwellers.

Monday morning broke clear and no more rain in sight we spent most of the day checking cat traps and exploring out the other side of our location up and around the Big Sand Hill. It was a great day for plenty of photos because to you could see in all directions. That evening I decided to try and see a kiwi because even though I had heard them and saw

bushes moving from them foraging in the bush I hadn't laid eyes on one. I was to have a look around the old air strip and Mike and John were off to their spot in the dunes. I didn't find a kiwi but spooked a Whitetail. I did hear a shot in the distance and this turned out to be Mike's Whitetail deer for the trip. I spent a bit of time walking the tracks in the dark around the Homestead and the Woolshed but the only things I came across were other Kiwi spotters from the DOC hut and a deer.

I still didn't have that photo of a Kiwi for my daughter, so Tuesday morning I was on a mission. The helicopter wasn't due until 10am to replace the fire and our pick up so I was up and gone at first day light. To my amazement as I was heading to a location that Mike said he saw a Kiwi a couple of days earlier, I happened to come across another Whitetail and with a single shot I had another one on the ground. After I cleaned up the carcass to carry it back to the hut I loaded up and walked only 50 metres and came across a Kiwi looking for breakfast around some tussocks. I quickly dropped everything and snapped a couple of good photos. Yes First # 10 was in the bag.



I couldn't believe my luck on such a beautiful morning. Back at the hut packing my gear for the ride out I was happy as a pig in muck when I realised I had left my binoculars back at the point I ditched all my gear for the photos of the Kiwi. Mike said I still had time, as quick as a flash I was off and sure enough they were right where I thought they would be.

As the helicopter came into site I explained how this was my first time in one so it was First # 11 – an uneven number but a perfect 11 for me!

As we landed back in Invercargill and before the fact set in that I was going back to work the next day I was reflecting on a week that was.

I am truly thankful for the trip and the experiences I had because I understand how lucky I really was, to get half of them would have still been an unbelievable trip. I know that the chances of having a dream trip like this again will be hard to come by but it won't stop me coming back at any other opportunity I get again.

This is a truly magical place, and I'm just thankful to the Mason Bay Rat & Cat Control Project, that I had the chance to get out there and do it. I can't thank John and Mike DeLury enough for making this one to remember. I learnt so much from them like I don't need a big knife, the difference between a ship rat and a Norway rat and the fact that when I take my time, I will see deer.

A big thank you to Invercargill Hunting & Fishing store for their generous help with the plane costs.

Scottie

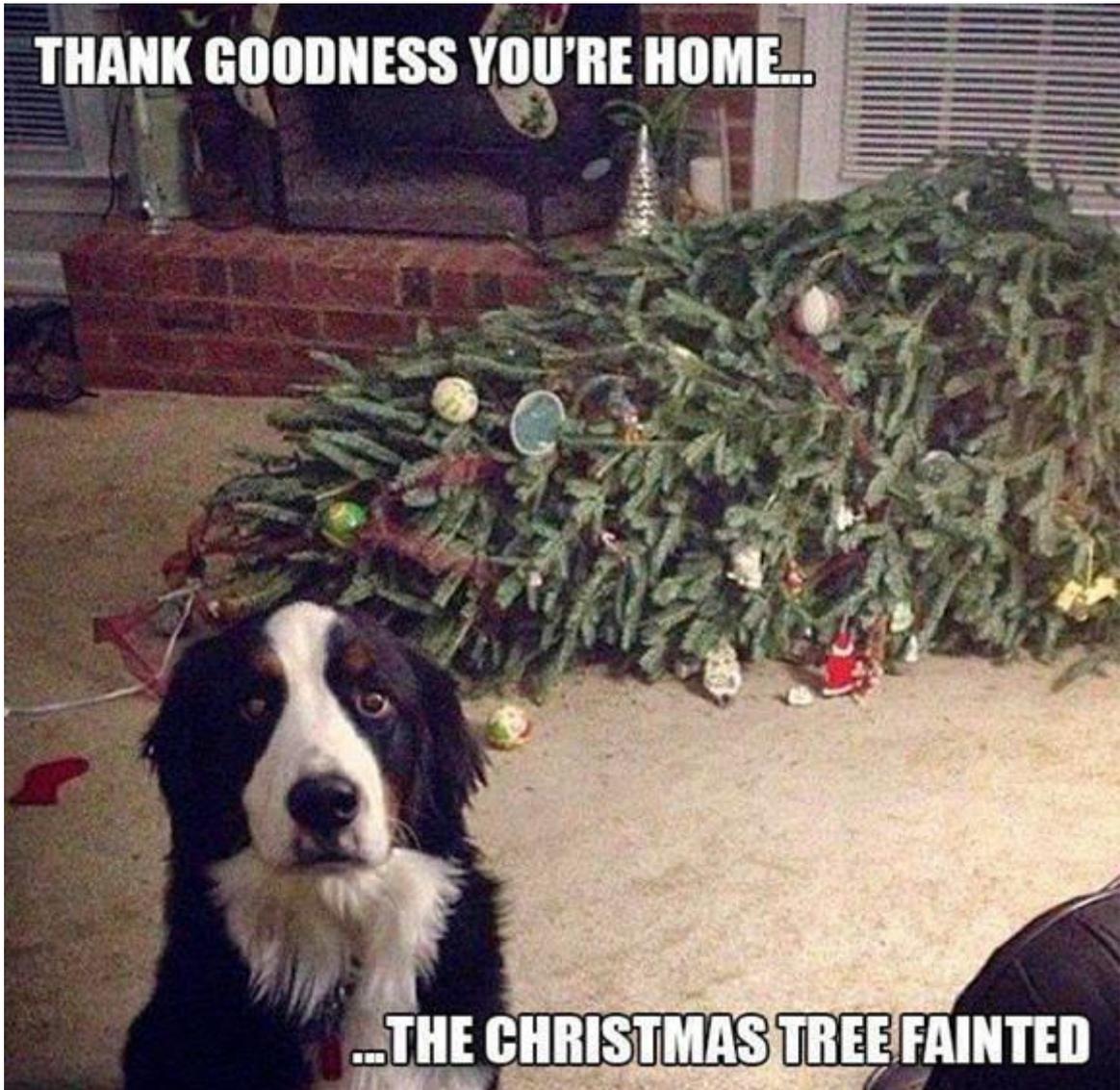


JOKES FOR THE MONTH

MEALS ON WHEELS



THANK GOODNESS YOU'RE HOME...



...THE CHRISTMAS TREE FAINTED

So, I can't bring a stick inside



But you're allowed a whole tree?

Rifle Sighting In

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

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.

9th December Nathan Dawson 027 235 8063

23rd December Doug Gordon 03 216 6383/ 027 637 2206

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Bookings to Neville & Carol Miller Phone (03)216 8654 email
nandc43@gmail.com or 43 Bain St Invercargill

**Xmas, New Year period there are still
several weeks not taken and available
so contact Neville. First in gets the
Lodge.**

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.**

Club Office Bearers

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