

THE DEERSTALKER

September 2008



WARNING

Due to the frequency of human-bear encounters, the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Branch is advising hikers, hunters, fishermen and any persons that use the out of doors in a recreational or work related function to take extra precautions while in the field.

We advise the outdoorsman to wear little noisy bells on clothing so as to give advance warning to any bears that might be close by so you don't take them by surprise.

We also advise anyone using the out-of-doors to carry "Pepper Spray" with him in case of an encounter with a bear.

Outdoorsmen should also be on the watch for fresh bear activity, and be able to tell the difference between black bear feces and grizzly bear feces. Black bear feces is smaller and contains lots of berries and squirrel fur. Grizzly bear shit has bells in it and smells like pepper.

THE STEELE CAMPGROUND

THE DEERSTALKER

web address: www.newsouthdeerstalkers.org.au

NSW Deerstalkers Association

COMMITTEE FOR 2008-2009

Formed: 7th June 1972

President: Darren Plumb
Ph: 02 48447071; 0412021741

Life Members: the late Gordon Alford
Bob Penfold
Wayne McPhee
Jack Boswell
Paul Wilkes

**Secretary &
Public Officer:** Greg Haywood
1 Struan Street
Tahmoor NSW 2573
Ph: 02 4681 8363

Affiliated To:

Australian Deerstalkers Federation
Game Management Council (Australia)
Inc.

Treasurer: Nalda Haywood
**Snr. Vice
President:** John Natoli
Ph: 04138514336

Contributions:

The editor and editorial committee reserve
the right to modify any contributions.

**Jnr. Vice
President:** Peter Birchall

All contributions are to be mailed or
emailed to:

Dal Birrell - Editor
14 Blackall Street
Bulli NSW 2516
dbi93465@bigpond.net.au

Club Armourer:

**Game Management
Representatives:** Greg Haywood
Steve Isaacs

Advertisements:

Advertisements for products sold by
NSWDA Members are accepted and
printed free of charge provided a discount
is given to club members.

**Licence Testing
Co-ordinator:** Greg Haywood

Video Library: Terry Burgess

All Memberships & General Correspondence to
be posted to: PO Box 519 PICTON NSW 2571

Cover Photo:

Top - Wolf attacking Elk cow Yoho National
Park Canada. Photo Dal Birrell.
Bear sign submitted by a member by email,
read carefully!

FROM THE EDITOR

This year we will publish five issues of this newsletter. To ensure that we get each issue out on time, there will be deadlines for submission of materials to be included. If material reaches me after a deadline, it will be included in the next issue, if appropriate. Expect to receive each issue about three weeks after its deadline.

2008 submission deadlines;

January 20th

April 23rd

July 2nd

September 15th

October 23rd

Guidelines for submissions.

Material which is emailed saves me a lot of work. **Preferred font is Times New Roman. Preferred font size is 12 point.** Writing can be sent as a Word file, or a text file. For those without an expensive word processing program, you can use any writing program included with your operating system, or download "Open Office" free from the internet which is virtually identical to "Microsoft Office" & can exchange files with that famous program.

Photographs should NOT be included in the article itself, but sent as separate files (attachments to the email). You can indicate where each photo might be placed by typing its file name in brackets in the text.

Photographs should be .jpeg files, saved at about 15 cm X 10 cm size at quality 8 (which gives the best quality for the smallest file size).

Printed on paper submissions need to have clear black typed text. Feintly printed text will not scan & cannot be included. **Very short pieces, such as personal adverts can be hand written.**

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Meeting dates for 2008.

The venue is the German Austrian Club Cabramatta – Thursdays at 7.30 pm

16 th October

Trophy Exhibition & Christmas Party

15th November.

2009 Meeting Dates.

19th February

21st May

23rd July

15th October (day, Southern Highlands / Central Tablelands)

14th November (Saturday) Trophy Exhibition & Christmas Party.

Other - SCI Expo February 2009, Douglas Scoring Accreditation Workshop February 2009.

Photos can be prints or negatives or slides.

These can be returned to you if you include a stamped self addressed envelope. If these photos are valuable, send copies rather than originals.

NSWDA Hunting Club AHO (for R licences) is 10111, & the Agent No. is 7185

Please Note: The N.S.W.D.A. Inc. takes no responsibility for views expressed in "The Deerstalker". All articles submitted are signed by the relevant author. The Editorial Committee does however, take responsibility for views expressed in articles signed by them!



THE HUT, THE RUT, and THE BUT..... April 2005.

By Chris Graham.

I was in the old hut that has been my camp during March, April for the last four years. Like most of us the rut is the highlight of my year and there is now nowhere else in Australia I'd rather be during the rut or any other time for that matter than in that old hut, hunting the hills and gullies that surround it by day and by night bullshitting with some of the most enjoyable guys I've ever had the pleasure of sharing a fire with, the Scotch drinker included. It was after dark and the others weren't due 'till the next day so I was setting up my share of the camp alone, just me and a heap of Fallow bucks grunting madly nearby. When I walked outside to better enjoy the situation the hills were alive with grunting bucks. Everywhere; here, there, near and far, they were just going off. In seventeen years of hunting Fallow I'd never witnessed anything as intense as that and it was just so good to stand there and listen to it. It was free range, wild and unpaid hunting on a very large property and there had been no hunters there for three or four days. The deer were undisturbed and doing their thing. It was fantastic and I knew as it happened all around me that it was a special and rare moment, one that I would always remember and under my breath I thanked the people that had given me the privilege of being there and who were responsible for the quality of this herd and the quality of the hunting; the owners, the manager and his wife, the other hunters and the local guys who protect these deer all year round.

