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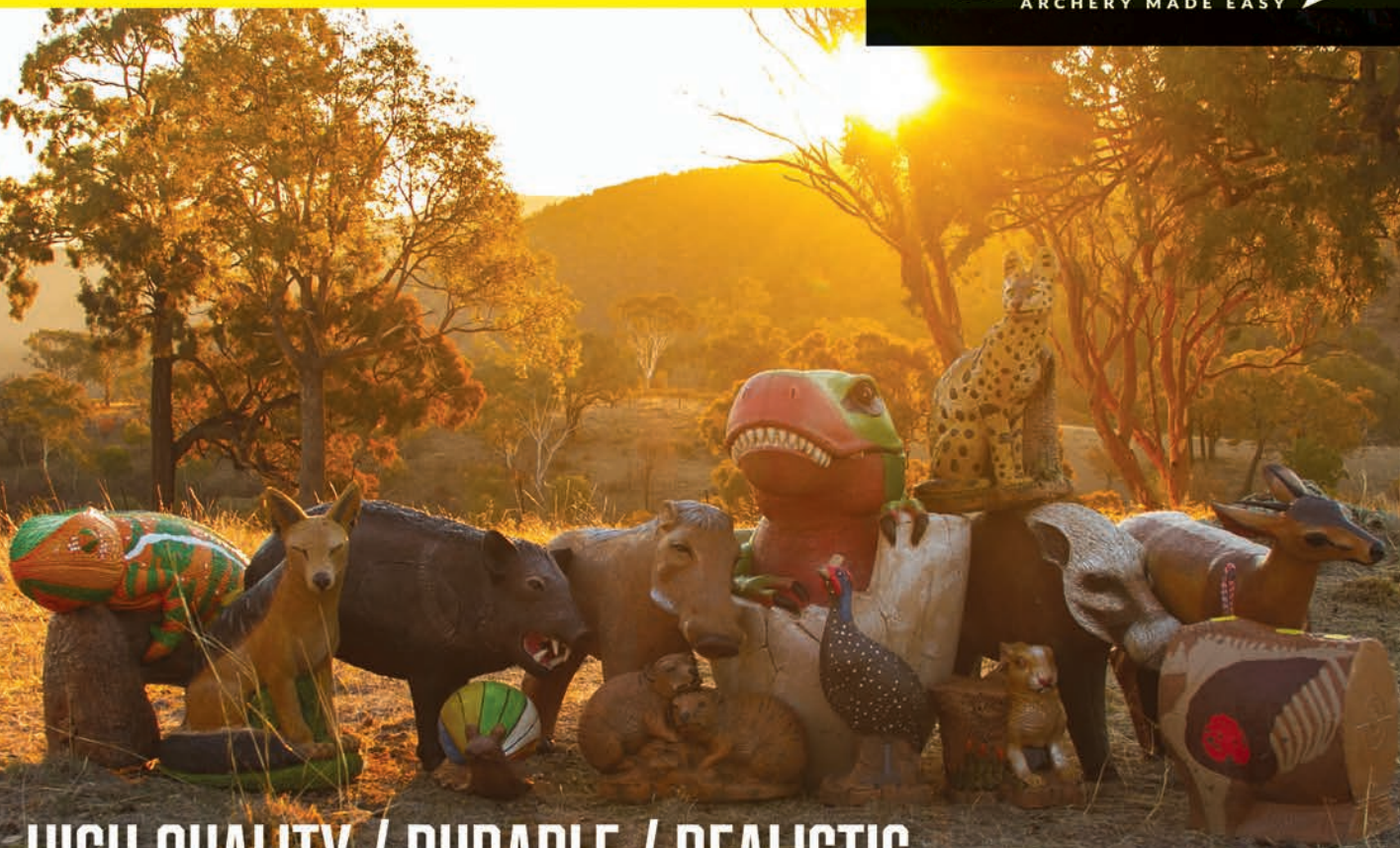


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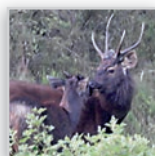
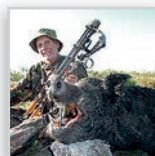
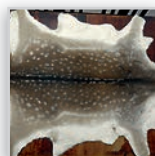
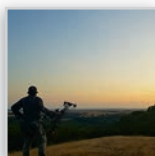
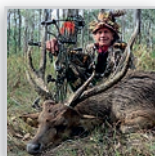
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Tyler Atkinson
Mark Burrows
Graham Newell
Mark Burrows



◀ COVER PHOTOGRAPH

Hog heaven in amongst rows of stubble.

Photo supplied by JETT HARCH

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You'll notice in this issue that we're quite heavily weighted in our hunting stories towards the deer species. But at least we have hunting stories! COVID-19 has deeply affected our ability to present field archery coverage and after six months of little club or Branch activity, this time my sources have dried up completely. Sadly, the National Safari and National IFAA Championships have been cancelled for 2020. Looking forward, I'm sure we'll once again feature some great field archery stories as things get back to normal.

Everyone's talking about a 'new normal' and nowhere is that more obvious than in the publishing industry. News Corp recently stopped publishing physical issues of 76 papers, transferring them to a totally digital format. Even sadder, they closed down 36 small newspapers entirely. The shake-up also affected us as the printer we have used for more than four decades was a victim of the rationalisation.

Archery Action started 46 years ago when John and Bev Ursem, then in Townsville, put together the first magazine from



a spare room in their home using an IBM golf-ball typewriter. Within 18 months, the physical copy was being printed at the Warwick Daily News in Palmerin Street, Warwick, using cold-type composition. In time the Daily News moved to bigger premises in Albion Street, became part of Australian Provincial Newspapers (APN) and its printing component grew and morphed into APN Print. The printing headquarters was moved to huge premises in Kenilworth Street where it operated as quite a major player in the printing industry. It became a News Corp entity when APN was purchased in its entirety in late 2016. In July this year, the giant printing presses went silent, marking the end of an era. Sometimes you can't help but be saddened by 'progress'.

The ABA's Rules of Fair Chase, Rule 12, states that "No animal harvested with the bow under the Rules of Fair Chase will be recognised by the Association unless the animal is utilised in some way, either by trophy, food or photograph."

A perfect way to utilise an animal is to have its skin tanned so that it becomes a useful addition to your home. Rather than paying someone else to do the job, why not tan the skin yourself? There's a bit involved, but in this issue long-time ABA elder Mark Burrows takes you through the steps to successfully tan a skin so it can take pride of place on your wall or on your floor. I hope many of you take up the challenge!

Jenel Hunt
Editor

DEADLINES

Please submit articles and advertisements by these dates:

editor@archeryactionmagazine.com

ISSUE	DEADLINE
2020	
Vol 46 No. 2 November-December	1 October
2021	
Vol 46 No. 3 January-February	1 December
Vol 46 No. 4 March-April	1 February
Vol 46 No. 5 May-June	1 April
Vol 46 No. 6 July-August	1 June
Vol 47 No. 1 September-October	1 August



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FREELANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

are welcomed by this magazine and articles should be addressed to: The Editor, Archery Action, at the above address. The Editor accepts no responsibility for unsolicited material. Colour photographs or high resolution scans are suitable for publication. Please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your articles to enable notification of acceptance or otherwise and return of article if required. Photographs returned only if stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

Emailed contributions should be sent in plain (editable) text only and any photos should be sent as separate attachments, not embedded in the story text.

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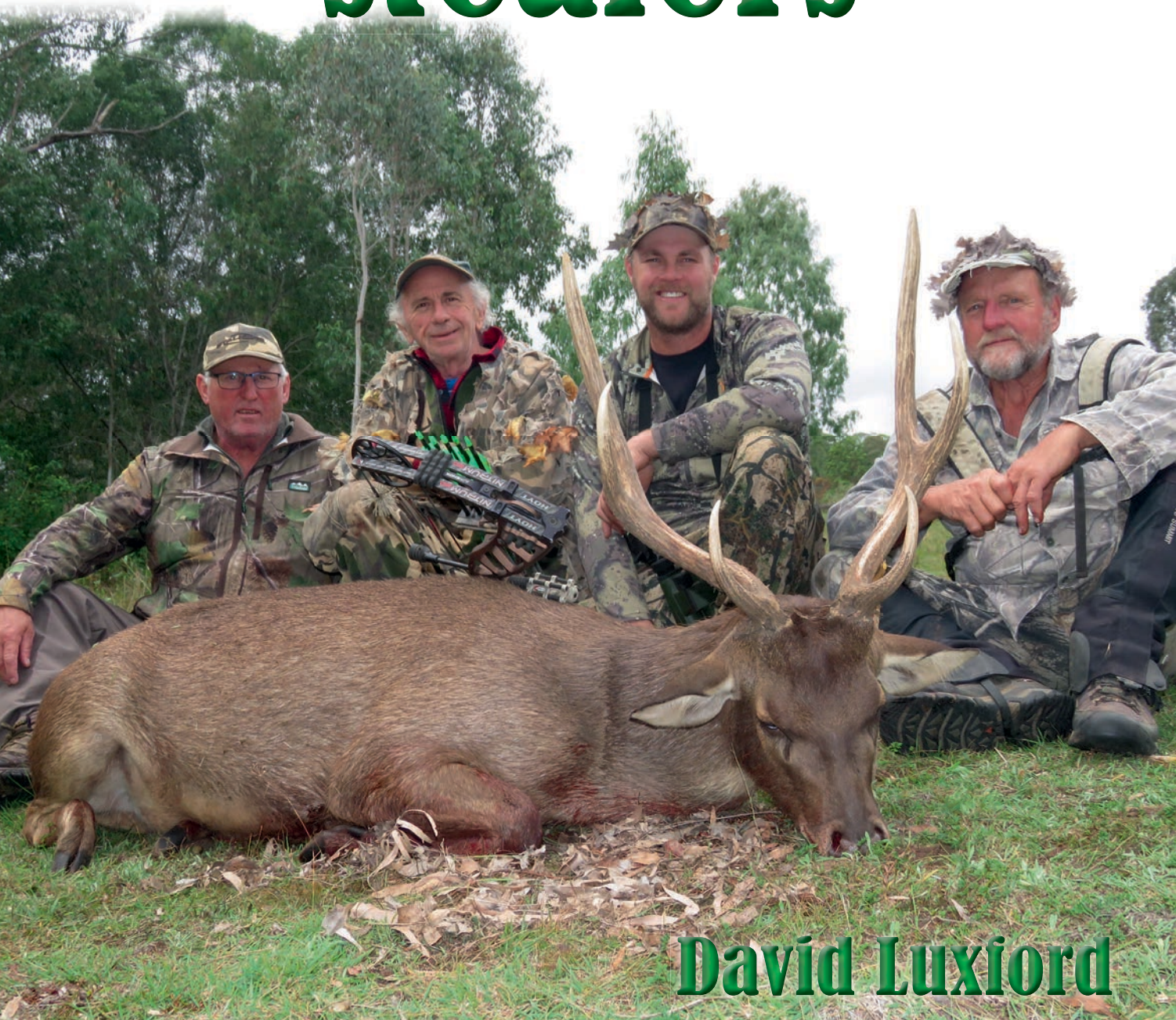


REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS

Traditional Trails—Nick Lintern

Bushcraft and Survival—Scott Heiman

Dream stealers



David Luxford

From left: Alben Perrett, David Luxford, Marc Curtis and Glenn Carlson ... special moments are all the more precious when people who understand are there to celebrate with you. This rusa represented the accomplishment of a dream for Marc Curtis—he has taken all species recognised by the Australian Bowhunters Association.

Sometimes it is not a bad thing to wait a lifetime to achieve your ultimate goals, for when it happens, it is pure joy of the highest elevation. The journey may be long and full of frustrating commitment but the end result is of ecstatic pleasure ... and if it is shared by a couple of friends who have accompanied you on the journey, it's even better.

The quest to take a Javan rusa deer of Record Class status was an extraordinarily long journey spanning a couple of decades. I had successfully hunted three Timorese rusa in Bensbach (Papua New Guinea) in 1994; a spiker rusa (my first Australian rusa) in NSW 20 years ago; spent 17 days hunting (unsuccessfully) for Moluccan rusa on the Prince of Wales Island in the Torres Strait back in the old days, and eventually harvested my first Trophy Class rusa, a Moluccan stag, in Cape York in the company of guide Luke Dixon in 2017.

However, a good Javan rusa had eluded me, and it wasn't for want of trying. I had several guided hunts with Glenn Carlson and Alben Perrett at Diaper Station when the population of rusa deer was exceptional, eventually taking a nice little stag in 2007. During the three-day hunts at Diaper, opportunities were presented on every occasion, but all I could do was provide dismal displays of what a bowhunter should not do: too high, too low, wrong spot. Although the

dream of a big rusa stayed active in my mind, I seriously doubted that it would ever eventuate.

However, through a series of circumstances I returned to Diaper in August 2019 in the company of Marc Curtis. It was a rather extraordinary experience. Firstly, Marc reminded me on the journey to Diaper that I had taken him for his Bowhunter Proficiency Certificate 28 years prior when he was 12 years old. Secondly, we were hunting with serious intent. Marc only required a rusa deer to achieve Royale Ishi status (which means having taken all species recognised by the ABA), so I felt rather privileged not only to have been at the start of his journey but also at what could be a serious milestone in his hunting career.

My own quest was simple—a stag of Record Class quality. Dreams are dreams and no one can take them from you.

Marc was a bit stressed and unsure about what to expect and the procedures related to hunting rusa. I was rather relaxed, having been there a few times before. First day, first light, Marc was keen to go and it took a bit to convince him to chill out. I explained that as the day matured and warmed, rutting stags adorned with headdresses of reed and grass would appear from nowhere, flex their muscle, parade their virtue, challenge any competing stag and rest in a warm sun-lit spot.

Marc's first day involved playing cat and mouse with a few stags and ended with a shattering experience on Mr Big; he simply misjudged the distance. My day also started with a shattering experience. At 30m, I drew on a stag feeding over a crest in very light fog. His chest was exposed but his head obscured. Calmly I settled the pin and released only to watch my arrow fly like a ballistic missile attempting to correct itself, but unlike the missile my arrow failed to find its target. In disbelief, Glenn and I looked at each other. A vane was only partially adhered to the shaft and it had resulted in erratic flight—a lesson I will not forget.

For me that was it: a chance given, a chance lost. Consequently, the day was rather long until we came upon a great stag bedded in tussock on the edge of a creek. The stalk was textbook. Everything was in my favour—the breeze, tussocks for cover and a high creek bank. Finishing the stalk on hands and knees, I crouched behind a tussock at 30m from the stag. It was a magical moment: The hunter watching the hunted. The stag stretched out his neck and rested his chin on the ground, closing his eyes as the setting sun illuminated his antlers and warmed his soul.

The presentation of the shot was overpowering and with recent triumph of a similar shot I steadied the pin and released the arrow. The stag rose (as did the dust beneath him). The arrow

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Sometimes you wait a lifetime for a moment like this.

was an inch or so low. He trotted away unsuspectingly then stood broadside to me. A second arrow found its mark behind the shoulder. He turned on the bank, took a couple of steps backwards—all looked good—then he disappeared up and over a steep rise. Dreams evaporated and a reclusive evening of shot replays, stag's reaction, potential wound fatality and torment followed. The wound told a certain truth but conjecture festered doubt. My judge and jury would assemble the next day and the verdict would be known.

The following morning, Marc hunted with Glenn and I went for a quick reconnoitre with Alben before attending to the unfinished business of the previous day. We came across two impressive stags feeding in a tussock-filled gully. A well executed stalk put me in striking distance of Mr Big. However, a wafting breeze put an end to that. Before relaxing our guard I looked for Mr Big's brother and found

him a short distance quietly feeding on his own. Breeze checked, boots off, and every time he lowered his head to feed I made fast ground until I was only 30m from him. Then for no reason he decided to bed in some tussock. I approached to 20m, stood with arrow on string and waited. A drift of breeze eventually put an end to our game. He rose from his bed and trotted in an arc back towards me, stopped at 35m behind some scrub and was the recipient of an arrow through the heart. He trotted a short distance and circled, exposing a well placed arrow, then slowed to a walk and bedded for the last time.

As I approached this fine 30-inch stag I was rather overwhelmed; it had happened; an impressive Javan rusa had fallen swiftly to my Viper Trick. I turned to an unexpected audience. Alben, Glenn and Marc were walking towards me. I raised my arms into the air and called, "Pickle Rick," for it was just one of those moments. The camaraderie

as we gathered around the fallen stag defined friendships of the hunt. Both Glenn and Alben had shared my desire for such a trophy for many years and Marc understood my journey.

However, the day was far from over and filled with surprises that called for a degree of celebration that evening. Marc was successful in taking a fine Trophy Class stag, ending his quest for all recognised species. Another positive for the day was that the impressive stag I had shot the evening before was found a relatively short distance from where it had been last seen.

As I stated at the beginning, sometimes it is not a bad thing to spend a lifetime trying to achieve your goals and dreams, for once you have achieved all you desire, your library of related stories ceases to increase, and your dreams of such adventures, exploits and exceptional trophies diminish and evaporate. Do yourself a favour—be patient and save a dream or two for tomorrow.



The first stag, found only a short distance from where it had disappeared the previous day.



Australian Bowhunters Association INC



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COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

The protocol for contacting officers is: Member speaks to relevant club officer. If the club officer cannot answer the query the officer passes it to the Branch representative who then contacts the relevant National Officer if required.

If you have any queries for National Officers, please direct your communication to the National Office (contact details as above).

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Ralph Boden (*appointed*)
VICE-PRESIDENT, BOWHUNTING
Allan Driver (*appointed*)
VICE-PRESIDENT, FIELD
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(*vacant*)

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North New South Wales	Peter Stubbs	(02) 6743 1559
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Central and Greater Victoria	Steve Old	0418 177 980
South Australia	Brett Raymond	0418 810 598
Western Australia	Ken Neill	0418 926 862
Tasmania – see Victoria		
Trophy Bowhunters of Australia	Ralph Boden	(02) 4392 6810

BOWHUNTING DIVISION REPORT

by Allan Driver

(Vice-President Bowhunting Division – *appointed*)



Another lockdown

Things have certainly changed once again with the COVID-19 virus, especially in my home State here in Victoria. I am back in lockdown for who knows how long as a second wave of the virus takes a real stranglehold on all of us. Things are changing in other States, with some very small outbreaks happening.

