



# MOUNTAIN ECHO

Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA April 2022



Autumn is here! Great colours, great hunting and shooting, what's not to like? Send your best autumn colours pic to the Editor!

## Club Night – Tues May 31<sup>st</sup>

**When things go wrong** - Julian from Land SAR giving tips on survival.

Don't forget to keep any good photos and of course trophies taken over the coming months for our Competition Club Night in winter!



[www.nzdanelson.co.nz](http://www.nzdanelson.co.nz)

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# Editorial

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Its autumn, the rut in its various guises is upon us. Omicron hopefully more behind us than in front and the world is troubled.

Our National Office, Game Animal Council and Mountain Safety Council are providing many wise words about safe and happy hunting over the coming months. I will not add to that but click our links at end of Echo to see and refresh yourselves.

Proposed changes to the rules for Ranges and Shooting Clubs are out for consideration and submission. Our National office is drafting a submission on members' behalf, as are we. However, **all** who care about use of ranges and for organised clubs to use firearms should check the proposals and submit on the template available [Information and Submission Form here](#)

A great story from our veteran campaigner Eric about his tahr hunt last year and a small photo essay from the Editor on a recent local hunt in Nelson Lakes National Park. I hope that many of you will have some pics and short yarns to share with the members thorough the Echo on your (and my) return from autumn hunts!



Given the current state of things north of the equator and generally, I will leave the main editorial piece to a poet who expresses the Editor's feelings (after a week in Otago!) pretty well at present and hopefully the words resonate with a few readers.

## The Peace of Wild Things

*When despair for the world grows in me  
And I wake at night at the least sound  
In fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,  
I go and lie down where the wood drake  
Rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.  
I come into the peace of wild things  
Who do not tax their lives with forethought  
Of grief. I come into the presence of still water.  
And I feel above me the day-blind stars  
Waiting with their light. For a time  
I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.*

*Wendell Berry*

Hunt, shoot, stay safe, be happy....The Editor



# HUNTS - Hunter Training is Back!

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**Are You Interested in Taking Up Hunting?**

## HUNTS

### Hunter National Training Scheme



Training hunt 2021 - with proof it works!

Nelson Marlborough Fish and Game and NZ Deerstalkers Association are again offering an introductory course in hunting (both game bird and big game) that is designed to help and encourage **new and potential hunters** (minimum age 16 years, conditions apply) into the sport.

This course is “hands on” and a great opportunity to gain practical skills and information from experienced instructors.

The course will cover the Hunter National Training Scheme (HUNTS) programme plus an introduction to Game bird hunting. Topics will include Hunting Ethics & Wildlife management, Equipment & clothing, Navigation & safety around water/river crossings, Game species - biology, habitat and behaviour, Firearm safety and shooting technique, Hunting techniques for different species, skinning and meat processing, when things go wrong.... And much more!!!

The course (held at the Fish & Game Rooms in Champion Road, Richmond) involves **8** evening sessions held Monday evenings starting **30 May 2022. (7 - 9 pm) plus two weekends.**

Membership of NZDA is a requirement to enrol in the course. [Membership and Joining Link here](#)

**Cost:**

- Current NZDA member (any category) - **\$200**
- New members joining June 2022. NZDA membership subscription that provides access to the NZDA Rifle Range and Public Liability Insurance.
  - Senior - **\$340**
  - Junior (under 18 yrs) - **\$257**
  - Student - **\$275**
  - Family (Partner or child of an adult course member) - **\$213**
- Hunting trip costs (**\$25 - 50**) are extra and are determined by the hunt location.

**For more information contact:**

Fish and Game NZ, Nelson Marlborough Region **(03) 544 6382** or

Bill O’Leary, NZ Deerstalkers’ Association **027 430 5008**



**Last Year’s Happy Graduates**



# Range Matters

## Info and Action from our Ranges

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There are now Nelson NZDA branded chamber flags available at the range, please take one or two only as you may need and use.

**Don't forget Packers Creek unavailable at Easter (16-19<sup>th</sup> April)** as the NZDA National Comp is on.

# Benchrest – Summer Outdoor Programme

## Rimfire Benchrest Challenge Series Packers Creek Range 13<sup>th</sup> March 2022

### Results:

Date : 13/03/2022		Title: 2022 National HV Be						Class: Light R/F	
Range: Nelson		S.I.							
Name		W	A	B	C	D	E	Agg	GAgg PN
Greg Couper	S.I. 100		.742	.838	.618	.622	.778	.7196	1
Graeme Vallance	S.I. 100		.862	1.245	2.064	.946	1.188	1.2610	2
Graeme Smith	S.I. 100		.819	1.401	.872	1.780	1.726	1.3196	3
Michael Kidson	S.I. 100		3.300	1.777	1.278	1.100	.978	1.6866	4
Anne Marie Kidson	S.I. 100		2.997	1.534	1.707	1.779	1.701	1.9436	5
Terry Farnham	S.I. 100		1.723	2.139	2.727	1.517	1.962	2.0136	6
Best Scores 100					Best Scores 0				
A	G Couper		.742						
B	G Couper		.838						
C	G Couper		.618						
D	G Couper		.622						
E	G Couper		.778						
SG	G Couper		.618 (Rec	)					
Agg	G Couper		.7196 (Rec	)					

Well done Greg Couper!



It's a long way down to the 100 metre target for a .22 rimfire....a real test of skills in windage adjustments.