In this district there are a few Red Deer about as well as the predominant Fallow Deer and

while standing there I wondered did I hear a faint Red stag roar in amongst all the grunting. There was a fair southerly breeze blowing and it made it hard to be sure. Eventually I went back inside and while making a cup of coffee I heard it again through the window. The little bit I heard was so faint and quick that I still wasn't sure I was actually hearing it. Well O'K, the coffee did have a warming agent in it. I went straight back out the front and vowed I'd stand there all night if I had to. This may sound odd but, even though it was pitch black, I had to close my eyes to focus enough to be able to hear it. It turned out three Red stags were roaring but because of the wind, the dark, the warming agent and the distances involved it took a bit of concentration to pinpoint them in my mind but by the time I went to bed I knew where I was hunting in the morning. By dawn I was well out and well up in the bush only trouble was the Reds where further out and further up, right on the tops. Some of the fitter guys I know could have gotten to them by lunch time but it was too big for me. Two roared regularly all morning, very content and unchallenged and it was like they were my companions as I did my best to find a Fallow trophy below them. It must seem weird to animal libbers how we can feel this near spiritual bond with these big stags yet given the chance we'll take them home in an esky, then again some of us find their spiritual bond with a tree or their "partner" just as weird.

By morning's end I had shot a Fallow buck as a cull, an animal whose genetic antler faults cost him his life. I learnt a lesson when I shot that buck and that was big mature, equally matched Fallow bucks when they're fired right up rutting, challenging and defending, will ignore all sorts of disturbances including gun shots and just keep on rutting.



There were four bucks on a creek flat, separated only by the creek and a very small gully, grunting full-on crazy all morning but because I'm so unfit I had resisted losing my hard won elevation and not gone down for a look at them. I reasoned that these bucks in established stands were so close to the neighbours boundary that the hunters he lets on every year would have already had to have checked them out and because they were still alive meant they were non-trophies. Boy when I'm wrong am I ever wrong! When my morning hunt was over and on my way back to camp I went down to take a look at these four. After manoeuvring through and around a number of "does in waiting that were above these bucks I was soon in that close proximity zone were you start to hear your own breathing. One buck, No. 1, was below me and to the left and close Another, No.2, was across the creek and uphill about 50 meters, I should have been able to see this fella' but I couldn't. I had most of his does and his stand but not him No 3 was down the creek to the right about 50 meters and No.4 was immediately below me and very close. I peered around the next tree and No.4 was with three does in the gully screaming his head off, a truly messy rack with the genetic death sentence of having no trey tine. I lifted my 30-06 and No.4 went to meet John Lennon. The does scattered as I slithered down to him and dragged him into the shade, the little gully spurs hiding me from the other three who were all going full on. They did not even miss a beat in their grunting! I had to crawl through stinging nettles to get to the creek but it was worth it as it put me between and central to the three others. No.3 down the creek went quiet as he winded me but the other two, each on opposite sides of the creek, kept screaming. Next I got a look at No.2. He was rutting around a big, old fallen tree trunk and was a buck that my son

Daniel and I had passed up earlier in the year about 2 k's up the valley. He had good length and width, good brows, poor treys and was uneven. One side was straight and the other curved right in. He was a big mature buck. I snuck backwards and was trying to get back to the creek when up out of the creek came a truly magnificent buck, No.3; super wide - well over 30", beautiful shape, great palm one side and a monster palm the other, big guards and over 30" long. In the split-second that he looked straight at me and turned to go back into the creek I mentally took a photo of him. Through the trees over the creek I saw fleeting glimpses of him as he made his way over to the dead, no trey tine buck and stood beside it. This animal had just heard a 30-06 go off beside it, as had all of them, then he had winded me, crossed my scent trail a couple of times, had actually seen me and had stepped over a now dead opponent and still all he wanted to do was rut! I was then facing the dilemma that crops up every year with trophy hunters, "what did I want as a trophy?" The previous year one of our hunting mates took a head on this property that was as good as they get, a true trophy of a lifetime. I've got two Fallow heads better than 230 D.S. and realised a couple of years ago that the way for me to shoot my head of a lifetime was to not shoot anything that wasn't. So there I was having just checked out a big mature dominant buck and passed him up, had a big mature dominant buck check me out and although not as big a body size as No. 2, No.3's antlers might have gone 240 D.S. I could have, with only a little luck, still shot No.3 but I hadn't viewed No 1 and what if he was THE buck? There was no chance he was anything but a mature buck, he had No.2 and No.3's respect and was holding a heap of does together. I could see most of them 30 meters

continued page 10.





Secretary's Report!

AGM – General Meeting Please note that the date has been changed to Thursday 24th July 2008 at 7.30pm German Austrian Club

Future meetings will now be held on Thursday evenings as the club is closed on Wednesdays.

On behalf of our members I wish to express our deepest sympathy to Glenn McGrath and family in the passing of Jane who was a true champion.

We can all support the McGrath Foundation in making a donation to support Breast Cancer with a focus on Country Regions.

Bank: National Australia
Bank Account Name: McGrath Foundation
Ltd Account Number: 58927 1582 BSB:
082-067

This is a short magazine as we have made a commitment to communicate to members at least five times a year.