We all need to follow our State and Federal Government directives if we are to get a grip on this to

hopefully slow the spread. Having said that, it has been noticeably quiet on the bowhunting front due to the current circumstances.

If you can get out and about, please make the effort to do so and get your claims in as soon as possible.

Shows and expos

Many hunting shows have been cancelled due to the virus and will

hopefully be back up and running next year if all goes well.

A few Branches have had the opportunity to attend the SSAA shot shows around different States to advertise ABA at the shows to get our message across to like-minded hunters. In addition, deer expos give exposure of our association to many others in the hunting world.

The many that I have attended give the opportunity to look around the venue at other things that are being sold et cetera. One item that took my attention was a PLB—a Personal Locator Beacon.

I had been keen to purchase one for a while and there was an Australian-manufactured device for sale. I spoke at length with the owners and they were deeply passionate about their device. Once the sale was made, others in our group also made purchases.

My PLB sits in the 4WD glovebox and is always ready to be put into the backpack when venturing out to hunt in unfamiliar places with the GPS or solo.

I remember when I first started hunting with my mate Ray. We were out chasing goats. While climbing on steep terrain, I slipped and went A over T. Luckily the tumble didn't do any damage but it could have gone in a different direction, so having a device like the PLB would have been helpful if I hadn't been able to contact anyone nearby. (At the time, I was more worried about the bow and the 35mm camera in my backpack!) If you are a solo hunter it is a good investment for under \$300 and I would recommend one.

What about hares?

After looking over the National Awards for 2019 it interesting to see a great deal of rabbits being taken but what about the humble hare? They can be an elusive animal and seem to not get much attention.

Even I have not taken one of them—let alone seen one standing still—as they are usual on the run.

So maybe we can all take up the challenge and see how many hares can

be taken with the bow for the rest of the year.

With the situation that all of us are experiencing—and as staying at home is a necessity for many—I know there are hunters out there who are itching to get out and hunt. But if you can't get into the bush with your bow, something you can do is relive some of your best moments by writing down your tale and sending it to our great magazine.

Don't keep it to yourself. Please share it with us all so we can enjoy your story—and of course send in some good photos to go with it!

Until the next issue, stay safe.

Editor's note:

Every time someone talks about hares I'm reminded of the joke about the bald fellow who asked to have rabbits tattooed all over his head. He thought that from a distance they might look like hares.

Okay, okay, you can stop groaning now.

Summary of Australian Bowshot Records

Species	Holder	Australian Record	Record Class	Trophy Class
Boar	Michael Dacre	37 2/8	29	25
Goat	James Finlay	151 2/8	110	95
Buffalo	John Lopes	108 2/8	86 4/8	80
Camel	Kimberley Nicholas	32 6/16	29	25
Fox	Graeme Duff	11	10 2/16	9 3/16
Cat	Tim Pitt-Lancaster	8 5/16	7 10/16	7
Red Deer	Dan Smith	315 3/8	200	175
Fallow Deer	Darryl Bulger	276 4/8	190	150
Chital Deer	Dan Smith	204	160	140
Hog Deer	Stephen Tilley	111 7/8	70	55
Sambar Deer	Dean Scott	203 5/8	162 7/8	140
Rusa Deer	Jay Janssen	236	170	150
Shark BHFF	Barry Feeney	35 2/8	20	15
Shark BF	John Van Den Heuvel	51 6/8	41 4/8	15
Stingray BHFF	Barry Feeney	11 3/8	7 4/8	6
Stingray BF	Gleewyn Butson	14 3/8	11 4/8	10

Ladies Best of Species

Boar	Kristan Bell	34 4/8pt	2017
Goat	Katherine Agale	127 1/8pt	2010
Buffalo	Christie Pisani	87 4/8pt	2017
Camel	Christie Pisani	30 7/16pt	2014
Fox	Helen Duff	10 14/16pt	2016
Cat	Lorna Hopkins	7 12/16pt	1984
Red Deer	Christie Pisani	268 3/8pt	2014
Fallow Deer	Elissa Rosemond	205 7/8pt	2019
Chital Deer	Elizabeth Proctor	161 3/8pt	2019
Hog Deer	Cheryl Morris	60 5/8pt	2018
Sambar Deer	Nil		
Rusa Deer	Emma Johnson	195 6/8pt	2016
Shark BHFF	Lynda Fell	25 4/8pt	2016
Shark BF	Lynda Fell	23 5/8pt	2000
Stingray BHFF	Carolyn Rundle	9 7/8pt	1987
Stingray BF	Gleewyn Butson	14 3/8pt	1986

Bowhunting achievements to end July 2020

Master Bowhunter

Nil further since last report

Trophy Bowhunter Award

Dan Podubinski 260

Bowhunter Award

Nil further since last report

Bowhunter Royale

Nil further since last report

Bowhunter Imperial

Nil since last report

Bowhunter Supreme

Nil further since last report

Senior Member of TBA

Nil further since last report

Members Admitted to TBA Club (membership granted after taking first Trophy Class or better animal)

Ruth Damstra



T/C and upward and/or First Kill/Species

Bnch/Hunter	Club	Game	Award	FK/FKOS	Size
A Wade Lockwood	Freds Pass Field Archers	Stingray	GA	FKOS	0
B Colin Morrison	Mt Isa District Bowhunters	Pig	GA	FK/FKOS	0
B Davina Morrison	Mt Isa District Bowhunters	Pig	GA	FK/FKOS	0
B Brian Duynhoven	Townsville District Bowhunter	Chital	TC		157 2/8
B Andrew Gosper	Twin Rivers Bowhunters	Stingray	GA	FKOS	0
C David Brewer	Emerald Archery Club	Fallow	TC		167 5/8
C David Brewer	Emerald Archery Club	Chital	TC		146
D Darren Askin	Independent	Red Deer	GA	FK/FKOS	0
E Gary Landers	Independent	Goat	TC		100
E Kim Everingham	Manning District Bowmen	Stingray	GA	FK/FKOS	5 1/8
E Bernie Hayne	Namoi Valley Archers	Red Deer	GA	FKOS	163 1/8
H Payden Fraser	Ballarat Bowhunters	Rabbit	GA	FK/FKOS	0
H Payden Fraser	Ballarat Bowhunters	Fox	GA	FKOS	0
H Wayne Atkinson	Ballarat Bowhunters	Fox	TC		9 14/16
H Dan Podubinski	Buffalo Bowmen	Fox	TC		9 11/16
H Dan Podubinski	Buffalo Bowmen	Fox	TC		9 3/16
H Dan Podubinski	Buffalo Bowmen	Fox	TC		10 1/16
H Dan Podubinski	Buffalo Bowmen	Fox	RC		10 6/16
H Chris Baty	Geelong Trophy Bowhunters	Rabbit	GA	FKOS	0
J Ruth Damstra	Peel Archers	Goat	GA	FK/FKOS	0
J Ruth Damstra	Peel Archers	Goat	TC		105



Trophy Bowhunters of Australia Club



THE IMPERIAL STAG

DAVID LUXFORD

In 2019, I ventured to Glenn Carlson's red deer camp at the headwaters of the Brisbane River. It had been a long three-day solo drive full of hours of bowhunting reflections; past hunts, triumphs, failures, camaraderie and of course no shortage of past haunting disappointments. Would this trip be another hunt where I failed to

capitalise on opportunities presented by hard-working guides? I hoped not, for there was a mission to fulfil; a dream, a goal.

Generally we all have certain expectations of guided hunts—that they will 'deliver'—but it is not like that. They do their job and the rest is in your hands. I had been with

ARCHERY is a FAMILY sport



Queensland Bowhunting Safaris a few times in pursuit of a trophy red stag and on more than one occasion in the past had opportunities but failed to deliver a lethal arrow on a trophy stag. So by the time I crossed the last of 17 river crossings my mood was somewhat sombre as I pulled up at Red Deer Camp.

Red Deer Camp is a unique social and hunting experience: For two weeks it is a hive of activity—guides coming and going, plotting and planning; hunters honing skills, comparing broadheads, arrows, bows and their latest and greatest bowhunting triumph; cooks clanging and banging, frizzling, frying, boiling and baking, and not to mention the campfire, central to peace, tranquillity, jocularly, laughter and loudness.

At the conclusion of each hunt, morning and evening, solidarity between all hunters and guides is evident. Eagerly and intently, all listen to every detail of the hunters' experiences, and at times when someone is late returning speculate on success in the field. But what rises above all is the respect and sharing of such storytelling. No matter how old or what gender, everyone has their moment at the podium.

Amidst the laughter and excitement of the first evening I may have appeared a bit reserved, a bit quiet. I sat back, listened to the enthusiasm of youth and probably envied their bravado, knowledge of all things technical and their expertise with the array of devices in their hands. I sat at the fire, found solace in the rising smoke and wondered if Lady Luck would ride on my shoulder the following week. For this hunt was up there with one of my most important. A red deer stag of Trophy Class quality, the last measurable species I required to be eligible for the Imperial Ishi.

The first morning at any hunting camp is full of pumped, excited,



electrified hunters eagerly awaiting to be let loose and find adventure, meet their adversary and then return, victor victorious. Day one of the 2019 red hunt was no different. However, for me high levels of anxiety were the only thing that flowed through my veins; I was going with Glenn to the Honey Hole, knowingly expecting to encounter a trophy stag. Before the sun had risen and amidst the roars of various stags, a double-five lured by Glenn's interpretation of a hind call momentarily paused at 20m and was gone. Without hesitation Glenn summed up the moment: "That was your double-five."

The day finished as it had begun; as the sun set we were at the top of a hill playing cat and mouse with a very impressive stag and although at one stage he was 60m from us broadside in fading light it was not a shot for me. The following day I hunted solo, sent into a myriad of steep hills and gullies. I followed a ridge then sat and listened on the highest point. Eventually a roar echoed from the abyss below, it was comparable to the sound of a pride of angry male lions. I pondered the situation then, intimidated by what appeared to be an endless mosaic of thick undergrowth-covered gullies, I opted for caution and ventured elsewhere.

Over the remaining days of the first week I spent considerable time in the 'Lion's Den', observed a couple of great monarchs, learned a great deal about the gully system, red deer hunting and my own internal fortitude; do the best you can, go as hard as you can, and when you've had enough go to the next hill and have one last look.

The first week at camp fulfilled the dreams of most if not all hunters present. I took a spiker under an embarrassing display of how not to draw a bow slowly when a deer is staring at you. On the third attempt the arrow flew true and the spiker dropped dead on the spot. During the week I caped a number of stags for hunters and seemed to be either at the skinning table or the salt shed and enjoyed every second, hoping every night that tomorrow would be my day. The week came to an end, the camp farewelled one group, rested, reset, and then enthusiastically welcomed the second group of hunters. I remained the second week; skinner, camp hand/cook and accidental guide, and if time or opportunity presented, I could further pursue my goal.

As it turned out, on day one of the second week I ventured back into the 'Lion's Den' but without a bow—just binoculars and an enthusiastic fresh hunter by the name of David Brewer, following my lead. I could give David a few years, but the previous week's walking held my legs in good stead. As we strolled up the first familiar ridge I thought it was highly probable that on this day I would call in one of the big stags for someone else, but consoled myself with the philosophical thought, what will be, will be. I wasn't surprised when it happened. David and I moved down a ridge into perfect positioning, called the disgruntled rutting stag and he did every thing expected of him, other than die. We had an unforgettable hunt and interaction with a great monarch and apart from



David Luxford with his Imperial stag.

getting a tiny bit disorientated in light scrub, or what Victorians call dense rainforest, we returned to camp mid-afternoon to an expectant audience. After we relayed our tale of woe I suggested to David to have a cuppa, a lay down, and be ready to go in an hour or so. (That's how a day can be in Red Deer Camp—go, go, go). As the second week closed in, a fine variety of trophies adorned the table, happy hunters farewelled camp and returned home ... memories cemented, dreams fulfilled and hard-earned trophies in hand. And as the dust settled from their departure the hectic chaos and

at times insane atmosphere of the previous two weeks slowly faded and Red Deer Camp for 2019 was done, as was my attempt to take a trophy stag ... so I thought.

As I sat in the company of the fire that I had nurtured for two weeks, a familiar voice asked if I would like to go for a walk the following morning. Luke Maher and I departed camp before the sun had thought about rising and the previous fortnight would be but training for what I anticipated could be a long, hard day. I first met Luke some 15 years prior at the old Red Deer Camp. He was, at that time, a young

enthusiastic lad. Now he was a man, a father, respected red deer hunter and competent archer renowned for going the extra mile and doing it hard.

The roar for 2019 was almost at end, the mountain was quiet in comparison to the previous two weeks. We followed up and encountered a few juvenile stags and found a couple of mature animals that eluded us. One reasonable stag was busy rubbing a tree. He wasn't a monster but would fit the bill. All was well, the stalk was going to plan, and every time he thrashed and rubbed the tree I made inroads until I only had one or two steps to go

for a comfortable shot. However, the stalk failed due to not paying attention to my footing. A small stick rolled under my foot and the stag was gone and with that I was convinced so was my last opportunity for the year.

But Luke's resilient and determined nature ensured the hunt was far from over. Once more we encountered stags but they were on the move, heading back to the mountain. Then a solo roar on a scrubby hill attracted our attention.

Within no time Luke pointed out the tops of a fine stag above the undergrowth not more the 40m away. We stood watching then to my right, along a trail we had walked, a hind strolled unaware of our presence. As she walked past us and in the direction of the stag, the stag, becoming aware of her presence, strutted to the greeting, turned with her in an arc to resume his position at the top of the hill with his harem. Sadly for him, the curve of his anticipated trail would come between us and his intended destination. Without conscious thought I drew and held, mentally noting that there was but one perfect window of opportunity. As the stag entered said window quartering on, I picked a spot between his neck and shoulder and watched as the arrow lodged exactly where I intended. The stag turned and crested the top of the rise in a few strides.

Luke and I looked at each other, stunned at the quickness of the event and execution of the shot. My interpretation was that it couldn't have been better. He agreed. Luke was visibly shaking with excitement and adrenaline, while I felt relatively calm. We relived the shot, placement and stalk for 20 minutes before the follow-up. At that stage I had no idea of what the results would be, however within two minute—or as long as it took to walk 60m—we stood in awe of a stag that had died in stride and came

to rest beside a log. My emotions were beyond comprehension and my gratitude expressionless; words failed me. Everything I could have wanted had been achieved and it had been shared with a fine young man and friend. The hunt had been a long, hard and tiring 12 days, but at the eleventh hour Luke Maher made it happen and a majestic stag now lay at my feet; my Imperial stag.

Many years ago I had a little bit to do with the introduction of three levels of bowhunting achievement; the Royale Ishi (all species recognised by ABA), the Imperial Ishi (all species and those measurable, at Trophy Class or better) and the Supreme Ishi, (all species and those measurable, at Record Class or better; the 'or better' being an Australian record). Before the introduction of these three levels of achievement the Golden Ishi, the equivalent of 100 Trophy Class claims, had been the highest pinnacle of achievement a bowhunter could aspire to. The Golden Ishi remains as it has always been—hard earned and highly respected.

The Royale, Imperial and Supreme levels of achievement are there for one purpose; to inspire and recognise those bowhunters who dedicate years to the sport of bowhunting. They are not easily achieved; they are the result of persistence, patience and perseverance; they cannot be purchased; they can only be earned by spending immeasurable hours away from family and in the bush, desert, seas and scrub across this vast nation.

A handful of Royale Ishis have now been awarded but up until the moment I walked to my stag only one Imperial Ishi had ever been presented and that was to my hunting comrade and friend Mark Burrows. On reflection, the consequence of my dreams, ambitions and desires resulted in the death of the stag, but as Ned Kelly said as he stood on the gallows: "Such is life."



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BUSHFIRE RECOVERY UPDATE



Working on the concrete slab at Manning.



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Still in the process of ...

rising from the ashes

Manning District Bowhunters

by WAL JOB

RM and disaster recovery co-ordinator

In the May-June issue of *Archery Action*, I wrote of the devastation that the Hillville fire did to our archery club. Since then, the dedicated team in the club has been working hard to rebuild.

And here we are nine months on. After successful grants, we are nearly ready to see the build happen—retaining walls built; shed site levelled; three bays of concrete floor and pier footings laid. And last week the shed kit arrived and we're just waiting for the building team to arrive to erect it.

Water tanks have been installed; the generator shed is done except for a door—and of course there is no generator yet to put in there.

The toilet block rear wall has been rebuilt and external plumbing done. No further work can be done there until we have water connected and, of course, a roof to catch the water to fill the tanks!

A lot of renovation of the grounds has been taking place and, with the huge amount of weed and grass growth over knee high, it has been a constant battle to tame it. (They even had the old bloke on his knees picking up stones!)

COVID-19 has slowed the progress, but we have now been able to get out into the forest and try to find the original trails and shooting lanes, which are totally overgrown with weeds, and trees sprouting epicormic shoots along their trunks. As well as the weeds, there's a tangle of dead and fallen trees to get through.

The first thing that we got going outside was one ABA practice range. This gave an opportunity for archers to at least do some practice, while mail matches have been a chance to hone skills and compete internationally. The International IFAA Mail Match is in its second month with



one to go with 12 of our members participating.

Meanwhile, I did a RM hazard inspection of two ranges and we now have the tracks cleared as well as shooting lanes cut in on one range. We even have 10 bales on the first 10 lanes and last week a few of us did a trial shoot on them to check their suitability.

So, enthusiasm is building, and constant requests are coming in from people wanting to start training. We still don't have an official opening date but we would love it to happen before Christmas, or at the least, in the first quarter of 2021. We will look forward to inviting you to come to our first competition shoot. (Hopefully by then we'll have a ride-on mower!)



