



New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association
Wairarapa Branch Incorporated

Newsletter for **February 2016**

Next meeting Wednesday 17th February 2016
7:30 pm Collings & Bradey, 62 Costley Street
Carterton

General meeting Wednesday 17 February 2016

Ross and Tim from Collings & Bradey Hunting & Outdoor supplies will be hosting our first meeting of 2016 in their store at 62 Costley Street, Carterton. A chance for a tour of their workshop and to check out all the latest guns and gear on sale. There will be on the night discounts for Members.

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Remember – meeting is at Collings & Bradey store NOT Parkvale Hall!

Key Dates - Upcoming Trips and Events

13-14 FEB FALLOW MEAT HUNT. Aranui station. Full. Participants please take water containers as supply in Quarters may be limited.

19-21 FEB SUBSIDISED FLY-IN TRIP TO THE TARARUAS. The new dates for the trip cancelled due to high winds in January. Already full. Those who are going please take EFTPOS card or cash to pay on the day at Amalgamated Helicopters.

12-13 MAR SAREX, The major Search & Rescue event of the year is the Annual SAREx to be held on 12-13 March. If you are interested in helping lost and injured people, or have ever considered joining SAR, you can no longer just turn up and help on a search. Training is now required and the SAREx provides an ideal opportunity to see what is involved. For further details see the SAR website www.landsar.org.nz or contact Phil Gray on 0274 740717. If you are already a member of LandSAR, please register, and talk to other members about getting a team together.

16 MAR BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Come along and have you say! The club is only as

good as its volunteers. Please consider nominations for the 2016/17 committee. We would like to get some new blood and ideas.

8-10 APR FALLOW RUT HUNT. Aranui station. Already full!

20 APR GENERAL MEETING Speaker to be confirmed.

We are planning a clay target shoot before the duck shooting season. Dates to be confirmed.

Following a very successful visit by the Hawkes Bay NZDA branch in August, we are looking at arranging a combined branches hunt in May 2016.



News

SEARCH AND RESCUE

There were few callouts over the holiday period. Details about the upcoming SAREx on 12-13 March are provided on the first page. If you are interested in joining SAR please contact Phil Gray on 0274 740717.

BARRY QUINN

Branch member Barry Quinn passed away on 9 December 2015. Barry was a Wellington Branch Life Member, having helped to build the original Roaring Stag Lodge and remaining active in Wellington Branch until shortly before his retirement to the Wairarapa. He was also the long-time Convenor of the NZDA. Sika Committee and was a regular fixture at the National Conference trophy measuring tables and conducted quite a few Douglas Score training sessions over the years. Barry's wife had passed away only six weeks before. A card was sent on behalf of the Branch and thanks received from the Quinn family.

LONG-RANGE SHOOT

Eight branch members attended the long range shoot on 10 January at Brancpeth Range, Wainuioru, and shot at targets to 500 yards (some with open sights!). Technical problems between Alex's phone and my computer meant that photos will have to wait for another month. Thanks to Grahame Hamilton for organising this.

JANUARY FLY-IN TRIP

Was cancelled due to high winds on the tops leaving 14 disappointed members making alternative plans for the Wellington Anniversary weekend. This has now been re-scheduled for 19-21 February.

HUTS AND TRACKS

No reports from Neill Forks. Sayers was looking good according to Barry (who walked instead of flew) in January!

DEER PARK

Irrigation is working well. The young red stag that damaged his velvet is missing the brow and bez tines on one side, but is otherwise healthy.

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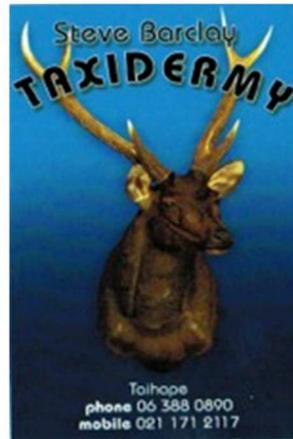
There was a great turn-out for the two working bees in December which resulted in a mountain of wood being cut and stacked. This raised nearly \$3000 for the club. There are about 8 trailer-loads remaining to be sold at \$80 for non-members and \$70 for members. Contact Martin or Tracy Amos on (06) 3795454 if interested.



NEW FALLOW MOUNT

A magnificent Wairarapa fallow head was donated to the Branch and has been expertly mounted by Steve Barclay. This is now on display in the main hall.