We need your hunting stories and photo's to make your magazine member friendly and many a fine trophy has already been taken this year. Please put pen to paper and share the moment with us.

The Shooters Party has been successful in having their Bill to amend the Firearms Act which has now passed through both houses of Parliament.

Waiting periods – currently 28 days apply to the renewal of all licence's permits and

permissions to acquire a firearm. The waiting period is to be waived from October 1, to renew a licence or a permit to acquire a firearm if you already have a firearm of that type registered.

Shooting under supervision as well as a number of other amendments covering antique firearms, access to category C shotguns for certain target shooters, Penalty notices, records for non-target shooters at ranges and theatrical armourers have all been amended.

Good Hunting

Greg Haywood





President's Report

Dear Members

This is my first report as President of the club & would like to start with a thankyou to our past President Steve for his contribution over the past three years. I believe that the club has moved forward during this time in all areas which is very exciting.

On a sad note. We recently lost one of our younger members, Michael Desanti who lost his brave battle with Leukaemia. I hunted with Michael last year in the Northern Territory after Water Buffalo & we had a great time & I for one will miss him. On behalf of the club I wish to extend our sympathy to John, Evelyn & David.

On a brighter note, the club has been issued with its AQIS permit. This permit saves individuals having to apply separately for permits to bring salted skins back from New Zealand, Papua New Guinea & New Caledonia. It is available for the use of members & for any additional information please contact me.

I am also attempting to get from the New Zealand Food Safety Authority a guide as to the requirements of obtaining permits from their end. This will hopefully help minimise the confusion associated with locations of permit offices etc in New Zealand.

Several members went on the club hunt to Victoria with Ken Leatham . They reported back that there were plenty of deer but the big ones had other ideas. We will be organising such hunts on a regular basis & I would encourage new members to come along & have a great time. On that note I would like to hear from members who are

interested in a club hunt to New Zealand. If there is enough interest we could organise something for next year.

The committee would like to remind members that our next General Meeting is on Thursday the 16th of October. The annual Christmas party will be held on Saturday the 15th of November. I would urge as many members & families as possible to come along & enjoy the day. We would also like to see a greater roll up of trophies taken by club members

Once again we are requesting members to submit stories for the club magazine. I for one will endeavour to lead by example & put pen to paper & I urge others out there to the same. They don't have to be epics but it all adds to the quality of the magazine (your magazine).

Regards

Darren Plumb



Video Library

Free hunting videos for members to borrow for one month if picking up video's at a meeting. Members must pay postage by registered mail back to the club in carton supplied. You can phone or write for videos to be posted to you, however the member must pay postage both ways. When returning videos to the club within one-month members must include cost of postage to them in stamps inside the box.

If members are to lend these video's to fellow members, remember that the original person who borrowed them from the club will be held responsible if they are not returned within due time. As these videos are the property of the club, you are expected to look after them. If you loose or damage a video you will have to pay the replacement cost. If you don't return them after 4 weeks you won't get anymore.

To borrow a Video contact:

Terry Burgess

Ph: (02) 9909 1267

P.O. Box 80

Cremorne Junction NSW 2090

Library List

1. Black Death, Cape Buffalo, Lion
2. Capstick, Botswana Safari Buffalo, Lion
3. In the Blood, Capstick, Rhino
4. Zambia Safaris
5. Whitetail, Mule Deer, Pronghorn, Late Season Elk
6. Monster Elk, Horns of Plenty, Hunt Exotics 1 & 2
7. Hunting Bugling Elk, Big Muleys, Caribou
8. North American Big Horn Rams, Greatest Whitetail, Wild Hogs of Texas
9. Col Allison Hunters Home Video, Big Bears, Russian Boar, Whitetail
10. North American Mixed Bag, Big Horn Rams, Whitetail
11. Great Trophy Bucks Mixed Bag, Big Horn Rams, Whitetail
12. Wild Boar Pig Hunting Down Under Part 1
13. Hunting Sheep, Goat & Moose in B.C.
14. Big Rams Brooks Range, Big Horn Rams, Mouflon
15. The Bow Hunter, Whitetail Deer
16. Big Rams, North American Big Horn Sheep, Mouflon Sheep
17. North American Big Horn Sheep, Big Rams Mixed Bag
18. Mouflon, Bow Hunting Elk, Whitetail, Mule Deer etc.
19. Challenge of the Mountain Monarchs, Thars, Mouflon Sheep, Red Deer in Qld