Eurobodalla Archery Club



*From a burned-out mess ...
... to being back in business.*

*Too busy to do much sitting at the moment, but
at least they have some new bench seats at the
club for when the working bees are finished.*



BUSHFIRE RECOVERY UPDATE

With three beautiful ranges gone and most infrastructure burned out, the scene of utter devastation was surely enough to make Eurobodalla Archery Club members wonder if the club's death knell had been sounded after a mighty bushfire ripped through their club.

But people are resilient, and a core of determined people started the arduous process of rebuilding what had been lost during Australia's terrible and fiery summer.

For a start, all was not lost. Before the fire, some of the heavy 3D targets had been moved to Glenn Brinckley's work shed down the road.

Glenn, the ABA field representative for the club, said some of the members did a lot of work to get grants for the rebirth of the club. One of the first things they did was get an arborist to check the trees and clear the ones that had to be taken down to make the area safe again.

"I've only been with the club for 12 months and they're a great bunch of people—there's always someone willing to give a hand to get something done," he said.

"Pretty much the whole archery club was burned out, but people just rose to the challenge."

He said the club president George Forster and treasurer Peter Colman had done a non-stop job at the scene, along with past president Roy Jenkins who had a vast knowledge of how to get things set up.

"Everything's been done right. There's a lot of behind-the-scenes work happening with people like John Bugh, Hans Ottervanger, Andrew Keft and Charles Brinckley. And others. I know I've probably missed a few names of people who've done important work.

"We've also had great service from contractors—Eurobodalla Tree Services, King Brothers Transport, Batemans Bay Removals, Jason Heffernan Bobcat Service and Yumaro."

Yumaro is a provider of services for people with a disability and was involved in the making up of target butts by pressing plastic into bales.

Glenn said the clubhouse area had been rebuilt and was looking good. It has two shipping containers, a roof and back wall. Tables have been rebuilt and a new bench is perfect for everything from preparing lunches to scoring. There's some great new seating too.

As well, the 3D stuff that was saved from the fire was moved back once there was a shipping container back on the site. Naturally, COVID-19 restrictions made this all the more difficult, but members abided by set times when they could visit the site.

Glenn said the area had since received massive rains, making the dense bushland quite unsafe and washing out two meets.

Still, the practice range is open (with limits to participant numbers).

"And we're going to try to get one of the three ranges open soon. Each range had 20 targets before the fire, and in the short term we're looking to replicate that," he said.

"For the long term, we are hoping to obtain part of a State Forest for a permanent home for the club, as currently it's on private land. We're talking to the Local Member and the Mayor about the possibility."

—Jenel Hunt



Building new butts.



A time of rebirth.

Around THE TRADS

To receive trad shoot information direct, email a request to:
swallace@wallacetradwoods.com

Sue Wallace

❁ COVID-19 restrictions had thrown many plans into chaos and trying to organise the inaugural TAA Queensland Titles at Chevallan Archery Park on July 18 and 19 was no exception. The Queensland Government guidelines for Stage 3 lifting, which included opening the NSW border and allowing outdoor recreational gatherings of 100, was due to come into effect on July 10, just in time for the event.

An online nomination form was implemented to keep a check on the numbers, including non-archers. I also kept the NSW names separate in case the border didn't open and started a reserve list as well.

The border was opened, but then people were finding out they were required to work the weekend of the shoot, as businesses were starting to open up again. So as names were withdrawn I contacted the next person on the reserve list. For that final week I was juggling people left right and centre so we didn't go over the 100 people allowed.

We decided to drive up on Thursday, to be there should any last-minute details need to be ironed out. The

afternoon was glorious; despite being in the middle of winter, the temperature was a superb 30 degrees.

A few other campers rolled in around late afternoon and after dinner one fellow grabbed his guitar and mouth organ. Even people who failed the triangle at music class at school had a go at singing along!

On Friday there was an opportunity for a few shots at the practice butts in the early afternoon. A little later I went from camp to camp to collect nominations and organise meal tickets. After dinner, some people retired to their vans, while others sat around the many campfires until it grew too chilly.

By Saturday morning we had archers from Newcastle, Sydney, Shellharbour, Tooma, and Tenterfield in NSW, and in Queensland from as far north as Mackay, a good contingent from Gladstone and Hervey Bay, as far west as the St George region, Chinchilla, Toowoomba through to Nanango, and the Gold Coast through to Gympie.

The format for this shoot was being trialled here as well as at WA State Titles held in March and at the Nationals to be held in Tenterfield. There were 20 3D targets with a three-arrow walk-up, scoring all arrows as A 10, B 8 and rest of body 5.

At this shoot the adults used three colour plates and shot one arrow from the orange, one from the chrome and one from the blue. The juniors shot one arrow from the chrome and two from the blue and the cubs shot all three arrows from their own pink plate. Most plates were laid in a reasonably straight line to avoid crossover of arrows, however a couple of the plates were moved by the National Shoot Director, Jason Chapman and the National Coaching Officer, Dave McGuire to make it a little more interesting, which it certainly did, and also gave us some ideas should this shoot be held here next year.





The vulture.



Warthog bristling with arrows.



A window of opportunity.

Target 1 was a blesbok in the shadows, target 3 was a leopard and you had to walk the plank to retrieve your arrows. At the vulture (as you can see from the photo above), the plate positions were different enough that the arrows in the target reflected a variety of shooting directions. Other targets included a crocodile on a sandpit, a javelina hidden in grass, a warthog nestled among some dappled undergrowth and some targets out in the open.

On the hunt round there were six 3D targets—five warthogs and a fox. You walked along the track and the target number sign was the indicator for the target direction (that helped, as some were a little obscured). You had one minute to walk to each target plate and shoot, then do the course in reverse until time was called. It was rather churned up as some real pigs had been rooting around during the previous week. I wonder if the 3D targets confused them ...

Then we wandered back up the top and did the rolling disc. The final event was the 30-second speed round which had seven 3D targets of various sizes and distances.

On Sunday morning there was a one-arrow round. Lunch was started early as the raffle table was really really full.

The first thing on the agenda was to give out a TAA Award to a woman who has been shooting a longbow for a very long time. She has travelled around the world and competed in many IFAA events as well as the Longbow Muster that used to be held at Tiaro Queensland, and many, many ABA National, State, and Branch Title shoots. This well deserving award was presented to Jane Bell.

For this shoot there was also an award for the overall winner, who was Steve Wallace!

We look forward to our next two-day shoot which is planned for September 26 and 27 (numbers may once again be limited if COVID-19 regulations still apply). Stay tuned for details.

* Trad shoots confirmed for October-November at the time of printing are: HVTA Charity Shoot October 3 and 4, TAA Nationals in Tenterfield October 10 and 11, Coffs Harbour TAA NSW Titles October 17 and 18, NAFA Trad Tourney October 24 and 25 and the Sunshine Coast Bowmen Traditional Knot Shoot November 15 (to be confirmed)

* We are hoping that in the next issue there will be a report from the Jules Shield Lakeside rescheduled event, the Tully shoot in September and the Chevallan Archery Park September shoot. The North Burnett Trad Shoot planned for August was cancelled.

You will find the further information and available flyers for the traditional shoots on the following websites:

Traditional Archery Australia:

www.traditionalarcheryaustralia.org > Shoot Information

Wallace Woods:

www.wallacetradwoods.com > Shoot information (proposed 2020 calendar, and will have the link to the shoot flyers as they become available)

Chevallan Archery Park:

www.chevallanarcherypark.com – for the traditional shoot calendar, IBO approved African 3D targets with replaceable centres, customised archery medals.

Ozbow:

www.ozbow.net > Traditional Archery Events > each shoot has an individual thread

I look forward to seeing you 'round the trads.



Searching for
summer fallows



TYLER ATKINSON

The weekend was approaching after a hot February week working in the sheds. The weather forecast was looking good for Saturday morning, with a small cool front moving through. That would be perfect to get a few animals out and moving and make it a bit more comfortable in the bush for wandering around. Friday night I made a call to my old man to ask if he wanted to come for a walk and try his luck on taking a fallow deer doe. He had only shot a couple with the bow and was excited to tag along and try to get another one on the ground.

Saturday morning came with an early alarm. Me being me, I slept straight through it and woke up 15 minutes later. Now it was going to be a race against the sun. I quickly got dressed and skipped the morning coffee. Most of my gear was in the car ready to go so I jumped in and was on my way to pick up Dad. When I arrived at his place he was standing out the front, all his gear ready (and I mean a lot seeing as it was just for a morning hunt). He greeted me with, "A bit late there, son, I was about to go back to bed."

We were on our way, 15 minutes behind schedule and really no way to make it up. Dad checked what the wind was supposed to be doing for the morning and we made a little game plan, cutting out the knob where I would normally head for a good vantage point to glass from at first light. We headed straight to where I was expecting some deer to be coming into the bush off some fringe country. As we were turning off the hardtop with about 10 minutes of 4WD tracks left to travel, the light just started to break through. Everything was slowly getting brighter and by the time we were pulling up and getting geared up, it was well and truly shooting light.

All our gear was on and in hand and it was crunch time—about a 1.5km dash along a pretty thick creek line, a

hop, skip and jump across the creek, a 200m push up a shale hillside and we would be in position.

As we broke out of the thick growth of the side hill, the ground started opening up and we went into hunt mode. We slowed right up, with eyes peeled on our final approach into our ambush position. About 70m from the fringe, I spotted something odd and out of place under some overhanging leafy limbs. There were two vertical, thin, long and very white-looking objects. I came to a halt and it was only seconds later that I caught a flicker through the leaves of a fallow doe's tail and then the white legs became visible as they took a step. It was on. She was

exactly where I thought we would find one feeding through and we were just five minutes late getting into position.

Dad made his way up to me slowly. We had a lengthy whispered discussion that went something like this: "I can't see it," "It's 70 metres away just to the left of the biggest white gum," "No, there's nothing there," "Keep looking ... you can only see its front legs under the overhanging canopy," "Nope, still can't." Well, this went on for longer than it should have and Dad finally got eyes on her. We planned a little stalk to try to get within 30m of her for a nice comfy shot. About 10 minutes passed, multiple kangaroos spotted us and slowly moved off. This

was putting the doe really on edge, she was still feeding away but with ears up and eyes on the lookout. We finally closed the gap to about 35m and then it happened. She had had enough. There were no kangaroos left for her security and without seeing or hearing us, she knew something was in the air. She sprang up and took off about 100m into a thicket of young gums for cover. I thought, she hadn't seen, heard or smelled us. She just doesn't know what's here. So I decided to try a few doe calls with my mouth. A couple of calls, "mmhhh mmhhh," had her interested and breaking out of cover in our direction. Slowly and steadily she made her way in, one step at a time,

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*All hunting stories are automatically
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with me giving a little “mmhh” every 10 seconds or so.

As she closed the gap, I whispered ranges to Dad and he was readying for a shot. At 30m, she offered a broadside shot through an opening. This was his opportunity. The range confirmed, his pin settled, the shot broke clean and the arrow was on its way. At its highest peak we heard the dreaded clunk; the arrow had intersected with a small overhanging branch no bigger than a pinkie finger ... and the game was up. The arrow landed at the doe's feet basically sideways and she took off bouncing, not knowing what had just happened.

“Bugger,” we both said and hoped

that the opportunity that had slipped through our fingers at the last minute wouldn't be our only chance for the morning.

Onwards we went, glassing and slowly working our way through the semi-open fringe. Kangaroos were our main obstacle and we tried to stay on game trails to keep quiet and avoid getting too close and disturbing them. A couple of more hours passed as we slowly worked our way through the fingers that lead to the paddocks. We looked and stalked through the little gullies that had been bedding areas and morning hideouts in the past.

The morning was starting to get on as we neared the last ridge. Just on this

ridge there was a great bit of ground to look over and glass. Slowly working our way up and over, we saw one kangaroo, two kangaroos, three kangaroos, and well there must have been well over 50 holed up in the nice little cool gully. We sat there for 15 minutes or so and picked apart every inch of what we could see through the binos, and nothing but more kangaroos showed themselves.

We made a quick game plan to cut around wide and get a look into some thick pockets on our way back to the car. We set off. Dad was having quite a bit of trouble with his hips and feet by this time and was starting to pull up a bit, so he was pushing along 30m or





Fallow country.

40m behind as I got to each crest and glassed then we'd keep going. Coming down off a crest with some thick tea-tree to the left I slowed, keeping an eye on the deep feeder gully below for any movement. Out of the corner of my eye I spotted a flicker, then another. It was that happy little flicker of a young fallow doe's tail as she was feeding, completely unaware of me standing 30m away. Turning around, I signalled to Dad that there were deer just ahead. He was still about 30m up the hill and signalled for me to try to get a shot.

I shuffled around a little bit until I could see a clear shooting lane. In the process, I spotted another three fallow does just moving around slowly and doing their thing. I turned again and signalled to Dad that I could see four.

I was set. The wind was nice and consistent, blowing straight from

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where the does were to me. All that I needed was a bit of patience and luck to be on my side. A couple of minutes passed, and I was just getting glimpse after glimpse of these fallow moving through the thick teatree. Then through my shooting lane I saw a head feed out. Yes, luck was on my side. She fed out—it was going to be a perfect 25m broad-side shot. She fed out further, now with her full vitals exposed and her head out of the shooting lane and into the thicket where she couldn't see me.

I slowly start to draw, and this was where things start going wrong. I had been so fixated on the doe feeding into that shooting lane that I hadn't noticed a chocolate doe moving up to the left and into a bit of an opening. From there, I was in full view of her. I was side-on to her and as I drew my bow she came alert, stomped and charged out of there ... and she took all of them with her—crashing and banging was going on everywhere as the does tried to work out what was going on and where the danger was.

They propped at the other side of the thicket, looking around to try to locate what the chocolate doe had seen. Luckily for me, one doe was clear of shrubs and as I was already at full draw, I worked my distance. I settled my pin low as I was 99 per cent sure she would jump the string ... then let the shot fly. She did as expected and dropped; the arrow flew true, and I heard the unmistakable sound of a solid hit tight behind the shoulder. A split second and about three steps later, she was on the ground. Shocked at how quickly she'd gone down, I was just turning to give Dad a big thumbs up and heard a 'thwack' as he let a shot break. My initial through was, "Oh yeah, they have come around and along the ridge past Dad and he has got a shot off."

Walking up to him, I saw a huge grin on his face. I was still under the impression that he had got an arrow



Tyler with his fallow doe.

away at a deer. Well the grin soon turned into a laugh as he moved, reaching out to pull his arrow out of the dirt 5m in front of him. "Well, I broke my own rule of not having your finger on the trigger." He explained what happened. The does had moved past him. He got to draw on them but they never presented a shot. Upon letting down, he still had a bit of adrenaline pumping and forgot about the finger being trigger-ready and at half draw the bow went off. We had a bit of a laugh over that and wandered down the hill towards my deer. As we were approaching, I was pointing out where the deer were, where they had gone to and what had happened, followed by how the shot had gone.

Dad was looking confused and asked, "You got one?"

I'm like, "Yeah." In the confusion of me thinking he'd got a deer, I hadn't mentioned that my shot had landed true.

We made our way across the hillside to the doe and cleared some

ground to take some photos. We had a 10-minute break, soaking in the beautiful day before we quartered the deer and took the back straps out. After a clean-up we put everything into my pack and headed back. We weren't all that far from the car, with only a couple of kilometres of ups and downs to go but not too much thick pushing.

We loaded up the back of the car then went into town to get a bakery pie for lunch before going home to finish cleaning up the meat so we could hang it.

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Nick Lintern TRADITIONAL TRAILS

Hello to all our readers and welcome to another instalment of Traditional Trails. It's great to hear that many archery clubs have some semblance of normality and are back functioning as best as they can. I've got a strong feeling we'll all be looking back on 2020 as being one of the weirdest years in living memory. It feels to me like we're all in a B budget horror film, maybe from the makers of "Attack of the Killer Tomatoes" ... a really bizarre few months.

At least now many of us can continue with our archery lifestyle and get out there and shoot.

In the previous issue, our yew English longbow was roughed out and ready to start tillering. So here goes with the next stage of our yew ELB.

Building the yew English longbow

Part 3

We have our bow roughed out to reasonable dimensions and are ready to start taking this embryo towards being a completed bow. The next step is to finish the bow's back. All self-bows—or any all-wood composite bow (except bamboo-backed bows which are already finished for us by nature) have to have their backs sanded down and burnished. This means we won't have issues with fibre lift and also means as we tiller, which is *always* done on the belly side, we don't need to factor in any changes to weight or shape from an unfinished back. With our yew bow, the back is creamy sapwood with a few blotches here and there of bark residue that we couldn't risk removing. So to finish our bow's back, start with 80-grit paper and sand the back entirely. Don't go nuts, we're just smoothing the sapwood down, not cutting through it.

Now do the same with 120, 180, and 240 grits. Now comes the burnishing part. There are a few ways you can do this. One method is to get a large dessert spoon and rub it hard over the back of the bow. This does work well

but make sure you wear a glove, otherwise you'll end up with third degree burns. My preference is to use 00/0 steel wool and then rub like hell over the whole sapwood area. Remember that by definition, burnishing is simply friction polishing. Once the bow's back has a nice shine to it, we're ready to go on to the tillering process. This is exactly the same process I have described many times before, but I'm going to cover it again for those readers who haven't read this in previous articles. Plus, this stage of bowery is a real make-or-break phase. Get your tillering right and you've got a great bow, get it wrong and ... well, heartbreak is sure to follow. Remember, as awesome as yew is, it won't like major tillering issues.

Tillering Stage 1 Belly shaping and floor tillering

Firstly, let's simplify things a little. Some new bowyers are terrified of tillering. Yes, it's important, but it's not rocket science and overthinking can be your downfall. Tillering is just carefully removing wood on the bow's belly until the bow bends evenly into a nice even curve, the string runs down the bow's centre and there is one limb slightly stiffer than the other. With a self-bow, this is definitely a more challenging process than on an all-wood composite where the stave is bought together from two or more laminations and is essentially the 'perfect' straight, even stave. With our self-bow, we have to allow for a lot more quirks and nuances and thus there is added a degree of challenge not seen in all-wood composite bows. Back in the Middle Ages, bowyers were quite fortunate to have near-perfect staves

to work on. They had to be good—these bows were going to be 100# plus. As well as that, demand for war bows was very high, so the cleaner the stave the quicker a quality bow could be made. I have made a yew war bow in two days, horn nocks and all when using good wood, but when using a wavy, knotty, twisted beast, it has taken as long as a week.