CHRISTMAS BARBEQUE

Eighteen members met for the last general meeting of 2015 at Amalgamated Helicopters on 9 December. Weather was great, lots of meat on the barbecue and a very informative briefing on helicopter operation and safety. Thanks to JD and Amalgamated for hosting us.

VHF RADIOS

The Club has access to four VHF radios which are tuned into Tararua repeater stations. These are available for Members to borrow and allow you to communicate change of plans or in an emergency when there is no cellphone coverage. Contact Martin Amos on (06) 3795454 for further information.

PARKVALE HALL

A number of groups have hired the Hall for functions and this is an important source of revenue for the Club. Recently we received a donation of \$300 from the Parkvale Community following the use of the hall for their Christmas function. The committee is investigating the use of these funds to install a ramp to improve wheelchair (and barbeque) access to the main door.

WARO UPDATE

(WARO is Wild Animal Recovery Operations – Helicopter hunting of deer) – A victory of sorts!!
From Gordon George (Lower North Island Hunter Liaison Group)

Just before Christmas I received a call from Reg Kemper of DOC (lower North Island area manager) to advise me that DOC had an outcome to the Ruahine WARO review originally due 30th September.

That outcome is mostly good news for recreational hunters in that DOC have decided to return the Ruahines back to how it was, i.e the 2015-2018 changes which opened up the former restricted zones to WARO have been rescinded. DOC are apparently working through a process with the operators to facilitate this. DOC have not addressed the changes which opened up virtually all the Rimutakas and some high recreational usage areas of the Tararuas.

This Ruahine turn around by DOC is due in large part to the efforts of The Lower North Island Hunter Liaison Group (LNIHLG), the Game Animal Council (GAC), NZDA and the countless hunters who wrote to DOC and to ministers. It is also due to DOC's unwillingness to go to court ("bruising for all parties"). The LNIHLG has engaged Wellington law firm DLA Piper to prepare and lodge a High Court challenge on the WARO changes, to date \$10K has been expended. Without doubt the prospects of an expensive and embarrassing case (to DOC and the minister) was telling.

So we appear to have the Ruahines returned to how it was although DOC have left some fish hooks in there. They still stick to the line that the deer numbers have increased and additional control (WARO) is needed and they have left themselves the option of issuing short term WARO concessions if monitoring shows excessive

deer numbers.

All this flies in the face of the facts about the Ruahines: The WARO harvest is stag dominated and contributes virtually nothing to deer control, it also discourages recreational effort. The deer increases DOC claim, are essentially that deer numbers have increased since 1983 (the historic low point hence showing an increase is not hard!). No monitoring has shown any concerning impacts upon vegetation. Comparisons between the WARO free areas and the WARO allowed restricted zone shows no discernible difference – i.e. WARO has not resulted in lower deer numbers. It is a failed approach.

That deer numbers are a problem in the Ruahines and the only fix is WARO is a DOC dogma driven myth akin to the weapons of mass destruction claim that justified the Iraq invasion. WARO has a place in the South Island but the North Island with smaller more accessible land areas and more hunters is a completely different kettle of fish and one size does not fit all.

So where does that leave us? The un-consulted and unjustified changes to the Rimutakas, the Tararuas and the reserves are still unresolved. It is not clear that DOC will sincerely discuss deer management in the Ruahines with hunters and may simply be trying to do the bare minimum needed to get rid of our legal action and then have another go at achieving their original goals of opening up virtually all of the Ruahines through the underway CMS process. Sounds paranoid but one of our Official Information Requests (OIR) which sought DOC emails actually contained statements by managers to use the CMS process to open up all the Ruahines to WARO.

The Liaison groups club reps meet soon and we will need to decide where to now. Currently we have the momentum, we have a strong case and none of us want to have to go through this again should DOC sometime in the future again try to do the dirty on us, so maybe we keep going until we have a sustainable regime negotiated?

However for now we have a victory and hope. Thank you to all those who took the time to do something to support recreational hunting and sent in letters etc, it did make a difference.

Good hunting – GG

NATIONAL NZDA NEWS

Members of the National Executive were meeting with Peter Dunne on 29th Jan. The agenda for this meeting was:

- Review of illegal hunting and hunter safety
- Inter-agency Hunter Safety Committee
- Tenure review and hunter access concerns

Canterbury branches have formed the Canterbury Regional access Committee (CRAG) to receive reports of access issues and to co-ordinate the responses. The first response was in relation to an access issue with Benmore Station, this was resolved quickly and amicably. This committee has also made submission to the Godley Peak Tenure Review. Case studies have, and are being prepared in relation to regional access issues.