20. Pig Hunting in Qld, Wild Goat in Qld, Mouflon
21. Pig Hunting in Qld, Red Deer in Qld
22. Hunting in Spain, Pig Hunt in Tunisia, Red Deer in Scotland
23. Hunting Fallow in Scotland, Red in Scotland, Kiwi Hunts North West Territories
24. The Wildlife Bow Hunter, Deer, Pigs, Foxes, Mountain Hunting NZ, O'Rourke's Deer, Chamois, Thar
25. Mountain Hunting N.Z., Deer, Thar, Chamois, Red, Sika, Bow Hunter
26. N.Z. Hunting, Sambar in Victoria, Red Deer in France
27. Hunting N.Z. Red Deer, O'Rourke's N.Z., Chamois in Europe
28. Bowhunting Red Deer in N.Z., Bugling Red Deer Rifle
29. Fox Shooting at its best-Volume 3 & 4
30. The Ultimate Whitetail Hunt
31. Sambar Hunting, Mountain Hunt N.Z., Thar in N.Z.
32. Caping Demo by NSWDA
33. Roar Red Stags, Shadows in Scrub, Great Trophy Bucks
34. Hunting the Elusive Wild Dog, Hunt to outsmart Wild Dogs
35. Dark Continent
36. Red in Qld, Dingo, Fox, Fallow, Hog etc., Sika N.Z., Cape for Trophy Mount
37. How to cape for a Trophy Mount, Shoot the Bull, Hunting QLD Red Deer, Deer Attack
38. Hunting African Lion, Hunting Cape Buffalo
39. Big Horn Rams, Nth American Mixed Bag
40. Shadows in Scrub, Red Deer - Clark McGhie
41. Sambar Stalking 1 & 2 - Reg Gordon
42. Bucks & Bulls, NZ Chamois, Thar, Whitetail, Sportsmans Paradise, Pigs, Barramundi, Tusk Versus Tooth, Pig Hunting with Dogs
43. Bucks & Bulls, NZ Chamois, Thar, Whitetail, Hog Deer in Victoria
44. Bucks & Bulls, NZ Chamois, Thar, Whitetail, Sambar Stalking 1 & 2 - Reg Gordon
45. Dogs, Guns & Grunters, Tusk Versus Tooth, Lifes a Boar NZ
46. "How To Load From A Disk" Ballistic CD-Rom
47. Huge Hogs of Aust. North Part 1 & 2
48. Sambar Safari Vol 1, SHIKARI
49. Venison Hunters, Hunting Northern Cape, Hunting NZ Southern Alps.
50. Hunting the Zambeze Delta, Trophy Seekers, Trophy Seekers Shadows End
51. NZ Hunting, Hunting Safaris Vol 1 & 2, Rusa Hunting



uphill from the creek and just across from where I shot No 4 from. Although most of his does were looking at me at least I could see them. I couldn't see him because he was, as they always are, hidden behind a f #*A/:> tree! If 1 was anywhere but where I was amongst those f #*A/:> stinging nettles he would have been in clear view. Risking the movement, I got into a sitting position so I could fire once he came out from behind the tree's foliage. I looked around to see how many of the does, they were everywhere, had seen me move and to assess how urgent they were going to make the moment when to my left, 30 odd metres away across the creek, out in the open, standing broadside to me on the little spur was No.3. All he was interested in, as were we all, was what No. 1 and his does were doing. For five seconds I could have taken him as easily as any deer I had ever taken, but knew I wasn't going to. This was without doubt a before and after experience in my life but I'll leave that waffle for the greenies and their crystals. No.3. felt the ache in his balls and headed straight over to challenge No.1. Great I thought and closed the bolt. I watched him move across and disappear behind the tree's big canopy. 1 sat there, welting to hell with nettle stings, ready for the shot no question in my mind that I was about to take one of these two deer. It was a no lose' situation. No 3 was an awesome head and No.1 was gunna be a moose and I was about to take my pick! All of my hunting and stalking failures and disappointments didn't matter now and all of the thousands and thousands of dollars hunting had cost me; Christ my wife could've had her boobs done years ago, just the money I had spent on diesel would have paid for another two sets to be sewn on, didn't matter. The ongoing pain in my knees and ankles, all the "if only it had"s, the guilt of deserting my family every April for three weeks and a good part of the rest of the

year, it didn't matter in that instant 'cause I was about to be fulfilled. Being dragged by the ear off Snake Island by the rangers, clean missing a 27" Sambar stag that Ian's mate led me by the hand to where he knew it was living, eyeball to eyeball with Mick Anning before I had even passed his gate, shot the wrong Rusa stag when Wayne led me to a 30"er at 4-30 in the morning, spent weeks with John on the same critters and blew the final stalk on a good one, all that and much more was about to be all right, squared away by the monster I was about to take. Elle Macpherson belly dancing nude couldn't have prised my eye off that scope, well ok,ok, one quick look but that's all. So No.3 went in and they clashed, I could hear the fight. It lasted about 20 seconds and there were two bouts then rustle, rustle, snap, snap, and displaced rocks as one buck chased the other straight up the slope, followed by the does, into some thick mess, all this blocked from my view by the head of that f*A#>!/ tree. I didn't get a look at either of them! I jumped up and ran across the creek and up the left side of the gully spur, downwind of the bucks. It was my last chance to get a look them but I ran straight into some does coming my way. They ran up to the others that were looking at me and all exploded off and away. Good fun isn't it !!! Standing there, rifle still loaded and cocked, hunched over looking at my boots, a beaten and humiliated man and No 2 said to himself" well I'm still having a good day" and started to grunt again! I was carrying out No.4's antlers and as much of his meat as I could handle when across the valley the 3rd red stag started to roar. I positioned him as best I could and booked a hunt for that afternoon. Come afternoon it was hard not to go back and hunt be looking straight at me when I spy them and in the next instant they would crash off, too close to bark, and take this beautiful creature