Tillering is a three-stage process. Step one is floor tillering. Before we can start on this though, we need to shape the bow's belly into the stacked, Roman arch shape that true ELBs have. With our self-bow we have to be mindful as we shape and head towards that stacked shape—of knots, pins and natural variations in the stave. To do this, clamp your bow in the handle area, belly side up, into a vice. The best



Yew stave in vice and stop.

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Note the grain here, pointing towards the nock end like an arrow.



Padded stop. This locks the bow in while you work on one limb.

vice is a good woodworking vice that has timber screwed into the steel jaws. This prevents gouges from occurring in your soft yew. You will need a 'stop' on the end you aren't working on to lock the bow in place (*see photo*). What we are trying to achieve here is to turn the squared-off belly into a rounded belly. If your yew stave is fairly straight and even, you can use a small plane to turn the square shape into a hexagon shape by slowly planing off the edges. Next, use a spoke shave to complete the rounding of the belly. When doing this, keep an eye on the grain. It *must* always point to the nock end (*see photo*). Again, on an all-wood composite bow the grain on the belly is largely irrelevant. The belly stock has not been cut in any specific direction, it doesn't have to be because the backing strip or material is an independent piece. Therefore, the grain can point in any direction. But with our yew stave, the grain must point to the ends of each limb to guarantee the limb is tapering evenly to the nock ends. If the grain points back to the handle that is almost certainly a low spot and hinge. If your stave has a lot of ups and downs, these must be faithfully followed. If nature laid down a wavy stave, we have to work with it. (Steaming can be used to straighten an erratic stave but I want to work with a natural stave here, plus in my experience yew doesn't respond to steam as well as osage).



Rounding the bow's belly with the spokeshave.



Here you can just see the grain running back as a result of leaving wood around the pin.

So, if there's a rise and a fall you can't simply plane these through or you'll have potentially built a hinge into your bow before you begin tillering. In this case you will have to follow the rises and falls and the best tool for this is a spokeshave. Remember, be mindful that the grain points like an arrow to the nock ends. The only exception to this grain direction rule is around knots and pins. A knot is a weak point in the wood. To protect the area from failing or chryssaling (lateral bulges in the limb caused when the compression limit of the wood has been surpassed), leave the knot area high, or in other words, leave some meat around the knot. This will give it a 'volcano' look (*see photo*) and that will result in the grain facing back to the handle a little bit in that area (generally, no more than an inch at most). But the general run of the grain is towards the nock ends. So if you have a wavy stave, the next step is to get a good quality spoke shave and start removing the square edges and gently move your stave towards the rounded belly. When dealing with knots and pins, a good cabinet scraper will help you. In some cases, a file may be needed to reduce a knot as bladed tools just dig in and gouge on a knot. Remember, a knot is just simply where a branch was growing out from the tree. This rounding and belly-shaping process is one that requires patience, particularly if you've got a wiggly, wavy stave on

your hands. As I've said before, if you feel like you want to rush, go away from the bow for a minute, put the kettle on and take a breather.

So we now should have a bow that is really starting to look like a bow. It should have a nice taper from handle to tip and should have a highly polished back and an even, rounded belly. Now it's time to see how she wants to bend. The first step here is floor tillering. Put one tip of the bow on the floor with the back facing down and while holding the other tip, press down on the bow's handle area and look down the limb and see how it bends. In this phase we are looking for a few things. Firstly, we are looking for a nice even bend in the limb from handle to tip. Secondly, we are trying to get the limb to a reasonable weight. Ultimately, we want the bow about 20# heavy at this stage. (Even a bit more is okay. We need some meat for tillering and also need to allow for the bow to 'come to the string' a little as she tillers in). This is very much a 'feel' thing. Don't overstress yourself on that point, but if the bow is going to be 50# and when you go to floor tiller, it won't bend at all, it's back to the vice for more reduction work. Simply remove belly wood while maintaining the shape and taper. Work judiciously and carefully. Then recheck and see if she wants to bend. If so, start assessing the bend, if not, back to the



Leave more meat around knots and pins.



A classic example of a cranky yew stave. This a magnificent 120lb bow, 100 rings per inch. It shoots a 1200-grain arrow over 200m. It was a very challenging build!

bench and reduce still further. Slowly does it. You don't want to ruin a \$500 stave! A stubborn limb that won't bend can suddenly decide after a small reduction to bend a fair bit. This process in its entirety is more like a discussion between you and the yew and often compromises must be made. Also remember, the thickness of the limb is not a great guide to limb stiffness. If you have a 100-ring-per-inch stave, it'll probably end up quite small in dimensions compared to a 60-ring-per-inch stave for the same poundage. Now, once the limb begins to bend, look down it for stiff spots or weak spots and mark them with a pencil. Where it's stiff, just remove a small amount of wood directly at the stiff spot, bearing in mind that the knotty areas won't be bending and have to be allowed for to a degree. Then check again to see if you've fixed the problem. Don't be afraid to flex the bow a lot of times. It'll need many flexes to react to your alterations. Plus the more you stress the bow against the floor, the more training it is getting. Where it's weak, remove wood each side of the area. Be patient. Any unevenness in the stave will still be there at the next tillering stage, so don't move on until it looks good. The crankier the stave, the more experienced the bowyers' eye must be.

Once the first limb is bending nice and evenly, repeat the process on the other limb. Make sure that not only are both limbs even in curve, but that they also are similar in stiffness. We don't want a huge discrepancy in the stiffness of the limbs or we may start to build in some excessive set in one limb—definitely not what we want. The third thing that floor tillering achieves is teaching the wood what we want it to do. We begin the process of compressing the belly side's cells and stretching the back's cells. Again, we are essentially training the wood. The more you apply training, the more the wood learns. It's a lot like a youngster who joins a gymnastics gym. A good coach will slowly train the athlete appropriate to their experience, letting their body and brain get used to new motor patterns and muscle stresses et cetera. Over time, they might make the Olympic team. If the coach made the novice do the sort of routines that experienced gymnasts are doing, that's most likely going to result in a broken neck. The same applies here with our bow. We have to train it thoroughly before asking it to come to 32in.

This is a good time to wrap this article up. More than enough sensory overload for one article! In the next issue we will continue with tillering our bow and head to the tiller post for stage two of tillering.

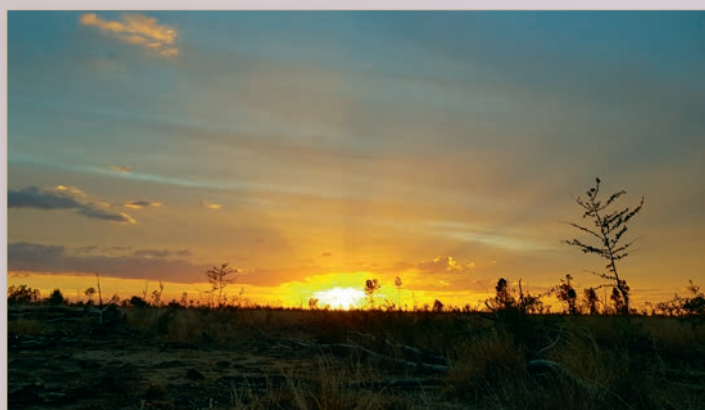
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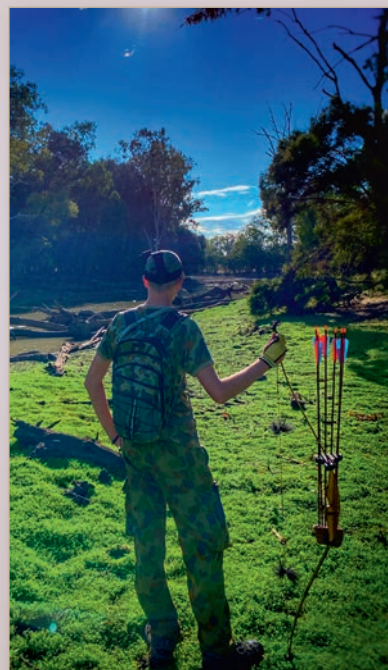
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MARK BURROWS

There are many ways and methods of tanning skins. Commercial kits that are available can do a great job. What I have here is the next step, a how-to on your own. It is how I do it and what works for me. It is a total system from the salting to the finished product. The tanning method covered here is what I use for flat skins. If I am doing capes for taxidermy purposes I use a different tanning solution, however no matter what tan chemicals I use; the salting, pickling and oiling process is exactly the same.

This tan is based on aluminium sulphate: It and the associated chemicals are relatively cheap, relatively safe and are relatively easy to purchase and it produces a quality white tan. If you follow my directions, you will end up with a great tanned skin.

Chemicals required

Salt

Fine grain non-iodised salt. I use flossy fine and buy it in 25kg bags from a produce store for under \$20..

Acid

McKenzie Ultimate Acid. Available from Australian Taxidermy Supplies. They have an online store. Other acids can be used—formic and citric are two. Formic is a very stable chemical used by many but is dangerous, with harmful fumes and will burn skin on contact. Citric is common as well, but tends to be weak. McKenzie Ultimate Acid works well and is safe. I have no fear in putting my hands in a mixed batch.

Aluminium sulphate

Aluminium sulphate is available from produce stores. I buy it in 25kg bags for under \$20.

Sodium carbonate

This is better known as washing soda, is available from supermarkets

Sodium bicarbonate

This is baking soda and is available from supermarkets

Tanning oil

Tanning oil is available from Australian Taxidermy Supplies.

Formulae

Pickle formula

Multiply these measures by the volume of water required.

4.5 litres (1 gallon) pure rainwater 500gram (1lb) salt

15ml (½oz) McKenzie Ultimate Acid

pH between 1.0 and 2.0

Neutralising formula

4.5 litres (1 gallon) pure rainwater

30g (1oz) sodium bicarbonate (baking soda)

Tanning formula

These measures can be halved or doubled to achieve the volume of finished mixture required.

40 litres (9 gallons) pure rainwater

2kg (4.5lbs) salt

2.7kg (6lb) aluminium sulphate

120g (4oz) sodium carbonate

pH between 3.5 to 4.0

Tips

A lot of the above formulae originated as Imperial and US measurements and these are not necessarily all the same ... but most often are close enough. For the sake of this exercise, there is virtually no difference between 30g, 30ml and 1oz. For example 1oz or 30g of baking soda can be measured as a scoop in a 30ml (1oz) liquid measuring cup. Also some of my measurements converting pounds to kilograms are rounded off but are fine for the purpose of these mixtures. Personally I still do most of my weighing and measuring in Imperial.

The reason I stipulate pure

rainwater is there are no added chemicals to affect the pH levels of your formulae. I regularly check the pH of the mixtures as I am doing the skins for other people. However if you mix the formulae as I have written them and use rainwater I am confident the pH will be okay. The pH levels are critical as bacteria cannot grow in a low pH. (below 2). If you want to check your pH, pH checking papers can be bought off eBay pretty cheaply. You need the one-to-14 range papers. If you can't access rainwater then I would definitely get the pH papers so you can modify your quantities marginally to get the correct pH levels.

Procedure



Skin salted prior to tanning.

Make sure you remove as much meat and fat as you can from the skin before applying a 10mm layer of salt over the entire skin, making sure you get right out to the edges and around all orifices (*Image 1*). I prefer fine salt as this can be easily rubbed into the skin and absorbed more readily. Lay the skin flat, preferably on a board that can be raised one end to allow any juices to drain off. After 24 hours, remove the first lot of salt and re-salt with another 10mm layer. You can then roll up the skin and hang in a hessian or cotton bag. Never put skins in a plastic bag. Skins can be left salted for weeks if done properly, however if you want to get into the tanning straight away another 24 hours is sufficient.

Depending how long the skins have been left salted will depend on how dried out they will be. A pliable skin at this stage will make a better end product. If I am not going to tan for several weeks, I will shake off all excess salt after five or six days then store the skin in the freezer until I am ready to tan. This stops the skin from drying out too much.

When ready to tan, the skins can

be soaked back in a saline solution of 1kg (2lb) salt to 4.5 litres (1 gallon) of water until they are supple (*Image 2*). Frozen skins can be added directly to this mixture to thaw out. The more supple the skins are at this stage the better the end result will be. Do not leave in this solution longer than 24 hours.



Soaking salt-dried deer skin prior to tanning.

After soaking, the skins can be washed in detergent (I use Morning Fresh). Now is the time to remove any dirt and blood from the skins. Clean skins create fewer problems controlling the pH of the mixture. The

detergent also helps to soften the skins. If they smell (goats in particular), then a few drops of Nilodor (a product available at supermarkets) can be added to the water when washing. If they still smell, I wash them in dog shampoo (also from the supermarket). (*Image 3*). If there are a lot of burrs et cetera, hair conditioner can be used to make them easier to comb out. Once washed, rinse out thoroughly in clean water and put aside to drip off while mixing up the pickle (*Image 4*). A pickle is a low pH acidic solution that is used to stabilise skins in the tanning process and stop deterioration. Pickling plumps the skin, which makes shaving and fleshing easier, and helps to set the hair. Salt alone simply creates a poor environment for bacteria to live; but it doesn't always kill it. The acidity of a pickle, however, does.

Once you have mixed the pickle according to the instructions (*previous page*), add the skins, flesh side up as much as possible but don't be too concerned. (*Image 5*). You will need sufficient pickle for the skins to be completely immersed with ample solution around them to completely



Washing smelly wild dog fur with domestic dog wash before putting skin into the pickle.



Ingredients for the pickling solution.



Skin soaking in pickle solution.



Results of the pH test paper from the mixed pickle solution..



Fleshing the skin after 24 hours in the pickle solution.

cover the skins and not have any air locks. Stir this two or three times a day. A fallow doe would require around 27 litres to 36 litres of solution to achieve this. I use 55-litre plastic storage boxes to hold my pickle and tanning solutions. At this point I check my pH level; it needs to be between 1 and

2 (Image 6). If it looks to be above 2, then a little more acid can be added.

After 24 hours, remove the skins from the pickle and use a fleshing knife to scrape all remaining flesh and membrane off the skin over a beam. (Image 7). The 24 hours in the pickle

will make this process much easier. It only takes me about 15 minutes to do a fallow skin. The pickle plumps up the skin and hardens any membrane and meat attached to the skin. The better the job you do at this stage, the better the end result. (Image 8).



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A wire wheel can be used to flesh small skins such as rabbits and hares or to flesh the faces of bigger animals like foxes.

After fleshing, fat-covered skins can be left with a greasy coating, (for example, deer just prior to the rut or dogs and foxes): Now is the time to remove it. Lay the skin hair down and spread a liberal coating of a grease-cutting detergent (Morning Fresh) over the entire flesh side of the skin (*Image 9*). Fold up flesh to flesh (*Image 10*) and put aside for 30 minutes before rinsing. Rinse until water is clear. This could take several buckets (*Image 11*). Once that is complete, return the skins to the pickle for another two days, stirring twice a day. If I have had to do a lot of washing and rinsing, I will check my pH. again at this point. The extra water left in the skin can dilute the pickle a little and it may require the addition of a small amount of acid.

By now the skins have spent a total of three days in the acid pickle and need to be removed and neutralised (*Image 12*). The neutralising bath doesn't require as much liquid as the pickle or tan. A deer skin pickled in 27 litres of pickle would only require 9 litres of neutralising solution. Remove skins from the pickle and wring out by hand and add to the neutralising solution as per the formula on the first page. Light skins such as fox, rabbits and small goats are to be left for 15



Detergent is applied to remove grease and fat from the flesh side of skins.



Rinse until the water is clear.



Soak the skin in bicarb soda to neutralise the acid in the pickle.

After applying the detergent, fold the skin flesh to flesh and leave for 30 minutes before rinsing in fresh water.



Tanning ingredients

minutes. Thicker skins such as deer are to be left in neutralising solution for 20 minutes. After the allotted time, remove skins from the neutralising solution and rinse in clean rainwater then let hang for half an hour.

While they are dripping, mix up the tanning solution as per the supplied recipe. A fallow doe would require around 40 litres of solution. (*Image 13, previous page*). Mix the salt in the water first, saving 5 litres or 6 litres of water in a separate bucket. Add the aluminium sulphate to the separate bucket along with a couple of litres of hot water. The hot water helps the aluminium sulphate to dissolve. Add the sodium carbonate at this stage and stir. It will froth up a bit but don't worry about it. After a reasonable stir, add the contents to the previously mixed saltwater in the other bucket, stirring vigorously. After 30 minutes, add the skin to the mixture and continue to stir twice a day. Again, make sure there are no air pockets. I would check the pH. at this point—it should be around 4 to 4.5—but if you have followed my instructions it should be fine (*Image 14*).



Results of the pH test papers from mixed tanning solution.

Tanning will take about five to seven days, depending on skin thickness. It can be checked by cutting a thicker area around the neck (*Image 15*). The skin should be a white colour all the way through.

Skins can be left in this solution for



Checking a deer skin to make sure the tan has completely penetrated through to the hairline.

a couple of weeks if necessary.

After the skins are tanned, remove from the solution and give them a quick rinse in clean water. At this point I put them in the washing machine on the spin cycle to remove excess water but they can be rung by hand and hung for a couple of hours to drip off (*Image 16*).

Once the skins have dripped off sufficiently—that is, about as dry as they would come out of the spin cycle on a washing machine—tanning oil needs to be added. Mix the oil 70/30 with warm water and paint on sufficient to cover the whole skin (*Image 17*). Fold up flesh to flesh and put aside overnight. The next day, open up the skin and wipe off any excess oil



Deer skin after going through the spin cycle on a washing machine.

with paper towel or a rag and hang the skin over a rail flesh side up to start the drying process.

At some point in the drying process you should be able to hold the skin between your hands about 50mm or



Wild dog skin after oiling.

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The deer skin's test area has gone white after stretching. Next it will be pegged out.



The pegged deer skin is dry and ready to sand.

60mm apart and pull your hands in opposing directions. If the skin starts to lighten in colour then it is ready (*Image 18*). If not, continue to let it dry. Depending on the skin's thickness and the weather, this can take a few days. Check the skin regularly; at least twice a day.