A meeting is scheduled to discuss deer monitoring issues in the Ruahine Ranges. This meeting is scheduled for Friday 4th March from 10-2.30pm in Wellington at a venue yet to be confirmed.

For more see the national website: <http://www.deerstalkers.org.nz>

Hunting Reports

We want to include your hunting stories and photos in the newsletter. Stories can be sent to the newsletter editor at wairarapanzda@gmail.com

I know that many of you have been out already in the New Year, some with rumoured success! This month's story is about Aidan Bichan's brush with bow-hunting.

A SHAGGY GOAT STORY

Aidan Bichan

In early January a group from Australia assembled at home to plan a bow hunting trip to Wanganui. They had managed to bring bows, arrows and outdoor gear in without too many problems - bows and arrows were fine, border security was more interested in foreign plant material and creepy crawlies. The lost bag with broadheads and sleeping bags arrived a few days later and we were set.

First up target practice, a stack of hay bales did the job nicely and sighting pins were set at 10, 20, 30 and 40 metres on the small bow, and 30 and 40 m on the 70lb ones. After a few shoots the groups started coming down until a goat was at serious risk of harm. A quick sight in of the AR at 100 m ensured the backup weaponry was ready and off we went.



The plan was to sleep in the woolshed - but it was full of sheep so plan B was dusted off, the haybarn. Having arrived on dusk we wanted to get setup in the empty bay - but the land owner was still bringing hay in, ably helped by his 9 year old son driving a 140hp tractor and trailer with 14 big round bales on board! We left them to it and headed out for a possum/hare hunt with the bows. Many stalling attempts were made and a few arrows fired but no hits. Here I discovered that bow hunters have as many add-ons as rifle hunters - firing release aids, range finders, lighted nocks (the bit that fits onto the string and lights up when fired so you can find the arrow in the long grass), field tips, broadheads..... the list goes on. An unlucky possum was spotted on a pylon but they weren't too keen on shooting it, so out came the 22 allowing a closer inspection of an Aussie native.

Back at base the tents and bivvy bags were set up and after a restless nights of dozing we drove to the back of the farm looking for game. The wind which had roared all night kept up and we retreated to the shelter of the barn for breakfast.

The farmer turned up and reported a mob of goats on his maize crop. Walking around the crop we found over half a hectare had been chewed to the ground and we could see the head high maize shaking. A quiet approach saw a goat shot with the arrow going through the chest and out the back - most impressive. Now the challenge with bows is you need to be in close so your targets tend to bugger off in the opposite direction. No such problems with the AR, nailed 5 goats as they ran for the hole in the fence, reloaded with the remaining 4 rounds and got another 4 and the last 6 were safe.

As with all hunting outings, meat was on the menu. A training session on breaking down a carcass, gutting, making the hind quarters into a backpack was had. A nanny and 2 kids were recovered for the table and the rest (smelly billies) were disposed of. A careful check that no bodies were left in the crop - imagine the chopper drivers surprise if a goat went through the silage chopper, and it was back to camp for lunch.

I grabbed a few more 223 rounds and set up on a cliff top overlooking a large bushy gully. 7 goats were grazing on the opposite face from 200 - 250 metres. A quick consult of the drop tables and another 4 were culled. The last one at 284 yards with a clean kill. Time on the range, chronographing loads and building drop tables -

thanks Hornady who have a good website for this, resulted in accurate shoot placement.



An afternoon walk around a lucerne paddock saw us bum into a fallow yearling - at about 8 metres. The lead scout who didn't have an arrow ready stared at it for a few moments before it bounced off to 35 metres, After loading a stalking forward a well-placed shoot..... sailed over its back and it was gone. Apparently range is very very important and at 17m his 30m sight pin caused a miss.

Heading home I decided a bow is not being added to the rack - just yet, they are fun, they do improve you stalking skills but smacking over goats at speed is more fun and helped a farmer with a serious pest problem.

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Buy, Sell, and Swap

A new part of the newsletter for 2016. If you have hunting or outdoor related items that you want to buy, sell, or swap, then we'll include these in the Newsletter free of charge (better than TradeMe). Send items (with picture if you wish) to wairarapanzda@gmail.com

Final Thoughts

Be safe be sure.
Assume it is a person not a deer.
No meat is better than no mate.
Identify your target.

A **big thank you** to the team at **Wairarapa Funeral Services** for your printing of our monthly newsletter this year – **we really have appreciated your assistance.**



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