with them. But no, there were no hinds and he was all mine for a moment. Anyhow this was what the stag was doing. There was a sizeable gum tree lying downhill that had been felled in a recent storm and the stag had gotten in amongst the head of this tree among the thinner branches and was rubbing his antlers on them. Well not rubbing so much as caressing them. He was rolling his rack slowly, around and around just sort of enjoying the feeling of the branches touching his antlers. As he pushed and moved a branch, a spotted Fallow buck that was standing behind him at the head of the tree would jump in and wack the moving leaf head with his antlers. He was like a boxer jumping about, wacking one bit then jumping back and whacking the next bit of the tree to move. It was quite obviously an amusement and a challenge to him and he looked to be having a ball doing it. The Red stag was unaware, I think, of the game he was creating for the Fallow but certainly aware that this buck was behind him carrying on like Jeff Fenech. Anyhow it was great to witness. The Red was a twelve pointer about 36" long and heavy with a broken trey tine. What saved his life was his balance. He had four on the top on the right antler but only two on the top of the left antler, one short of what I want on a Red stag. The Fallow was 210 to 215 D.S and not a bad sort of a buck. You can't be that close to a deer in the mountains without it catching a swirl of your scent pretty quickly and soon enough they both caught mine and jumped away down into the thick bush below. It was great! The next morning I got a look at No. 1 . He was back in his stand and so was No.2 . No 3 was silent. No.1 was a big bodied buck with one antler snapped off between the brow and trey tines. Yeah I know, forget the heroics, just shoot 'em. Even complete he wasn't a skerrick on No.3 and over the rest of the week neither I

nor any of the other hunters saw No.3 again. At the end of the week I counted twenty two does and fawns standing together in his stand. No trophies were taken by me that week and it was seven of the best days hunting I've ever had. Two of the guys took great bucks, both with their bows and at long last the "Pipe Smoker" took a magnificent Red stag. Now where was Elle Macpherson bellydancing????? Regards Chris Graham.

CANNON BALLS !!! DID YOU KNOW THIS ? I DIDN'T

It was necessary to keep a good supply of cannon balls near the cannon on old war ships. But how to prevent them from rolling about the deck was the problem. The best storage method devised was to stack them as a square based pyramid, with one ball on top, resting on four, resting on nine, which rested on sixteen. Thus, a supply of 30 cannon balls could be stacked in a small area right next to the cannon. There was only one problem — how to prevent the bottom layer from sliding/rolling from under the others. The solution was a metal plate with 16 round indentations, called, for reasons unknown, a Monkey. But if this plate were made of iron, the iron balls would quickly rust to it. The solution to the rusting problem was to make them of brass - hence, Brass Monkeys. Few landlubbers realize that brass contracts much more and much faster than iron when chilled.

Consequently, when the temperature dropped too far, the brass indentations would shrink so much that the iron cannon balls would come right off the monkey. Thus, it was quite literally, cold enough to freeze the balls off a brass monkey. And all this time, you thought that was just a vulgar expression, didn't you?



Roy's Latest Hunting Adventures (Sorry but bare arse pictures censored)

I've had an awesome trip! I had the pleasure of guiding some great Mexican clients and spent time in a great country with good people. Only one complication though.....I slid down a frozen mtn side on my butt and caused quite a bit of damage. I went hunting Tahr with a couple of Tim's helpers (Jacob from Denmark and Fernando from Spain) in the head of the Gunn river on the west coast. We got dropped off for a couple days by chopper and I hunted the first day on the dark side for Chamois and Tahr. At about 5pm as I was heading to camp I headed down into a side creek to look for Chamois and also a way back to camp. The ground was frozen hard with the odd tussock spread out between the frozen gravel and larger rocks. It was 50 deg or steeper and I knew it was dangerous, but with the thought of having to head back up and over to the nice tussock ridge and being only 150m from the creek, I convinced myself that with my good Meindl boots and walking pole, I could negotiate the slope..... I was wrong!!! My foot slipped on an ice covered rock and off I went. I tried grabbing at the odd tussocks but my momentum was too great. My boots wouldn't grip on any of the frozen gravel as it had no give and was incredibly slick. I remember being on my side at the beginning trying to get a hand hold of something but when that didn't work I turned my back to the mtn and took the brunt of the slide on my butt with my arms outstretched still trying to grab something. Now, im not sure if that was a good idea because after about 10 days a still can't sit properly. After sliding for what seemed an incredibly long time, in between the hard hits and fuzzy moments, I think I saw my life flash by at least twice. This time seemed a little different than the last though, maybe because it was a couple yrs since I nearly died due to a home sick Kirghiz horse. When I reached the more

gentle slope closer to the creek, I piled up into a crumpled, gasping/moaning heap in the monkey scrub. I laid there for a while before I could move anything and then slowly moved each limb to see if I had broken something. I tried to stand but fell straight over as my knee couldn't support any weight. I knew i had snapped a ligament or torn a cartilage. I knew what that felt like. I felt the cold breeze on my arse as my pants were shredded but I didn't dare feel it. My left elbow was starting to really ache and I couldn't bend my arm easily, it must have hit a few rocks on the way. I had cut and sprained fingers on both sides and a severe pain in the left side of my rib cage that made funny noises when I moved. Great, broken ribs!! So with the damage evaluation out of the way, I started to think of an exit strategy. I thought the easy option would be to follow the creek out to the bottom of the valley which came out close to our tent. But knowing what these creeks were like on the west coast, I thought my chances were small. But I had to try as all other options were going to be bad. I thought, maybe I could stay here the night and hope my mates find me in the morning. But if they don't find me, which was pretty likely, I would've wasted a day and we didn't know if the chopper was coming tomorrow or the next day. Plus it would've been a cold and very uncomfortable night. So before I hobbled off I glanced up to see how far I slid. I figured about 30 to 40m. I figured I was sort of lucky still to be thinking. I then realised I still had my warm hat on, so I managed to keep my head out of trouble the whole way. Bonus!! As I lost my pole, I had to use the beaten up rifle to give me as much support as possible. Somehow, it was still in one piece. It was now getting darker and I knew it was going to be a long night. I headed down the creek and laboured over and around some big rocks and water falls but then