Once you have stretched it and seen a change in colour, you have to decide what you want to use the skin for. If it is for a flat skin (we'll call this Option A), you can give the skin a stretch all over then peg it out. I use a sheet of 5-ply on which I have drawn a rough grid (*Image 19*). This lets me peg the skin out evenly using a staple gun. You can peg the skin out wet

after oiling but there is the chance of mould build-up in the wet hair and the finished flat skin will be stiffer.

When completely dry, the skin will be a dirty white colour. This can still take a few more days (*Image 20*). I then use a 60-grit sander on my right-angle grinder to finish the skin off completely (*Image 21*). It will come up pure white if it has been left to dry completely (*Image 22*). On thicker

skins like deer, you can remove a fair bit of material; the thinner the skin the more supple it will be. On lighter skins like foxes go easy on the sander. Either way if you see the roots of the hairs you have sanded too deep. After sanding, the skin can be removed from the board and trimmed (*Image 23*).

At that same change of colour point, if you require the skin to be extra supple and more like buckskin



Deer skin stapled out on a sheet of ply. Notice the grid which helps set the skin out evenly.



Sanding a deer skin.



The finished deer skin.

The wild dog skin.

(Option B), this is where the real work starts. Instead of pegging the skin out you have to constantly stretch the skin over its entirety. Work the skin as it dries, pulling it with some force, backwards and forwards over the back of a chair or something similar until it is completely dry. This can take many hours. The more you work it, the softer it will be. Professional tanners do this by tumbling the damp skin in a giant tumbler mixed with sawdust for up to eight hours. So that gives you some idea on the work involved.

Whatever you decide—flat skin or buckskin style—it's a great feeling of accomplishment to have tanned your own skin, and it's something from a hunt that you can keep forever.



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Include your name and address

Tusker
JUNIOR
WINNER



Stephen Robinson, FKOS fox.





Final Best of Species —Ladies shark

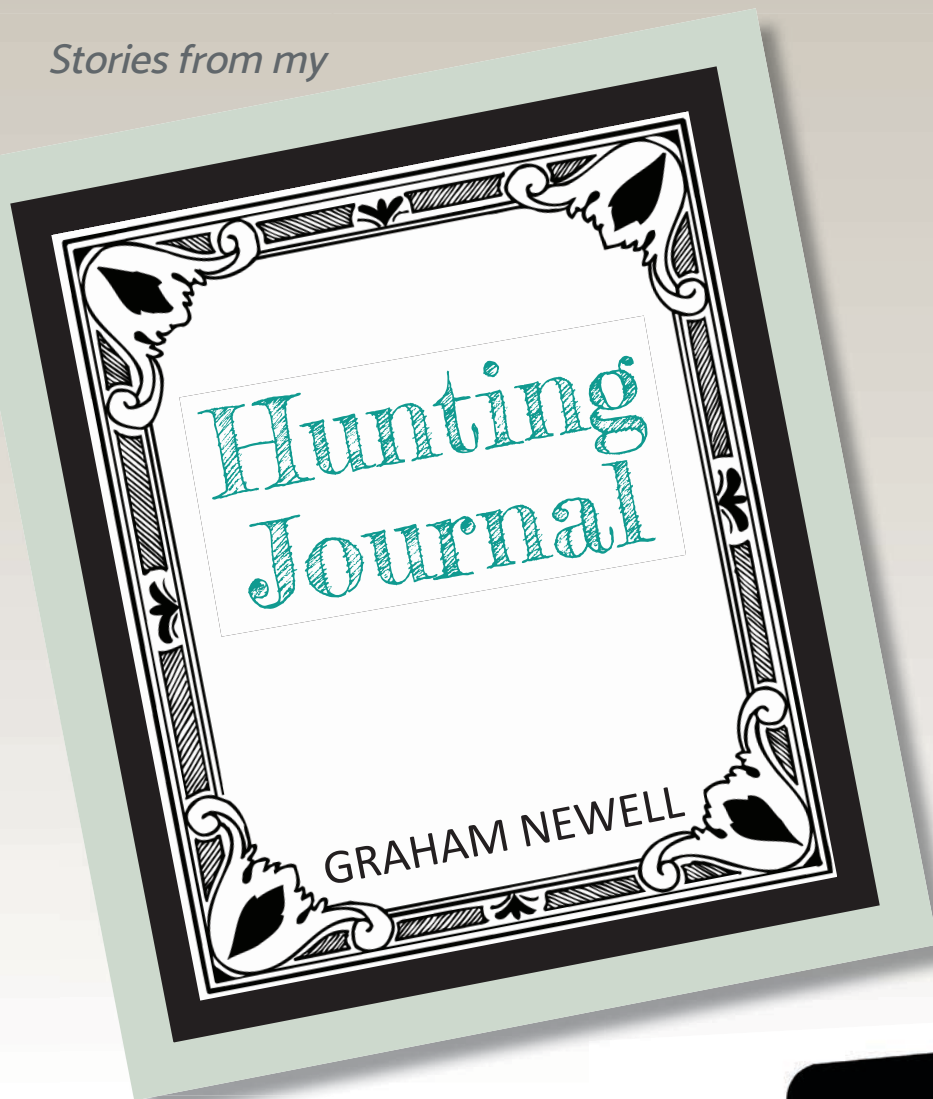
*Facing page (top):
Wade Lockwood, stingray;
(bottom):
Brian Duynhoven, chital deer.*

*This page, clockwise from top left:
Chris Baty, scaled fish;
Troy Bullen, rabbit;
Gary Lander, goat.*



This claim was received after the Bowhunting Awards were processed but it still deserves mention as it is a 2019 Ladies Best of Species. Lynda Fell's BHHF shark measured 19 2/8pt.

Stories from my

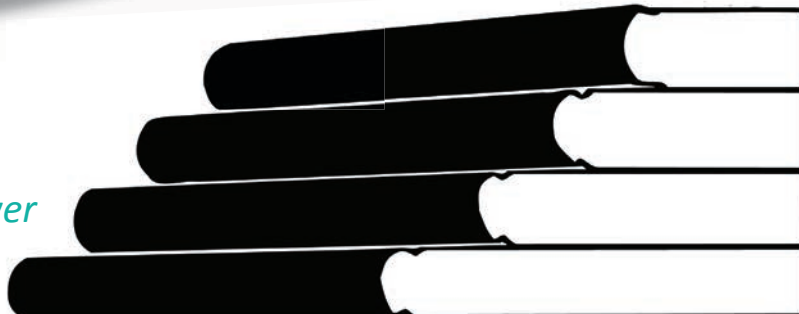


*A peep into the past ...
hunting anecdotes spread over
a quarter of a century*

From the day I got my first real bow more than 25 years ago and started hunting, I have kept a journal of almost every hunt I have been on.

With hunting in early 2020 almost a non-event, my journal entries have provided a welcome way to enjoy hunting of a different kind—seeking out the funny moments, the successes, the failures and even some of the brushes with danger. It has also made me realise all over again how lucky I have been to have joined up on hunts with mates like Alan ‘Robbo’ Robertson, Dave Littlejohn, Brett Stokes, Jon Matsen, Eric Creighton and a few others. We have certainly been to some out-of-the-way places and done some interesting stuff.

The late 1990s was my entry into the world of bowhunting. I met Lew Wren and Robbo when I joined Grange Bowmen Club. We went to places like Wangara ‘Resort’, about 30km south of Tenterfield in New South Wales where we hunted feral goats and some pigs ... not too successfully at the start, I might add.



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Lew Wren, Graham and Robbo at Wangara.

We all scored a few goats and a (very) few hogs. The most noted feature of this property was that as you turned off the bitumen onto the 15km-plus drive into the place, if you saw goats on the hillside you were in for a good hunt. The property was about 5,000 hectares, *but* if it was laid flat it would easily have been 11,000 hectares ... very hilly and tough to hunt.

Accommodation was in a caravan with a lean-to for cooking, drinking and drinking.

It's worth mentioning this property was arranged by that interesting man, a Grange life member, John Koppitke.

It is rumoured (from a reliable source) that John Koppitke, on seeing a large billy on the hillside across from the camp, grabbed his bow and headed out only to find, when he was within 30 yards of the billy, that he had left all his arrows back in the camp. Funny, John.

Like so many other hunting spots, that one is lost to our world of bowhunting with a change of owners.

Over the years, the north has offered many opportunities for hunts and camaraderie.

Through contacts that I made at work, I managed to get onto some

properties owned by the now defunct Colonial Pastoral Company. The early 2000s certainly gave us the opportunity of a lifetime. The company had cattle properties from Burketown in the Gulf of Carpentaria to Moree in NSW, in the Northern Territory, at the Cape and out to Windorah in Queensland's outback.

On the trips to the Gulf we usually averaged 5,500km drive and sometimes just getting there was an adventure.

In June 2001, Lew Wren and I flew to Cairns to overnight there before taking a 22-seater commuter plane

via Mornington Island to Burketown Airport. On the surface, that doesn't seem too challenging ... except that I found I had left all my arrows at the Cairns Hotel and I had to get the transfer bus driver to turn back so I could collect them. Trying to get to the airport in time for the plane's departure had us—and the other passengers—a tad excited.

Paul, the property manager, had loaned us an old beat-up Toyota Cruiser with a full tank of fuel for the seven-day hunt.

We later found out a June timed Gulf trip could be very lean hunting due to the cool weather and plentiful water lying around—but we got a confirmed kill tally of 26 in six days that year.

The hospitality of our hosts was a real highlight of the trip. We stayed in the guests' quarters (air conditioned!) and had three quality meals a day with the ringers and managers. We also had the sheer joy of seeing so many hogs, mobs of 30-plus were quite common. Sadly, those kinds of numbers are not seen up there these days.

My gear in those days was a Martin barebow compound with aluminium (23/15) arrows and Tusker or Ribtek broadheads and I used a glove, no release aid.





Weren't you boys warned to stay out of the water?

One clear set of instruction we got from the station managers was this: "To earn your grub, guys, you are to dispatch every hog you see." Naturally, we were keen to do the right thing by them.

I've seen some unusual things while in the Gulf. One time, while having an evening rum or six, I saw a toothless pig dog chase a wallaby into the lagoon out the front of our quarters, drown it then drag it back to the bank. Well, it wasn't to eat it, because the dog had no teeth. Maybe it was just dog sport.

We used to see eight or more hogs feeding in the pod calves pen every night not 30m from our quarters. It was strange being able to see them and not able to stick an arrow in any.

When asking the managers about crocodiles in the Gulf waterholes and creeks, we were told: "Assume every bit of water has a 'lizard' in residence and you'll survive."

And that meant to stay out of the water. Which we did. Mostly.

I was privileged to watch Robbo remove a whole family of hogs—mum, dad and the three juniors. He actually took two with one arrow—talk about economy of effort and arrows!

One evening trip into the Burketown

Hotel in the Toyota Cruiser is right up there as one of the interesting moments in my life. Paul, the manager, was driving. The car lights picked up a mob of cattle on the road (I guess because the bitumen was warm), and without slowing down, Paul leaned forward and switched off the car lights. So there we were, speeding straight towards the cattle doing 100km an hour. I closed my eyes and (almost) prayed. Unbelievably, we did not hit a single beast. The same thing happened on the way home (this time after four hours of socialising). Paul told me later the car lights dazzle the cattle and they seldom move but with no lights they hear the vehicle noise and move off. Well, I do not know why or how ... but it worked, somehow.

Sometimes when feral pig hunting you just have to be in the right place at the right time.

At this station, like most, there was a carcass pit some 800m from the homestead for dumping stock that had died in the yards or in transit. We had the chance to put a few pigs down at the site but only if you were there before sun-up. One morning Lew was too tired to attend so over I went—

and quickly dispatched three good-sized boars while Lew was still in bed. He who sleepeth misseeth out on the boars!

One stinker of a hot hard day heading back to the homestead, Robbo and I saw a nice boar wallowing not 110m from the track. Both of us were hot, tired and thirsty (the boar was probably feeling the same) and we already had a few good kills under the belt. We 'argued' (our only ever argument so far) as to who had to go and do the deed. I lost. I stalked in to about 9m (old sleepy worn-out boar) took the shot, missed, yes missed, and the boar got up and walked towards me. He was now at 3m and I took another shot ... and missed again! (Robbo was laughing by then, of course). The boar got wise at last and trotted out to 30m, then stopped to look back. I decided to take another tired shot and yes, I did take out the femoral artery. Down he went. I was almost too tired to remove the hooks but Robbo insisted. Thanks, mate, that boar measured 32pt.

Another time at a new spot with very steep banks along a creek with a few spots of water I watched Robbo

The 34 pointer.



Toothless terror.



put an arrow through the vitals of a nice boar. After a few minutes I saw a boar slowly walking away and I hit him in the lungs. Then Robbo shouted out across the narrow creek asking why I'd shot *his* hog! Unbeknown to me, the pig was already terminally ill, shot a few seconds before by Robbo. Should've gone to SpecSavers.

We regularly walked a long creek-cum-lagoon of about 2km long, each walking on opposite banks. One such day I had to return to our vehicle as I had used all the arrows from my bow quiver (seven in total) after taking out six hogs. Poor Robbo had been a spectator only, the pigs were all on my side of the creek—as it should be, yes?

You are best served to have a solid hunting mate on these trips for safety and company. Well, that's the theory, anyway. On the first day of our hunt I hit a small boar, not fatally unfortunately. As I went to grab another arrow out of my bow quiver, the sneaky boar charged me and with short but very sharp hooks ripped me on the lower shin (it was only a little boar). As I was bleeding furiously, I called up Robbo on the UHF only to be told by my best mate that he was 'too busy'

looking for a boar. Very caring guy, our Robbo. No, that is a little unfair as he did (eventually) come see. Incidentally I did not clean the wound properly and it was septic by the time we got home.

Another time Robbo had double-lunged a nice boar on the edge of a large dam. The silly hog ran into the water and disappeared, so Robbo stripped down to his jocks (not a pretty sight) and went after it. I have also done this but I'm writing the story so it will not be recorded here. This was against managers' waterhole 'rules' of course. Neither the hog nor the arrow were to be seen again ... for a few days anyway. We revisited the spot again three days later and this time the swim proved a success—pig and arrow recovered.

I made several trips to the Gulf on my own to shore up relations with property managers. On one such trip, new manager Zac told me of a big old toothy boar near a solar pump. "He won't hear you, as the pump is noisy," Zac assured me. He was correct. I managed to shoot my best boar to date—a 34 pointer off that turkey nest solar pump. Zac was very keen to see the hooks and said they were better

than he'd thought they would be. Then he asked to see the photo. Well he was disappointed because he said I'd shot the wrong one. My kill was a brindle one and the boar he'd seen was all-black and smaller. Not that I cared!

Then there was the time we shot a boar but not with a quick fatal shot, and we lost him. Despite a long search we finally gave in and returned to our vehicle, only to find that the boar had travelled in a large circle and was lying

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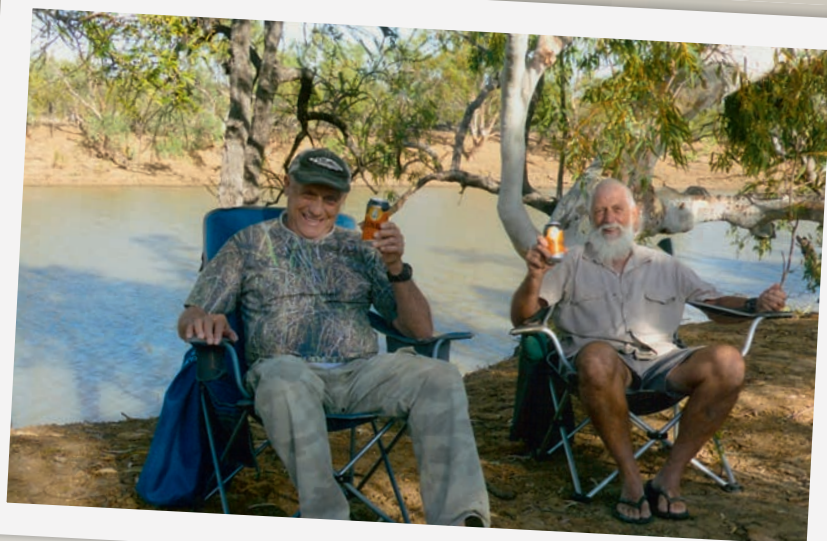
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dead a metre in front of the vehicle!

On a new property 150km east of Normanton on our second evening, we had a visit from two mustering chopper pilots. Both ladies, they could (and did) outdrink Robbo and me. They were great company around the campfire (they really liked rum!) and said they'd be mustering with their choppers 40km north the next day.

Just after dawn, we heard a chopper heading our way, then we guessed those ladies were up to no good. They had managed to 'muster' 10 or so hogs and were intending to push them straight through our camp. Not nice ladies after all! But we were ready, and by the time they got to us they only had five pigs left. We shot the lot. More rum was consumed that night, but it was a private celebration—no chopper pilots allowed.

Sometimes we have been known to do things a little differently. For example, one morning we were up but it was too early to hunt so Robbo and I decided that an OP rum at 8.18am would be a nice start to the day. In fact it was so nice we had two. The lagoon provided a picturesque backdrop. (That story is probably not appropriate for young hunters, sorry.)



An early start.

I must add it's not all been honey, beer and bourbon. We have had some very disappointing trips to the Gulf. There was the one where every day the bore-runner had shot every moving feral, another where the managers had triple-poison-baited for wild dogs but decimated the pigs and the time when a DPI chopper shot 5,000-plus feral pigs over three or four weeks, plus the contract musters who shot every day after work. However, all in all with our best tally of 51 confirmed kills in six days and our worst five boars

in 10 days, we're great believers that you've got to take it as it comes.

From our hunting property in the Gulf there is a dirt (blacksoil) road from Leichhardt River Falls to the Gregory Road, about 82km and usually a one-hour trip. Well, that is if there hasn't been recent rain. We were set to depart the cattle station on the Friday morning. On the Wednesday prior, the manager Zac had travelled that dirt road. He informed Robbo and me that the road might be "a little slippery as it got few drops of rain, but okay".