reached a point were to continue in my condition was impossible. There was a big drop in the creek and both sides were as steep as where I'd slid. Back up the creek on the true right was the dreaded monkey scrub all the way up to the tussocks. That was my only option. I had to pull my self to the top and see if I could radio the guys in camp. It was now dark and my head lamp led me slowly, hand over fist thru that crazy mix of west coast tussock, Spaniards and monkey scrub. At one point, I lent back onto a bush and felt a sharp pain in my backside, as i reached around with a little apprehension, my fingers slipped around on the blood and found the hole the twig had been nice enough to point out. I later found out it was a 2" V shaped tear about 1" deep in my left butt cheek. So much for fat having no feeling!! I kept trying the radio as I was getting higher and then suddenly came the voice of Jacob. My best friend in the world right then.....Jacob. I told him what had happened and where I was and to meet me on top of the ridge in the tussocks. It was about 22:30 when I had the happiest hunters gathering on a mtn top.....ever! It had taken me 5 hrs to go a few hundred meters. By the time they helped me down and we walked into camp it was 00:30. I asked Jacob to take a photo of the new hole in my butt and show me (thanks to digital technology) so I could direct the first aid. Fernando did a good job of removing most of the rocks (a little more was found in hospital the next day) cleaned and bandaged the wound while Jacob fed me some fine steak and mash. With the aid of some good drugs, I had a rough nights sleep and in the morning we were all hoping that Clutch would pick us up. That was depending on Tim's plans with clients. Then suddenly we heard a chopper heading into the head of our valley, I crawled out of the tent just in time to see it wasn't ours and fly out over the other side. I cant find the word to describe

how I felt. As my mates had just finished packing up their tent, we heard that familiar sound once again. This time I crawled out to see it was Clutch's bird. Usually it feels good to see the chopper come in, this time i was over the moon!! Fernando went over to tell him the story in his heavily accented English. He walked over casually with his head phones on, took one look at me as I struggled to stand up and said..... "Holy Shit, its you! I thought he meant there was a Tahr or something that was wounded with broken ribs!!"

Regards, Roy

Peter Birchall's article will hopefully appear next issue, (provided the eEditor gets time to type it!)



Game Management Corner; What the Science Says.

Introduction. None of what will appear in these articles is personal opinion. There has been a good deal of scientific study of all aspects of deer biology and herd management, particularly in the USA and Europe where the need for scientific management of ecosystems (including game species) is almost universally accepted. Every scientific study, even on the same problem, is different in some way from every other, so it is not surprising that sometimes the outcomes or recommendations are a little different, even contrary. In particular, studies done on deer farms where the conditions can be closely controlled can produce results and recommendations different from studies done on wild populations where the level of control is much less. When reading these studies this has to be kept in mind. Most of the studies I have used will not necessarily be for Fallow or Red or Chital or Sambar or Rusa or Hog. However, the basic biology of all deer species is similar enough to be largely applicable to the deer in your herd. The conclusions I have drawn in each article in this series are those most applicable to our situation in which a group of hunters are attempting to manage to some degree, a herd of wild deer, on private property, to produce the best possible outcomes for all concerned. A list of references is included at the end of each article. As many are from the World Wide Web (www), readers with an internet connection can read the original articles. I encourage you to do so. Dal Birrell.

Biological Factors Affecting the Rut This is the second in a series of short articles for the NSWDA members on game management as it

applies to deer. Fallow deer breed seasonally, with the rut in autumn. In Australia the timing varies from North to South, and in NSW it is generally between March and May. Odd does may still be cycling in June. Asher (1985) states that the mean cycle length is 22.4 (+/- 1.3) days in Fallow and was not affected by doe age or weight. The length of the breeding season and therefore the number of oestrous cycles is affected by age. Studies on wild White-tail found that general deer activity rose and fell with each of the three oestrous cycles during the rut. Probably Fallow show similar behaviour and number of rut cycles. Colder temperatures are well known to stimulate rutting behaviour in Fallow, and warmer weather to suppress it. Whether this has any effect on actual mating is problematical. Many studies have shown that wild fawns born early in the season generally do better than those born later. These do eventually catch up, but not usually until their 5th year. Kip Adams (2006) lists the following as all affecting a White-tail buck's antler development; (1) birth month, (2) mother's age (older females typically breed and fawn earlier), (3) weather conditions, (4) mother's physical condition, (5) herd density (as it affects nutrition), (6) mother's social rank (higher ranking females are thought to use better quality habitat). In White-tails, which have multiple births, the number of fawns also has an effect. Of course the timing of the rut is affected by weather, and we mere mortals can do nothing about that. However, it might surprise some that good management can effectively shorten the rut, thus reducing the number of late born fawns. Adams also points out that while it is generally assumed that large mature White-tail bucks dominate breeding, this is not actually the case. "Even in populations with good age structure, yearlings and two and a half year olds sired 15-30% of fawns". These figures



were established by DNA studies. An 11 year study by Dr. Randy DeYoung quoted in Adams' article found that on average a buck sired only three fawns per year. Adams also observes that some large antlered bucks don't breed at all. Reby et al (1998) showed in a study of Fallow deer, that the individual bucks could be identified from their groans, which constituted a "signature" which remained constant over the rutting period, and probably longer. This "may provide a valuable basis for individual recognition during the breeding season and therefore may play an important role in the social interactions observed during this period." Unlike White-tails, Fallow bucks establish fixed rutting territories (leks) with does wandering in and out. It seems the does can find and return to a favourite buck by listening for his grunts. At a guess, one would expect that at least some Fallow does would also breed with younger bucks and that this tendency would increase as the sex ratio moved further and further away from 1:1 (with females making up more of the herd). All of us would have seen an immature buck in charge of a mob of does, often towards the end of the rut. It's relatively rare to see the actual sex act in deer because it mostly happens at night. It's virtually impossible in a wild herd to actually keep count of "who's poking who". In herds which have larger proportions of mature bucks the rut tends to be shorter, with a larger proportion of does becoming pregnant early in the rut. Studies indicate that there are fewer matings with younger bucks and that most fawns would be born earlier in the season rather than later. Both are good outcomes because all of the deer enter winter in better condition and the fawns in particular have time to grow before winter sets in. Boyle (1995) states that the sex ratio is important to breeding, but that it is not until the ratio reaches about 1:19 that a noticeable number of

does remain unmated. In such a herd the rut and the fawn drop would almost certainly be stretched to the limit. The wild herd manager would be wise to try to keep the herd numbers down below the carrying capacity of the property so that all the deer are well fed, and to keep the sex ratio to as close to 1:1 as possible. These two things affect three of the six points mentioned above. The others are probably beyond his control unless he can improve nutrition in some way.

The culling Question. To cull or not to cull, that is the question? (with Apologies to Bill Shakespeare). This is a question with a more complex answer than many would imagine. A cull is defined according to what you want to achieve. It may be a buck with inferior antlers of a particular age, or a buck with an identified antler fault such as a missing tine, or some other fault which reduces its Douglas score, or simply an animal which is excess to requirements. Let's take an easy case first. When the carrying capacity of the land on which the population lives is exceeded or stressed, or the excess animals move off the place to cause genuine annoyance to the neighbouring properties, it's time to cull some animals. But which ones does the manager select for elimination? Another reason to cull is to bring the sex ratio closer to the "ideal" 1:1 ratio. In a population which is say 1/3 male and 2/3 female (a 1:2 ratio), a number of females would need to be removed. The use of a relatively simple computer model called a "life table" set up using a simple spreadsheet, would allow the herd manager to calculate the number of females which should be harvested (removed) over a period of years, to change the sex ratio gradually to that required. A reasonably good idea of the total numbers in the herd is needed as part of this calculation. Why also is a 1:1 ratio supposed to be "ideal"?



Well, for a start, a 1:1 ratio maximises the number of trophy bucks which the population produces while maintaining a healthy breeding herd. Secondly, provided the manager maintains a proper population age distribution (i.e. good numbers of both males and females of all ages) the presence of high numbers of mature males will help to keep the rut period shorter (see above). Thirdly, the rate of population growth is reduced compared with a population in which females predominate. The need to cull the population to keep numbers in check is reduced. Because in the wild buck fawns born late in the season take 4, 5 or 6 years to catch up with their early born cohort, their antler development in the first few years is no indication of their genetic potential. Adams (2006) points out that bucks with poor genetic potential, born early to a dominant doe might well have better antlers over the first few years than a buck with much better genetics, born to a subordinate doe & when feed quality is poor (e.g. during a drought). Dr Graham Hall (2008) answered my email enquiry as to whether any Australian studies existed on the predictability of mature antler quality from a buck's spikes. He did a study on Fallow in Tasmania a few years ago using 30 spikers with varying degrees of antler development, from "golf balls" to 160 gram models. The "golf ball" animals also had smaller bodies than the 160 gram models. By the third year, the antler scores of both groups were the same, and by the age of 4.5 years body sizes were also equal. Adams (2006) states "most abnormal antlers are not genetically based. Most result from injuries to the skull, pedicle, antler or body, and thus culling (these animals) would have no effect on the antler genetics of the herd". I read this as ruling out the culling of "unbalanced" heads on the grounds of genetics. The conclusions one reaches from looking at many

studies on culling (& only a few are listed in the references) are that culling bucks at an early age is a mistake. The herd manager needs to allow the bucks to grow up so they can better show their antler potential, which means allowing them to grow into their 5th year. He also needs to evaluate each year's antlers in view of the quality and quantity of feed available to them in the preceding year. In practice however, deer are not born with a date stamp prominently displayed. A possible solution is to simply raise the minimum Douglas score of a trophy which can be taken from a property based deer scheme. A variation of this might be to allow a "representative trophy" to be taken first, then subsequent trophies to progressively have higher Douglas scores. In theory, if more low scoring (generally younger) heads were protected by such a policy, the proportion of bucks with higher Douglas scores will increase. Bucks with mature heads but with missing tines, badly split palms or whatever other fault the group decides is highly undesirable could also be culled, provided that the number taken doesn't negatively affect the sex ratio.

References.