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Blacksoil country.



NT campsite.

Unbeknown to us all, on the Thursday the area got a drenching of 55ml. As we entered the dirt section, we noted there were a few pools of water in the depressions on the road. Then after about 5km we knew we were in deep, deep ... uh, soil. Blacksoil. The Pathfinder was in high-range 4x4 and we literally ploughed our way through. I can tell you the black soil is actually all colours—red, white, grey and black. We continuously lost traction but the vehicle's momentum pulled us through. I tell you, it was white-knuckle stuff. The trip took us over two-and-a-half hours and had it not been for the newly fitted Cooper AT3s we would still be there. For me, it was the first time in those conditions and was scary stuff.

Other times we've had fun and games being NT buffalo hunters. These buffalo hunts were in an interesting locations; west of Katherine, south west of Nhulunbuy/Gove and northeast of Katherine. This country is very different to most of Australia!

On one of several paid/guided hunts up north, we had a 14km walk (and that's the distance as the crow flies!) after the guide had put diesel in the petrol vehicle. We had to carry all our gear (bow cases, bows, spare arrows, backpacks et cetera) as there was a very good chance our gear would go walkabout from an unattended vehicle.

On the same NT trip, I was dropped off to do a lone pig hunt with a prearranged pick-up time and location. They forgot me! I can tell you the 6 km walk to camp, in the dark with my torch batteries about to die and hearing buffalo 'strolling around' within a few metres of my track back to camp was rather exciting. The guides thought it was funny, apparently.

The same mob of 'professionals' using old derelict Toyota dual-cab vehicles had the whole back axle simply fall off out some 20km from

camp and three of us walked some 9km before the guides eventually picked us up. You've got to admit, bowhunting is great physical and mental exercise! To be fair, I will add the camp facilities and the food were excellent. Matt, the chief guide and owner, was an ex-chef. It was here we ate buffalo, venison, crocodile, donkey, emu, kangaroo and spaghetti, all excellently presented.

Then there was buffalo hunting with true experts. With access to a huge tract of land northeast of Katherine arranged by Dave Littlejohn, I was fortunate to hunt with Dave, Jason Podlich, Dave's good friend Adam (plus Adam's Dad) and Robbo. These trips, four (or was it only three?) in all, were for a total of 16 days in a dry camp.

The logistics were interesting and

testing. Prior to departure, all our gear for the hunt was put onto two pallets and road-transported to Darwin—all except our bows et cetera and personal clothing. We then flew into Darwin, hired two dual cabs (with two spare tyres per vehicle), loaded our shipped gear up and headed to the buffalo country with an overnight in Katherine to get all our fuel and food.

What could go wrong with cheap, standard road tyres on these wonderful vehicles? On recovery of one of Robbo's buffalo kills, we took the two vehicles off-road (it's all off-road anyway) to collect the trophy head. Some seven (or was it nine?) punctures and several hours later we made it back to camp, almost out of puncture patches. It was decided we needed to replace all tyres, and a



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Dave with a buff.



Jason and Adam.



Graham's buff.



Jason at the NT buff hunt.

10-hour round trip back to Katherine was completed to do the tyre swap.

Adam rifle-shot a yearling buffalo for meat and to make some biltong (jerky). The stews and steaks were great, but the jerky was so bad that even the crows wouldn't eat it.

Our very neat camp was on a spring-fed creek. We had very cool water for washing in and getting our drinking water. Dave used his special filter to keep us safe but he got tired of using the hand-pump filter so unbeknown to us, we drank water straight from the creek. No one got sick.

On a separate hunt the following year, Dave had a great commercial water filter system ... and used it. Just as well, because on day five we found a badly decomposing buffalo carcass which had had been up-stream about 1km for quite some time.

Walking back to camp one morning, I needed to relieve myself. Dave went to check out a wallow. As I was about to head back towards Dave, a wild dog strolled by some 30m out. My bow now in hand but pants still at half-mast, I whistled to pull the dog up. He stopped and looked back to my

position and the arrow took out both lungs. Game over. Dave, on learning what had just happened, called me a few names. But we are speaking again.

While in camp we had a visit from the guys whose job was to cull some 20,000 buffaloes from the massive property via their Bell 44 four-seater chopper. The guys flew Dave and me to an out-of-the-way spot and after dropping us off they left ... or so we thought. However, we heard the chopper coming back and realised what was happening—they decided to get a nice big beast driven our way

(to 'help' us make a kill—absolutely not our idea!) but when a stampede of 40-plus buffalo are heading your way it's time to seek cover. The noise these buffalo made when belting through the scrub was intense. We did not nock an arrow—we were too busy saving our hides.

But there were other times when we did get the chance to aim at one of these huge beasts. And I'll tell you this: you don't know how heavy a buffalo skull and horns are until you have to carry a set a few kilometres. Everyone was lucky enough to experience that bit of fun. Robbo, Jason, Dave and

I can attest to the weight of those beasts' heads.

As you'd expect, there were a few incidents along the way. Adam's dad poured boiling water into his boot, which resulted in a very nasty and serious burn. Dave and I (Dave was driving) got bogged in 40-degree-



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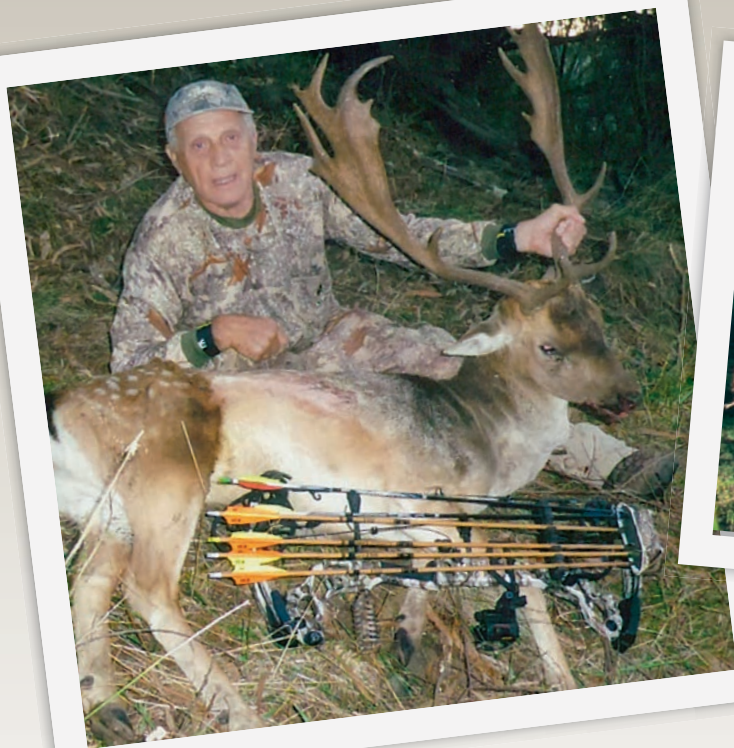


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Graham with a fallow.



Jon Matsen.

plus heat in *hot* sand. It was not a good time. Nor was being chased by a heart-shot buffalo bull for some 60m. Slowly, mind you, with Adam, my rifle back-up some 120m away enjoying the spectacle. Later he said that I looked to be in control. Maybe!

Bows are a very efficient feral

dispatcher, as evidenced by my observation of Dave front-on putting his arrow the full length of the bull buffalo. The arrow exited the buff's near rump. Compare that to the day I saw Dave needing to put several bullets into a problem buffalo bull to pull him up!

Getting our gear plus the heads and horns home went okay the first two trips, as the pallets travelled from Darwin direct to Brisbane. But when one such return trip went via Adelaide (and who knows where else), by the time the pallets arrived in Brisbane—despite the fact that we had put a ton of lime on the heads—they were all fly blown plus the juices had filtered through all our gear. Even Vinnies didn't want any of the clothing after that.

And now to the delights of hunting fallow stags in the rut. The New England area of northern NSW has been kind to me and to a few good mates. Success has been had by all, although not without some incidents.

It is probably fair to say even a

veteran hunter of sterling calibre can be surprised by something he has never heard before. Jon Matsen and I had driven in my Nissan to what we call the third cattle water trough. The heater was on, so we were in our own little world inside the vehicle. Once we'd stopped and the engine was off, Jon vacated the vehicle in a hurry. Some 400m away (as the crow flies) there were about 15 or 20 fallow stags all croaking at the same time! The noise could have been heard as far away as Glen Innes, I reckon. How anyone could hear that commotion and not wet themselves with excitement, I don't know. It was a memorable moment. Jon had been introduced to the 'honey spot'.

I remember the time I decided to build a solid tree-stand some 4m up a substantial gum tree. Upon its completion, I was standing within the tree-stand admiring my work, including a purpose-built rack where my bow was residing. Of course you know what happened next. A rusa



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stag walked directly under me not 12m away. I could not get to the bow in time as he sensed some danger. I still haven't shot a rusa. I only ever shot one fallow stag from the stand as the next year the buggers moved their 'honey rutting spot' west by about another 150m.

On the day Dave Littlejohn first visited the infamous honey spot, Robbo and I were trying out other spots. On my return both guys were sitting down next to the truck and when I asked Dave if he'd managed to harvest one, he said, "No, Graham. But I did get two." There's always one smartarse.

This hilly property of some 3,400 hectares really has only a very few small spots suitable for hunting and it is in reality only a two-hunter property. Accommodation is in an old workers cottage (with electricity and hot water).

One incident happened while I was down there on my own to set up trail cameras. I went outside at about 2.30am with my spotlight/torch. In the nearby implement shed there were some thousands of swallows roosting, and as I went outside I put the kitchen light on, leaving the door open. You guessed it, all the birds flew inside the cottage, attracted to the light. Removing the birds took the rest of the night, and even at daylight I found a few more that needed to be evicted. Lesson learned, I think.

This New England property has been very good to Robbo and me because after the first couple of years we seldom missed getting quality fallow stags and some excellent venison to boot. Sadly, again it now looks like we will not get the opportunity to hunt there anytime soon; things change and COVID-19 has not helped.

From time to time, bowhunting exposes you to a huge variety of conditions and terrain. We have hunted in minus-12-degree conditions during a New England winter and have sweltered in 48-degree heat at the Cape in early summer.

I haven't even started to cover times spent in the Flinders Ranges, southeast South Australia, properties near Charters Towers, Cooktown, out to Moree and into areas near Windorah, St George, overseas to Africa and Montana (USA) ... there's still plenty to share and talk about.

I believe every bowhunter has some great times to share and we can all learn from the not-so-good trips and hunts. Even the gurus of bowhunting are continually on a healthy learning curve. I know I have a hell of a long way to go but at 76 years young I may—just may—run out of time.



Robbo with a New England fallow.

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BACK TO BASICS



Sterilisation

Recently we've discussed the need for water and how to find it. Now it's time to drink it ... but there's one more step to do, and that's to consider the quality of the water that you've managed to get access to.

Can you drink water straight from the creek, puddle or soak? Well ... you could. But you shouldn't. The reason is that the water isn't pure. It will be contaminated with faeces from wildlife, suspended particulate, bacteria, viral and parasitic organisms. And this will inevitably cause diarrhoea.

Diarrhoea is one of the most common problems caused by water pollution. It results in the passage of loose, watery stools that can cause dehydration and death. In fact the WHO tells us that diarrhoea occurs worldwide due to water pollution and causes four per cent of all deaths globally each year, mostly among children in developing countries.

Knowing that, you might be scoffing around about now. Maybe you're thinking that serious illness from water contamination is something that happens 'over there' and it won't happen to you. After all, you're simply out bush in the 'lucky country'.

But you can get diarrhoea from drinking the water from a rainwater tank on a property, even if you're accustomed

to rainwater from the tank at your own place back home. Why? Because your gut's micro-flora have become adjusted to the contaminants in your own water tank. And these will be completely different to the contaminants in the tank at a shearing shed 800km away.

The reality is that, in a survival situation, you can't afford to lose precious water and nutrients to diarrhoea. Sure you've had the squirts before and lived through it, but you had all the comforts of home to rely on—like a tap. New research from sparkling water company Sodastream, 80 per cent of Australians suffer from symptoms typical of dehydration and the majority don't recognise key symptoms. It takes only a two per cent loss of total water content for your body to start feeling thirsty. Once you're at this point your body is already in a state of dehydration. Now consider that you can die from dehydration in three days.

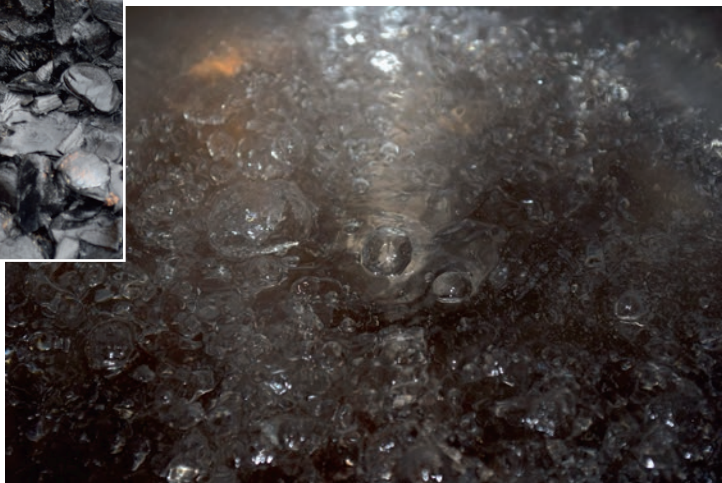
Water for survival

Consider yourself in the following scenario (a worst case scenario): You've gone for a hunt, or a bush walk on holi-



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Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble ... if your water hadn't reached a rolling boil, it isn't hot enough for sterilisation.



days with the kids. You haven't told anyone where you're going, you're not carrying a PLB, you don't have mobile phone coverage ... and you get lost. All of a sudden, you're relying on your ability to practice the priorities of survival: Protection, Rescue, Water and Food.

If you think the scenario is far-fetched, it happens more often than you might expect. Next time you have a spare moment, go online and surf the police social media streams in various States and Territories. It's almost guaranteed that one or more of them will be in the midst of a search and rescue for someone who simply hasn't come home. Often, these are people who've left the house for recreational purposes expecting to be home by dinner time. Sometimes they're never seen alive again.

Back to the scenario: You're lost out in the scrub. The first thing you've done is to find or make a good place to get out of the elements. You've created a fire. You've set out your passive rescue aids. Now you're looking for water. And you're looking for the cleanest, most transparent water available to you. If possible, you'll be avoiding muddy water and water with visible signs of pollution. But maybe you simply can't tell whether the water's polluted or not.

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After all, even some of the crystal-clear alpine lakes of Tasmania are polluted with lead, copper and arsenic from historic mining practices. Now think of the chemicals used on farms, not just now but in yesteryear because they don't go away and, in fact, some of them are persistent and bio-accumulate. The bottom line is that it's safe to assume that the closer you get to humanity, the more polluted the water will be. So, what do you do now?

Friendly filter

Polluted water must be filtered. If you have the foresight to carry one, there are various products on the market to do this. Do your research and you'll see that different brands and models can remove different pollutants from the water—from dirt, bacteria and parasites to micro-plastics, chemicals, lead, PFA and viruses.

Remember, however, that some of these filters have moving parts (which can break) and others require batteries (which go flat). So if you're in the market for a battery-powered water filter, choose one that takes the same batteries as your torch, handheld CB and other items that you generally carry. That way you're more likely to have spare batteries on hand when you need them, even if you have to pull them out of another device.

A welcome new addition to the market is a device that you can install midway down the tubing of your Camelbak to filter the water for you. There are no batteries involved; you simply have to remember to maintain the filter over time.

Remember too that there's a difference between filters and purifiers. A water filter is a strainer to clear out certain particulates (debris, dirt, leaves, bugs, and bacteria) from water. A purifier can remove (or kill) smaller things like viruses, dissolved minerals and metals. Some devices can do both and the market is flooded with various options.

If you don't have an off-the-shelf filter, you'll simply have to 'adapt, improvise and overcome' with a few basic methods.

- At the very least, you can take off your trousers or long-sleeved shirt, remove a shoelace from your boots, and tie the lace around one of the arm or leg openings. Then add around 15-20cm of sand or charcoal (collect the charcoal from burnt trees) before slowly pouring the dirty water into the middle of the hole. Cleaner water will drip from the knot at the bottom. You'll still have to sterilise the water before you drink it because you haven't yet removed microbial contaminants such as bacteria and viruses. (More on sterilisation later.)

- A better basic filter involves creating a small tripod and



An emergency water filter can be made utilising dry grass, sand and charcoal.

utilising three pieces of material (hat, shirt, trousers or even a car-seat cover or backpack). You have to suspend one layer of dry grass to remove the larger filth; a second layer filled with sand to remove macro particulates (dirt, clay, algae, et cetera); then a third layer of charcoal to remove more sediments and the volatile organic compounds that affect taste and odour. And remember, you're still going to have to sterilise the water.

- For a smaller filter of this type, improvise with plastic drink bottles that you carry or that you may find along the way. Do this by cutting off the base of three bottles, fill the top bottle with grass, one-third-fill the second with sand, and put charcoal in the last one. Fit them together and you have a water filter.

Stay alive and sterilise

Even after filtering, all water gathered from creeks, rivers, billabongs or puddles et cetera should be sterilised before drinking. The two basic methods of sterilising water are:

1. Use water purification tablets, or
2. Boil the water for at least one minute to achieve a rolling boil.

You'll note that I've not specified the standard five minutes of rolling boil. That's because a water temperature of 70°C will kill most bacteria. The old five-minute rule came about because water boils at different temperatures at different altitudes. At sea level, it's 100°C, but even on Mt Everest water boils at 70°C. The key is to maintain a rolling boil, and leave it there for a full minute, which means the entire vessel has reached boiling point and everything within it is dead. The important part is that the boil needs to be a rolling boil. The problem is people would take it off too early after seeing the first tiny bubbles clinging to the bottom, not the torrent of gurgling molten lava pool it needs to be. Patience is a virtue.

Water can also be sterilised using three to six drops of iodine per litre. The water and iodine should be mixed thoroughly and allowed to stand for 30 minutes before drinking. Iodine kills bacteria by penetrating the bacterial cell walls where an oxidation-reduction process occurs resulting in membrane destabilisation killing it ... so you have to give it time.

In fact iodine is capable of killing all types of pathogens including bacteria, virus, fungi, yeast, and protozoa. So having a small bottle (or swabs) of Betadine in your first-aid kit and survival kit can assist in first aid and hydration. Clean water is also good for cleaning out wounds and general hygiene, in itself having a first aid function.

Prior preparation

The importance of always carrying a water vessel is pretty clear from all this. While I often carry a Camelbak, I also carry an old-school army-style water bottle and metal cup. The metal cup can be used to boil the water whereas the plastic of the Camelbak can't.

If you carry a plastic sports bottle, consider changing it to a metal single walled bottle instead, or also carrying a metal cup. In an emergency situation, you may be lucky to find a glass bottle somewhere that you can boil water in, but don't rely on luck. Make sure that if you're using glass, you slowly introduce the glass bottle to the fire otherwise it will crack.

Remember too that, before each hunt and field comp, you should wash out your water bottles and Camelbaks to get rid of the primordial soup that's been accumulating in them since the last time you were away. And when you get home, drain them. Periodically, sterilise them with a product like Milton anti-bacterial tablets—you know, the stuff you wash out baby bottles with. It's that easy


RATION SWEAT, NOT WATER

When in an emergency situation, your personal activity must be closely monitored and adjusted to conserve water. The following tips should guide how you act in such a situation:

1. Rest up in the heat of the day. Work (building shelter and searching for water et cetera) should be done during the cool of the early morning and late afternoon and evening.
2. Seek shade to reduce water loss from sweating and evaporation.
3. Clothing should be kept on, with belts, cuffs et cetera loosened to reduce water loss from evaporation. Keep your hat on for the same reason.
4. Your mouth should be kept closed. Avoid talking. You can lose water via respiration.
5. The best place to store water is in your stomach. But hold off from peeing as much as you can to absorb as much of the precious fluid as you can, then don't waste it: Pee in your solar still.
6. If water is available, thirst should be quenched whenever necessary.
7. Foods which are sweet or contain high amounts of moisture are better eaten than protein foods such as meat, eggs, cheese, fish, muesli, trail mix et cetera. This is because proteins and drier foods use more water in the process of digestion.
8. Smoking and consumption of alcohol should be stopped altogether.



A three-tiered water filter is demonstrated during a workshop.



Chasing sambar in the Victorian high country

That's the spot

Mark Burrows



It was November and I was back up in the Victorian high country chasing the elusive sambar deer. I have had a love/hate relationship with the sambar over the years: I love to hunt them, I love being where they are but I just hate climbing those whopping great mountains that they live in. As I have gotten older I have gotten smarter. (Well, I think so anyway, and that's the important thing.) My action plan nowadays is to find a suitable site and set up some sort of blind then wait for them to come to me.

My first afternoon, therefore, found me at a ground blind (I'm not good in tree stands anymore ... actually,

I never have been) overlooking a likely little gully head. The problem with afternoon hunts in the mountains is that the wind drift is usually downhill and in this particular spot the evening drift is from slightly behind my chosen stand and across to my left. This meant that as the air cooled, there was a distinct possibility that my scent would get sucked straight down the gully ... but the spot was so great that it was worth the risk.

The stand was a relatively easy kilometre or so walk from where I left the vehicle. About three hours before dark, I made my way in. This gave the locals (birds and wallabies

and anything else I might disturb) the chance to settle back down, forget about me and let me blend in.

I love just sitting and watching at this time of day if the weather isn't too cold. There is plenty to see. On this day, I watched a hawk circling on the last of the afternoon's updraughts, looking for that last chance at a feed before dark. He even spent a few minutes in the tree above me until he spotted something in the distance and was gone.

Not long after the hawk left, a hare came slowly feeding past. He was halfway between my stand and where I hoped the deer would appear 35m





Tempting, but this was a deer hunt. The hares would have to wait.

away. At 20m or so, I was very tempted to shoot but I was here for a deer—the hares could wait. Soon a second hare joined the first, along with a young wallaby. This was a good sign; my scent was obviously not drifting down the gully and I was blending in.

My stand was at the base of a big old gum tree with bracken fern woven through a bit of old chook wire to help conceal my position. My outline was obscured by the hill and a bit more bracken directly behind me. I was out in the paddock, which is the draw card for the deer, looking through an old gateway that led down into a little

grassy hollow. Over the years I have seen a lot of deer pass through that hollow. Quite a few have made their way up through the old gateway and just as many, or maybe more, have kept on going up the hill. Often they just hang back until it is too dark to shoot, actually more often than not, but it is just great to watch sambar deer in the wild when they have no idea you are watching them. I wondered what tonight's outcome would be.

About 45 minutes before dark, I spotted my first sambar of the trip. A hind just materialised, like a ghost. One minute there was nothing there

and the next she was standing in the middle of my hollow, picking at the available feed. As much as I would like to say I was going to hang out for a stag, in truth any sambar is a trophy and the likelihood was that I would shoot the first deer that gave me the best opportunity. If I was just after meat, a yearling would be ideal ... but I wasn't going to be fussy.

I watched her browse, getting as close as 55m at one stage but she was well covered by the abundant blackberry bushes and offered no chance for a shot. After 15 minutes or so she was joined by another two deer, a hind and a yearling. (More than likely they were there all the time but I just couldn't see them.) They all fed around together before disappearing out of my direct sight, although I could see occasional flashes through the scrub so I knew they were still in the vicinity. They would eventually feed out into the more open country, but only when it suited them.

Just when I thought it couldn't get any better, a stag and a spikey melted into the clearing. They were also interested in filling their bellies that had become a little lighter during the day. The young spike made some mock attempts at fighting. The spike and the stag would have a bit of a push around but nothing serious. It looked to be a little bit of exercise for the bigger stag and a bit of future practice for the young spike. It was great to watch. Eventually, low light claimed the day. I was a little disappointed in not being able to get a shot but excited by the prospect of the next few days. I hadn't disturbed these deer at all and made my way back to the vehicle with a multitude of plans going around in my head.

Back at the hut that night, I ran over the evening's adventures with David Luxford who I was hunting with. As is the norm up here, we rarely hunted together so he had his own tales to tell.

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We both thought with that amount of deer in the gully it would definitely be worth trying to get in below them for a morning sit. So that was the plan for the next morning.

I was up well before daylight with the idea of being somewhere near

where I had seen the deer the night before. I had a particular tree in mind on a slight ridgeline overlooking a small gully that the deer often used to filter back into the bush from a night's feed in the paddocks. This meant a slow roundabout walk in the dark so as not

to disturb any deer prematurely and to be in position well before daylight.

After half an hour of walking, stumbling and cursing, only using a hand-obscured light when it was absolutely necessary, I settled down in front of my chosen tree. I knew from



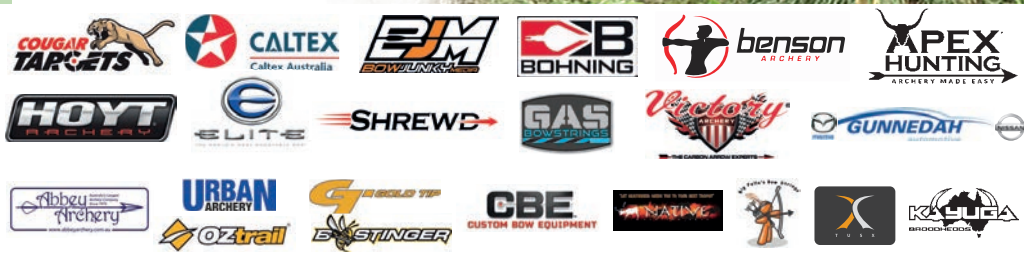
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I had been standing in this exact spot 12 months earlier awaiting the arrival of a possible target. An hour after sunrise I had given up all hope that a deer was going to come through that day. As a result I put my arrow back in its quiver and laid my bow on the ground. I leaned down and retrieved my pack to sling over my shoulders and just as I did I heard what sounded

She was parallel to me and looking down towards the bush line 50m or so behind me. She didn't appear to have seen me but that big brown eye that I could clearly see seemed to be full of awareness. I felt like a big old goanna standing under a tree waiting for a possum to drop out. What would the chance be of me slowly squatting down, taking an arrow out of my quiver, loading it, hooking up the release and drawing the bow? Zero, I thought, and I was right. She actually let me squat down and put my hand on my bow before she casually turned, put her full attention on me and gave out one of those famous sambar honks. I was ready for it, I knew it was coming, but I still jumped a metre in the air. You have to hear a sambar alarm honk at close quarters to truly appreciate the volume. The group vanished in a flash.

slowly, the light increased. I could see 20m, then 40m, then a hundred. Nothing was coming. At that point I looked across to my right to the far side of the basin, about 400m across. It was still a little dark but I could make out shapes moving across the far face. The thought went through my mind that I hadn't thought there were any cattle in here at the moment. I brought my binoculars up to my eyes for a better look.

Now I am not going to tell you how many deer I could see moving down off the grass tops to their bedding areas as you wouldn't believe me, but there were heaps. That's the spot I need to be, I thought.

I brought my attention back to the ridge and small gully in front of me; I could still have a chance here yet. I stuck it out for another hour but nothing came my way and I must admit my focus had shifted to a plan for the next morning.

While back at camp for a late breakfast, David suggested we take a drive down there in the middle of the

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It might look unprepossessing, but it turned out to be a great place to hide.

day and check things out for a possible stand site. A small pile of timber that I had seen the deer filing past that morning looked ideal. After 20 minutes I had arranged things to my liking and would be sitting there an hour before daylight the following morning.

That afternoon proved to be a non-event for both of us. We had plans but the weather obviously wasn't aware of them as no sooner had I set up in my chosen position than the wind did

a complete 180. What was perfect one minute wasn't so good the next. It was pointless staying where I was, so I decided to still-hunt along the fringes of the bushline in the hope of spying a deer before it saw me. It didn't work as far as the deer were concerned, but I did manage to get myself a hare. David hadn't fared any better.

I was up the next morning a couple of hours before daylight. I needed to give myself ample time to get to my



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ground blind well before daylight. I had to walk a further 500m or so past where I'd been the morning before, and it was slow going in the dark.

David had decided to come with me and head to another stand further on so we set off together. The same as the previous morning, we had to swing way down below the open paddocks and come up in front of where the deer would be heading. It was hard work in the dark, desperately trying not to draw any attention to yourself.


Just under an hour later, I was standing beside my ready-made ground blind. David and I wished each other luck and he headed off to his chosen position about another 300m or 400m around the ridge I was on. The inside of the blind was half a metre lower than the surrounds, which helped with my cover. I got set up: Pack off, arrow on string, bow propped

against a log, rangefinder at the ready. Time to sit and wait. I estimated there was still 20 minutes before any sort of light when I heard the first deer file pass ... casual footsteps just below the blind. I couldn't see a thing however there was no honking, so the wind must have been good.

As the eastern sky ever so imperceptibly lightened, I could hear more deer walking past. Ten minutes later I could actually make out a silhouette of a deer about 15m away, head down. It appeared to be feeding, but it was still too dark to be able to see through my peep. But it was lightening more quickly now. A couple of minutes later, a yearling hind moved up towards me and stopped at about 8m, ever so slightly quartering to me on my high side. She could probably make me out but had no idea what I was. I drew back—really just to see if

I could make out my pins through my peep and place them in the proper spot. I could see them okay and at 8m it probably wasn't going to be a major issue which pin was in the middle. Initially I was going to hang out to see if a stag might filter past. But there is an old bowhunter saying, "a sambar in the hand is better than the one you didn't shoot at," so I released.

At the shot, the deer whirled and ran off. There appeared to be deer going every which way and in the confusion I lost sight of where my deer had gone. This is hard to believe but I could still see a lot of deer. I have been hunting sambar up here for several years now and I would say that I have never been here and not seen deer. But I have never seen this many sambar in one small section. Sambar don't really herd like chital or fallow, but this was as close to a herd of

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sambar as I had ever seen or was ever likely to see again. There appeared to be three or four separate groups and in the commotion they all went their separate ways, making it really hard to track the deer I had shot.

I didn't move ... and being well camouflaged, remained undetected. The remaining deer didn't really know what was going on. I could see a stag standing downhill from me, alert but just totally unsure of which way the danger was, or if there was any. I was pretty sure it was the stag I had watched on the first night. According to my rangefinder he was at 42m and a hind standing a little further around the hill was at 23m. I have no doubt I could have put an arrow into either one of those deer, and I probably would have if I had been able to see the one I had shot, but the last thing I wanted was

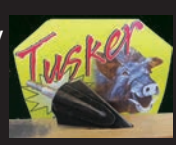
two sambar running around the bush with arrow holes in them.

In the end it didn't really matter. As the light improved I found my deer up behind me, a nice young yearling with the potential for some really good feeds.

I'd had a great morning—actually, a fantastic morning—and an exceptional few days, the likes of which I am not likely to see again as the sheer numbers were amazing.

If you are looking to hunt prime sambar country, give Russ or Steph a call at Timberline. It is bowhunting only, self-guided and self-catered property in Victoria's High Country. A cosy hut is supplied along with generator and fuel, cooking and eating gear. All you have to do is bring your bedding. There are plenty of ground blinds and treestands set up ready for you to use.

The writer of this story wins a threepack of **TUSKER SPIRIT** broadheads



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ROY ROSE

Meanderings



Positive draw length

I'm not one hundred per cent certain I have my compound draw length right. Is there any method to make sure, and is it critically important?

This is a very regular query I experience in clinic sessions and one-on-one conversations. Yes, there is a surefire method and yes, it is important in order to obtain repetitive form and execution, as well as a comfortable set-up, which are the basic criteria for consistent accuracy.

A starting point for calculating draw length is measuring from your anchor point to your grip, but this will only give you a good ballpark result.

What will really determine whether the draw length you settle upon is too short or too long (or just right!) is the dot pattern movement you are experiencing on the target. It is not possible to obtain a dead-still dot aim on the X, but if your dot is circling and zigzagging around the ten-ring, this is a clear indication that your draw length is too long. On the other hand, if this movement is quite limited to the X in which seems a reasonably good pattern but then suddenly moves away into the nine or even out to the eight, then this sudden motion is a sure sign that your draw length is too short.

Now this range of activity may well occur within the one inch you have to play with on your bow, for example, 27in is too short but the move to 28in is just too long.

This can be overcome by adjusting your string loop length to accommodate whatever fraction of that inch you need to settle upon. Some top professionals favour a long loop, often to adapt to a facial positioning, a nose reference or a specific comfort feel at anchor. Others prefer a shorter loop around the 2cm range but minute adjustment of loop

size can hone in your draw length to an exact spot where your aim becomes most secure and your comfort level is maximised.

Your correct draw length is always governed by your own personal body shape and where you choose to finally position your body at full draw.

I have a narrow shoulder structure and short arm length, so my draw length is over an inch less than most archers my height. Some top shooters like to arch back at anchor. The great Reo Wilde is an example, so it becomes a personal form idiosyncrasy as to where your comfort level and your execution phase are both best suited.

But it is the dot pattern movement which can tell you whether you're too short or too long. To obtain your most productive aim and execution, you must operate with a definitive draw length—and utilising the dot pattern and loop-size strategies will give you a precise measurement.

To the recurver, attaining a precise draw length is just as imperative but much more readily achievable by simply adjusting the clicker position or by cutting arrows to a particular length in harmony with the clicker placement that the archer prefers.

So whether you shoot compound or recurve, it is critical to set up in alignment, and determine by your comfort at full draw (married to a precise draw length as obtained by dot pattern reference) the exact measurement which gives you the optimal level of shot duplication.

Most asked questions

What's FOC?

Some of the terminology utilised by elite archers, both in seminar situations and in magazine offerings, is lost on newcomers to the competition scene. This is in no way deliberate, it's just that the archery jargon they use in the company of other informed shooters becomes a part of their daily vocabulary. There is a perception that various terms and different equipment set-ups and choices are basic and that everyone understands what they are and how they are implemented. In this issue I take a couple of examples and explain in detail what they mean and how they work.

The term FOC is a very basic and often used example, which perhaps surprisingly, a cross-section of aspiring recurvers and compounders are not familiar with. Secondly, newcomers to compound are repeatedly puzzled as to what stabiliser set-up they should adopt, how it works and why, unlike recurvers, there are a variety of options as to placement and function.

The letters FOC stand for 'front of centre' and this refers to the balance point of your arrow ready for shooting, with a nock, fletchings and an inserted point.

When you attach a weighted point to your arrow, it shifts the position at which your shaft will balance towards the front of the arrow. Hence this new positioning is termed front of centre. If that point, added to a spined shaft, is either too heavy or not heavy enough, then your arrow will not shoot in a balanced line. With too little point weight, the arrow will be attempting to travel to the target tail down, whereas if the point is too heavy, the opposite will occur, with the arrow nose down. Obviously neither of these point weight situations is desirable for optimum flight and duplicative scoring.

Now in general, a front-of-centre distance close to 15 per cent of your arrow length is the accepted FOC and the point weight which produces

this balance result is the one you should employ. Top shooters have both the experience and the arrow preparation skill to ascertain a very exact point weight at which they achieve superlative arrow flight. They are not dependent on a specific percentage FOC, although in reality they are achieving that particular percentage when they test and set up their arrows.

Many top professionals may not have actually measured a specific percentage or worried about what that precise measure is, but invariably it runs between 11 per cent to close to 15 per cent. As a newcomer, however, you will need to do some measuring and make sure your point weight selection is giving you a balanced FOC within that required percentage range. Combining a correctly spined arrow for your bow poundage to a positive front of centre is critical in attaining quality arrow flight and subsequent accuracy.

What about stabilisers?

Now let's address the stabiliser and side rod positions that the top pros employ. Generally the elite today shoot either a long front rod with a single side rod positioned at the bottom extremity of the handle and angled back quite sharply, or with a single side rod positioned at grip height and angled away less aggressively. Which option a specific shooter selects is clearly determined by feel and comfort. Top compounders such as Reo Wilde, Dave Cousins and Mike Schloesser favour the second option, while the majority utilise the former.