Adams Kip (2006) Is Culling Necessary? Quality Deer Management Association. www.qdma.org/articles/details.asp?id=124

Adams Kip (2003) Cull Bucks Quality Deer Management Association. www.qdma.org/articles/details.asp?id=123

Hall Dr Graham (2008) FLS Adjunct Associate Professor School of Animal Studies, Queensland University, Senior Game Management Officer Game Management Unit Department of Primary Industries and Water Tasmania. Personal communication.



NSWDA Merchandise

I have organized some new club shirts, polar fleece & caps.

The colours are at this time ;

Polo shirtswhite/navy trim.....\$ 25.00

Micro fleece top.....Moss green.....\$ 35.00

Caps.....bottle green.....\$ 15.00

Caps.....blaze orange.....\$ 15.00

All garments have the club emblem embroidered on the item

We will have the items at the next meeting for sale & also at Coffs Harbour.

For further information members could contact me on 48 210 774 / 041 202 1741
or at 20 John street. Goulburn. 2580

Postage will be at \$5.00 for members.

Also, other colours are available but will need to be a special order.

Thanks Darren

D. Reby, J. Joachim, J. Lauga, S. Lek and S. Aulagnier (1998). Individuality in the groans of fallow deer (*Dama dama*) bucks. *Journal of Zoology*, 245, pp 79-84 doi:10.1017/S0952836998005093

Boyle Brian (1995) Aspects of the biology of fallow deer (*Dama dama*) in eastern Tasmania. Charles Sturt University (Honours Dissertation).

Asher G.W., (1985) Oestrous cycle and breeding season of farmed fallow deer, *Dama*

dama. *Journal of Reproduction and Fertility* (1985) 75 521-529.



Field & Game Nationals Notification.

Saturday 1st & Sunday 2nd November

Members of the Bairnsdale branch have been working flat out to have their range in top shape for the Nationals. Extensive upgrade works have been undertaken on the range layouts, car parking area and facilities.

This year's event is special as we are celebrating FGA's 50th Anniversary. **For additional info and nomination forms log on to www.fga.net.au or call the National Office on 03/57990960.**

Eat More Roo Meat.

As reported in The Land 8/8/08 by James Woodford: A scientific paper in the international journal Conservation Letters reports that expanding the kangaroo industry would significantly decrease greenhouse gases. The paper's lead author, George Wilson, says kangaroos could help cut greenhouse gas emissions. Dr Wilson is involved with the University of NSW's Future of Australian Terrestrial Ecosystems project and also runs the consultancy company Australian Wildlife Services. He and his co-author, Melanie Edwards, say a proposal to reduce sheep and cattle numbers on the rangelands by 30pc should be considered.

THERE ARE AMUSING RATBAGS AND THERE ARE DANGEROUS RATBAGS.

**No prizes for being able to categorise
this lot.**

Some quotes from Peta.

“Even if animal tests produced a cure for AIDS, we'd be against it.” - PETA president Ingrid Newkirk

“To give a child animal products is a form of child abuse.” - Neal Barnard, PETA medical advisor and former president of the PETA Foundation

“We're at war, and we'll do what we need to win.” - PETA vice president Dan Matthews

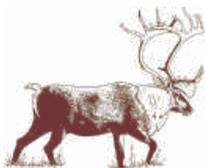
“I find it small wonder that the laboratories aren't all burning to the ground. If I had more guts, I'd light a match.” - PETA president Ingrid Newkirk

“When you see the loss of 9 billion [animal] lives each year, it's inappropriate to hold a sign or pass out a petition. It's appropriate to go out and burn down the ... farm.” - Joshua Harper, convicted domestic terrorist and a recipient of \$5,000 from PETA in 2001

“Young activists should “not be afraid to condone arsons.” —PETA “humane education lecturer” Gary Yourofsky

“Everything we do is based at adults.” - PETA president Ingrid Newkirk denies targeting children on CNN, (March 21, 2002)

“We are after the kids who are looking and searching for something.” - “PETA Kids”



coordinator Marci Hansen, (June 22, 2003)

“Our campaigns are always geared towards children and they always will be.” - PETA vice president Dan Matthews, Fox News Channel (December 19, 2003)

READ THE ABOVE THREE QUOTES:
WHOSE LYING?

In the words of its founding president Ingrid Newkirk, PETA’s goal is “total animal liberation.”

three times but the judge would not ring the bell to announce a miss despite the two side judges agreeing he had missed. This action ended up robbing the young US shooter Jeffery Holguin of a bronze medal. Hu Binyan Hu collected the medal instead and Holguin was inconsolable!!

Keeping Politics out of Sport?

Russell Mark believes that Chinese officials at the Olympic Games in Beijing confiscated his ammunition and gave it to their own shooters to practise with on the range. He had it especially sent from Italy as had 14 other shooters. When they went to collect it they were told it had not arrived. But Mark later noticed Chinese shooters on the range using his exact same ammo. He in turn was forced to buy no name Chinese ammunition that he had never used before and had to pay \$15 per box for the privilege. He said that while his performance was not altered, it did “mess with his mind”. He had been using the Italian ammo for 4 years in practise so was thrown by it being unavailable to him with no recourse to follow. In addition to this abysmal oneupmanship, Mark reckons the Chinese judges were heavily biased towards the home team and there was little they would not do to assist their athletes. An example of this was seen when a Chinese shooter missed the clays