This decision is determined by

whether the archer functions with a non-aggressive shot execution where the bow is set up with no dominant play on a particular axis or a second resistance option where a particular axis works with shot execution to a very steady sight picture and a much more aggressive execution.

The balance style shooter most often has a certain weight out front and a much heavier weight out back—in fact, as much as the archer can comfortably handle.

The resistance-type archer, such as the trio of champions I identified, usually have less back weight relative

to the front, around a 10oz difference, and of course with the wider angle than those who prefer the low bushing.

These professionals have determined which geometry they feel gives them their best feel and comfort.

A very few of the best do use twin back rods set on the low handle bushing but it's not a popular choice.

So, unlike the recurvers who all seem to use the same long front rod and V-bar set-up, if you are a prospective compound competitor, you need to determine which of the two main options will best suit your feel, comfort and execution.

Outside In the zone

Easily pleased

I consider myself someone who is easily pleased. I have to be. For all of my adult life and most of my childhood, I have had dogs and had to train them. Owning a dog is not for those who are short tempered, beligerent, impatient or even faint hearted. Owning a dog is also not for those who wake up one morning and decide it would be trendy to have one.

At first, owning a new dog might seem like fun but when the digging starts and the washing gets pulled off the line (not to mention the barking), the novelty soon wears off. Such dogs usually end up locked in a small yard, fed once a day and generally forgotten about. In my opinion, anyone who desires a dog should be put through rigorous psychological testing and only those who pass with flying colours should be considered. In my experience, the best dog owners are those who were born with a dog licking their face.

All dogs are good natured and try their best to please their respective owners. If you get them early and show them kindness and love, they will pay you back in spades. Treat them poorly, tease them or beat them, and you will end up with a dog that will either be scarred for the rest of its life or will turn upon you out of self defence. In my experience, no dog is born bad. Only people make them so.

Just about every dog that has graced my life has been utilised in some way as a hunting dog and companion. Back in my shotgunning days, I was a keen duck shooter so it goes without saying I had a dog to retrieve downed birds. These same dogs I also utilised as flushers for rabbits and sometimes pigs in the thick lignum. On the subject of dogs and pigs, I am not referring to those big burly brutes who are trained to run down a pig and hold it. My dogs could never do that ... nor did I want them to. I trained my dogs to nose about slightly ahead of me and put up sleeping pigs from their beds in amongst the real thick stuff. They would then hold their position until I

gave them the command to go (which was always after the event). They followed these same rules to the letter even when hunting rabbits.

When a pig is flushed within a thick lignum swamp, the last thing you want is your dog chasing the confused swine. Chaos is the best way to describe such a scenario and an over-enthusiastic dog hat is hot on the heels of a fleeing pig can quite easily find itself in danger if there is a cranky boar about. What's more, you can do nothing to help when you are lagging 100m behind. I have seen it happen and I have also witnessed an owner accidentally shoot his black labrador that was at the back of a fleeing pig mob.

Believe it or not, the best dog I

by Nils Spruitt



have owned for this type of hunting was a miniature fox terrier, but that is another story.

There are many breeds of hunting dogs. Some are specific pointers, others are great soft-mouthed retrievers ... and some will eagerly have a go at it all if you bring them up right. I have never owned a pointer. Why, I don't know as a pointer seems at first glance to be a logical choice for the type of hunting dog I prefer. Perhaps it has something to do with the cost of purchasing and keeping such a dog as they are by and large, a big breed requiring a lot of room. Retrievers I have owned, but I gave up duck shooting a long time ago and have little need of such a specific breed even though I do have a soft spot for labs and golden retrievers. When it comes to breeds, my favourite amongst all others are the spaniels. I have owned more spaniels than all other breeds combined. I just love these good-natured canines.

Apart from the springer—which is a hunting dog pure and simple—the other sub-breeds like the cocker are what I would call all-rounders. I have used them on ducks and they are soft mouthed so as not to bruise a downed bird and they are great for flushing rabbits. My uncle used a cocker as his pig flusher to great effect for quite a few years. Field craft aside, spaniels are intelligent dogs, loyal, fun loving and caring. Their work ethic may be a little lacking sometimes, but generally this is because the day is hot or they simply run out of puff. They are not blessed with great stamina and their thick coat can cause them to overheat rather quickly if you are not careful.

Those who read my ramblings with some degree of regularity will know my current canine hunting companion is a cavalier spaniel. Chloe is the first of that breed to grace the Spruitt household. I was actually looking for another cocker pup when I visited the breeder, but

things have a way of turning around when you least expect them. Chloe had been returned to the breeder by a woman who was looking for a dedicated show dog. For some reason this cute little pup didn't seem to fit her bill. Maybe the colouring was not what she had envisaged or perhaps the eyes were too big ... who knows?. All I know is that both Mrs Spruitt and I fell in love with her the moment we saw her.

Now I must be honest when I say I have never heard of anyone using a cavie as a hunting dog ... but what could possibly go wrong? A spaniel is a spaniel (or so I thought at the time).

There are two schools of thought with this breed. Some—and I now fall into this category—believe that the cavalier and the King Charles are two separate breeds no matter how identical they look. The cavalier (Chloe) is a slightly bigger dog and if you were to put Chloe beside a King Charles then you would notice the difference immediately.

Chloe, like all my dogs, is a house dog. I am not against those who prefer to keep their dogs outside providing the dogs have good and decent shelter, are cared for on a daily basis and regularly interact with their owners. Cavaliers are notoriously inactive if given the chance. They will gladly sleep most of the day although they will drag themselves off their bed if food or a walk is offered. The rest of the day they are quite content to nod off or just simply watch you as you try to find your missing sock, slipper or work out how come the brand new lounge-room rug is shedding pile.

Chloe's training or—more rightly 'our' training—started pretty much as soon as we got her home. Whilst I was teaching her to stay, she was teaching me that she loved a belly rub more than anything else. When I tried her on 'fetch it' she was teaching me to get it myself or else stop throwing the wretched thing in the

first place. The command 'come' was converted to lay down and soak up a bit of sun or simply wander over to smell some bushes. Did I happen to mention earlier that a dog owner must be patient? Well, consider yourself warned. After months of talking, cajoling, and buying treats, Chloe started to get an idea and when the mood suited her she would stay, she would come, but fetch it? Well, that was obviously meant for dogs of a lesser breed.

Her first true hunting trip afield was a simple affair. I organised an afternoon on bunnies with a mate who used an energetic Jack Russell as his flusher. After introducing Chloe to Trixie, we shouldered bows and headed out. Trixie is a very experienced rabbit hunter and eagerly set about criss-crossing the bracken. Chloe was a little shy and at first was just content to stay by my side, but when Trix put up two rabbits in succession, she decided to move out in front. Gary was the first to thump an arrow into a running rabbit and Trixie was all smiles when she delivered the bunny to his feet. I think this was Chloe's defining moment because she sniffed the rabbit, looked at me and then started to ferret her way through the fern.

I missed the first rabbit she startled but I didn't miss the second and sent a broadhead straight through it. Chloe's tail was wagging ten to the dozen when she sniffed the inert rabbit and much to my surprise she grabbed it by the back leg and started to drag it towards me when I told her to fetch it. It took her a little while to drag the rabbit to where we stood waiting, but I was beaming from ear to ear. It was not what you would call a textbook retrieval, but I didn't care. She had been paying attention after all during our many fruitless training sessions. As I said at the beginning, I am easily pleased. I am also a dog owner and a proud one at that. Until next time.



Date	Club	Branch	Shoot Style
September			
6th	Full Boar Archers	B	3D/IFAA
6th	Mackay District Bowmen	B	ABA
6th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
6th	Canberra Archery Club *	ACT	CAC September Presidents Shoot
6th	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE
7th	SVAC *	Vic	Indoor Sept 2020
9th	Tuggeranong Archery Club *	ACT	Indoor QRE
12th - 13th	Charters Towers Bowhunters *	B	ABA
12th - 13th	Gloucester District Archers *	E	ABA Branch Titles
12th - 13th	Armistead Archers *	NSW	ANWS Field Championship
12th - 13th	Mornington Peninsula Bowmen *	Vic	3DAAA
12th - 13th	Caboolture and District Bowmen *	Qld	3DAAA
13th	Dead Centre Bowhunters *	A	ABA
13th	Freds Pass Field Archers *	A	ABA
13th	Mount Isa District Bowhunters	B	ABA
13th	Macalister Trophy Bowhunters *	G	ABA
13th	Archery SA *	SA	State Field
19th	SQAS *	Qld	SQAS Short Range Championships
19th - 20th	Wide Bay Archers *	C	ABA
19th - 20th	Campbelltown District Field Archers *	F	3D/ABA
19th - 20th	Mallee Sunset Field Archers *	I	State Paper Titles
19th - 20th	Geographe Field and Bow *	J	3D/ABA
19th - 20th	Lake Glenbawn *	NSW	3DAAA
20th	Collinsville Bowhunters	B	ABA
20th	Full Boar Archers	B	ABA
20th	Hinchinbrook Bowmen	B	ABA
20th	Kurrimine Beach Archers	B	3D
20th	Mackay District Bowmen	B	3D
20th	SQAS *	Qld	SQAS Clout Championships
20th	MAC *	Vic	Moorabbin Shield Tournament
25th - 27th	Lilydale Bowhunters *	H	State IFAA Titles
26th - 27th	Darling Downs Field Archers *	D	Gold Cup ABA
October			
3rd - 4th	South West Slopes Field Archers *	F	State 3D Titles
3rd - 4th	Cessnock Archers *	NSW	3DAAA
3rd - 4th	Gladstone Field Archers *	Qld	3DAAA
3rd - 5th	Mount Isa District Bowhunters *	B	ABA/3D
4th	Full Boar Archers	B	3D/IFAA
4th	Mackay District Bowmen	B	ABA
4th	West Gippsland Field Archers *	G	3D
4th	Canberra Archery Club *	ACT	CAC October Presidents Shoot
11th	National AGM		Online Platform
10th - 11th	Mornington Peninsula Bowmen *	Vic	3DAAA
11th	Charters Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
11th	Mount Isa District Bowhunters	B	ABA
11th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
11th - 17th	Dead Centre Bowhunters *	A	Alice Springs Master Games 2020
12th	SVAC *	Vic	Indoor Oct 2020
16th	Penrith City Archers *	NSW	Cake QRE
17th - 18th	Northern Tablelands Archers *	E	3D
17th - 18th	Bacchus Marsh Bowhunters *	H	State 3D Titles
17th - 18th	Yorke Peninsular Field Archers *	I	State 3D Titles
17th - 18th	Peel Archers *	J	State ABA Titles
17th - 18th	Ipswich Field Archers *	Qld	3DAAA
18th	Collinsville Bowhunters	B	ABA
18th	Full Boar Archers	B	ABA
18th	Hinchinbrook Bowmen	B	ABA
18th	Kurrimine Beach Archers	B	3D

All shoots must abide by COVID-19 government requirements in your State/Territory. Please check with your local archery association to make sure your event will be going ahead.

18th	Mackay District Bowhunters	B	3D
18th	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE
24th - 25th	North Albert Field Archers *	Qld	3DAAA
25th	Dead Centre Bowhunters *	A	3D
25th	Freds Pass Field Archers *	A	3D
25th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	3D
25th	SQAS *	Qld	Silver Arrow Field QRE
31st	Penrith City Archers *	NSW	Halloween Clout
31st Oct - 1st Nov	Gympie Field Archers *	C	3D
November			
1st	Full Boar Archers	B	3D/IFAA
1st	Mackay District Bowmen	B	ABA
1st	Canberra Archery Club *	ACT	CAC Nov Presidents Shoot
2nd	SVAC *	Vic	Indoor Nov 2020
4th	Tuggeranong Archery Club *	ACT	Indoor QRE
7th - 8th	McLeay Valley Archers *	E	Branch IFAA Titles
7th - 8th	Stawell Bowhunters *	H	ABA
7th - 8th	3DAAA National Championships *		3DAAA
8th	Charters Towers Bowhunters	B	ABA
8th	Mount Isa District Bowhunters	B	ABA
8th	Townsville District Bowhunters	B	ABA
8th	Macalister Trophy Bowhunters *	G	ABA
8th	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE
11th	Tuggeranong Archery Club *	ACT	Indoor QRE
14th - 15th	Granite Belt Bowmen *	D	Club Challenge ABA
14th - 15th	Southern Yorke Peninsular Archers *	I	ABA
14th - 15th	Burnie Bowmen *	Tas	Luttrell/Clarke Memorial Shoot
15th	Collinsville Bowhunters	B	ABA
15th	Full Boar Archers	B	ABA
15th	Hinchinbrook Bowmen	B	ABA
15th	Mackay District Bowhunters	B	3D
15th	Archery SA *	SA	State Target
21st - 22nd	Wide Bay Archers *	C	ABA
21st - 22nd	Capital Field Archers *	F	Branch 3D Titles
21st - 22nd	Geelong Trophy Bowhunters *	H	ABA
22nd	Dead Centre Bowhunters *	A	ABA
22nd	Freds Pass Field Archers *	A	ABA
22nd	SOPA *	NSW	SOPA QRE
28th	SQAS *	Qld	SQAS Matchplay
28th - 29th	Paringa Archers *	Tas	Paringa Northern Championships

Black type shows ABA events, green type represents Archery Australia events and blue type denotes 3DAAA events, ABA national events are in red. Shoots marked with an * are cross-participation events

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New Member ☐

ABA Membership N°:

I, (full name) (M-F)

Of (street # & name) (town-city) (p-code)

Postal address (PO Box #)..... (town-city) (p-code)

Phone number Date of birth / /

Email address.....

do hereby wish to make application for membership of the Australian Bowhunters Association Inc (ABA), and if accepted, do undertake to conduct my/our membership in accordance with the Constitution, Rules, Policies and Code of Ethics of the ABA. Additionally, I/we acknowledge that Field Archery and Bowhunting are shooting sports conducted in the natural environment which can impose inherent risks and this application is made in full recognition of the Association's requirement for responsible and ethical behaviour. I/We undertake to do all in my/our power to preserve the good image of the sport and ABA. I/ We understand that members breaking the Code of Ethics and/or ABA's regulations may be subject to sanctions as per the Constitution.

I am a member of (Club)

I agree my contact details can be provided to form a contact list to be used within the Australian Bowhunters Association only.

If you do not agree, tick this box: ☐

I agree for photos to be taken and used for promotional purposes by the Australian Bowhunters Association.

If you do not agree, tick this box: ☐

I enclose the required fees of \$.....

Signature of Applicant

I, the applicant above, also wish to make application for membership of ABA (Inc) on behalf of the following persons, who are members of my family and reside at my address:

Full Name of Applicant	Male-Female	ABA Number	Date of Birth
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

I am prepared to accept the responsibility for the above applicants who are under the age of 18 years, until they attain such age.

Parent-Guardian Signature ABA Number if Applicable:

The Australian Bowhunters Association Inc reserves the right to refuse, suspend or terminate the membership of any person whose conduct contravenes the Constitution, Rules and Policies of Association of the ABA. Failure to provide information sought or supply of incorrect information may result in application being rejected.

RENEWALS and/or Advance Memberships for existing members

	12 months	3 years in advance
Adults	\$75	\$205
Juniors-Cubs	\$50	\$145
Families	\$160	\$435

New Members (12-month membership including joining fee)

Adults	\$100
Juniors-Cubs	\$75
Families	\$205

PENSIONER DISCOUNT: Deduct 10% from fees listed.

Quote Pension Benefit Card Number:

All fees include GST

Note: Dates of birth must be shown for all persons listed. Club name must be shown. **Family membership applies only to parents and their children under 18 years of age.** Separate single membership must be taken for children over 18 years. Couples without children under 18 years also pay separate single membership. In the case of family renewals, state ABA membership numbers. If insufficient space, use additional form.

Card Number ↓	NAME OF CARDHOLDER (print)															
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	[][][][]				[][][][]				[][][][]				[][][][]			
<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard	[][][][]				[][][][]				[][][][]				[][][][]			
Expiry Date (mm yy)	[][][][]				Signature											

08/2020



APPLICATION FORM FOR MEMBERSHIP TO THE
AUSTRALIAN BOWHUNTERS ASSOCIATION™
INCORPORATED (Inc in NT No A01978C) GST TAX INVOICE GST ABN 79 750 431 225



ASSOCIATION USE ONLY
M'ship #s Allocated
Receipt Number
Computer Entered
M'ship Forwarded

TROPHY BOWHUNTS AUSTRALIA

TAKE THE HUNT BY THE HORNS



**Widowmaker
Arrows and
Broadheads**



www.widowmakerarchery.com

Contact Mick Baker - Email: mr baker@bigpond.net.au Established 2002

www.trophybowhunts.com.au



Fully Guided Hunts for:

Red Deer - March/April from \$1800 (5 days) includes a doe, trophy fee if stag taken.

Chital Deer - Jan to May from \$3000 (5 days) includes a stag and unlimited does.

Buffalo - June to August (6 days) fully guided hunts, POA.

Wild Boar - Aug to Oct from \$4000 (10 days).

All prices are a guide only as people require different options so please call for a quote. Hunts are all inclusive except: Alcohol and Trophy Fees (Trophy Fees on application) Indemnity Waiver to be signed at pickup. Special Hunts are available from time to time so if you are flexible you can get a great deal on some hunts. All you have to do is get on the emergency list and you are notified every time a special deal comes along.

Abbey Archery

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Abbey Archery is your full service Archery Pro Shop with two well stocked locations situated in Sydney, NSW and Brisbane, QLD as well as our 10 tonne truck travelling across Australia, fully fitted out as a Pro Shop. Not only do we sell the latest in archery equipment, our highly experienced staff can provide many services. We repair, tune and install accessories on all bows. We custom make premium quality bowstrings and cables on our Specialty Super Server 800 string jig and we can accommodate any of your fletching needs with our four fletching tables fitted with 144 original Bitzenberger Jigs. If it's Target, 3D, Field or Hunting, we have what you need. We sell you product, knowledge and experience.

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Free Call: 1800 883 664