**Interested??!!**

Phone **Graeme Smith** 03 544 7138 or Email: [lvhvbr@gmail.com](mailto:lvhvbr@gmail.com)

# Whataroa Tahr Hunt June 2021

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No caption required!

After a great Fallow hunt and a very successful Whitetail hunt over April and early May I was real keen to finish up on a Tahr hunt before heading home after 6 weeks based in Queenstown. This trip was set up with Dave Hobson after our Molesworth Hunt in March.

I missed out on a Tahr ballot block this year so after few phone calls to Brad at Heliservices in Fox (James Scott) everything was set to fly us on to a spot in the Whataroa I had hunted twice over the last couple years with success. With a 10.00am chopper flight from James Scott's helipad at Whataroa it was a very early start in the morning from Antos in Queenstown. Dave was driving down from Nelson so an early start for him as well. We both made it on time so after a quick briefing with the ground crew and pilot over my map we were soon flying up river to our camping spot. As we lifted off the helipad the ZIP crews were loading two choppers with 1080 baits some 500m metres upriver. These choppers flew all day non-stop dropping 1080 on the eastern face of the Whataroa River between the Perth Junction and the mid Junction Butler Hut.

With our camp set up on a level patch of hard snow on a prominent ridge we were soon glassing. Note we did spend some time setting up the tent ensuring it was well anchored down. Good job we did as the next night we had a few hours of very high winds. The big rocks on top of the pegs saved the day. My new Macpac Alpine tent was exceptional in those conditions. By the first



evening we had seen a lot of Tahr which was a good omen for tomorrow. We had a fine 5 day weather forecast ahead of us which had Dave and I in hunting mode as we hit the sack.



Sunday saw us heading down to a very steep scrubby area where I had seen a lot of tahr in my previous trips along with a really big bull. We saw a few nice bulls but we hung off shooting anything to ensure we didn't disturb the area for a mediocre bull.

Monday followed a similar pattern except a good bull was spotted below us with a heap of nannies. We reckoned he was around 12 1/2 inches so knowing he was there and shootable gave us hope of spotting a bigger bull.

Tuesday morning was very cold making the snow and ice super slippery so it took a longer time dropping down the ridge to where we could glass from. We had a beautiful fine warm day making the surface of the snow melt. All was well on the one hour climb back up to camp until the last 50m. The soft surface had frozen solid making it difficult to even cut footholds with the ice axe. Dave looked a picture sliding on his backside to the tent for the last 30m rather than stop and put on his crampons. A couple a beers with our dinner had us in good spirits for tomorrow with another fine day forecasted.

Wednesday was following the same pattern until around midday I spotted a Chamois Buck way below us. It walked out of the bush edge and laid down enjoying the warm weather. Within minutes Dave and I were off at pace to close the gap. Over the years I found Chamois can be very unpredictable, there one minute and then they are off covering long distances in a very short time. Half an hour later we had closed the distance to 150m. Dave stayed put as I stalked closer. Peeping around a rocky mound I could see the Chamois was standing up looking my way at 85m. He must of heard me as I struggled to get through the steep scrub. A quick offhand shot knocked the chamois over.





The 9 ½ inch Chamois was soon photographed with some great background shots. We looked uphill towards our lookout spot, and both agreed that it was going to be a very late night getting back to camp. Two worn out hunters slept very well that night. Would tomorrow be bull tahr day?

We had been glassing for half an hour when I said to Dave, got him. A good Bull on the spur in the heavy scrub, Dave answered yes, he's worth a closer look. Retracing our steps from yesterday we climbed down hill and sidled over to the edge the steep slip covered in monkey scrub. Expecting the Bull to be 200-300m away I was momentarily taken back when I spotted the bull dozing in the scrub at 82m dead level with us. The front shoulder was obscured by the monkey scrub leaving only the head and neck exposed. My new Leupold scope on 15 power made the base of the neck shot easy. The Bull just slumped down on the shot not moving from the small flat spot he was sitting on. Dave and I were watching the bull enjoying the moment when the bull gave a quick wriggle and slipped off into the vertical monkey scrub. Dave commented this could be bit of a mission now trying to get a photo and removing the head. Not a truer word spoken, vertical monkey scrub, will always be monkey scrub even after 45 years of hunting. On finding the bull hung up on the scrub 4m below we managed drag it up onto the top of a bush and take a few photos.





Being only 100m from where I shot the chamois yesterday it was another gut buster to the top ridge again. We were probably halfway up when Dave spotted a big body bull in the gut we had been watching for most of the trip. He was 200m directly below us surrounded by a heap of nannies. After a quick look through the binos we reckoned he was a shooter. The day was starting to draw in so not wanting to walk to far in the dark back to camp we wasted no time in dropping altitude. 20 minutes later 120m directly below us the bull had his attention on his nannies. He just crumpled on the shot falling further down the gut. A tricky climb down in the gut allowed us to find the bull.





A big body with a great mane and 12 1/2 horns. On the steep climb back up to our packs another bull about 12 inches was watching us only 100m away. He was left to grow another couple years. We finally made it back to the tent a couple hours later in the pitch black. No stars tonight.

The sky had clouded over, and it was starting to snow. A quick tidy up of our gear was done before climbing into our sleeping bags as the chopper pick up was 8.30am in the morning, The text from Heli services in the afternoon said pack all your gear but leave tent up just in case we cannot pick you up as the weather marginal. 6 days of beautiful fine weather now it's snowing. And it did snow, very heavy all night making all our gear outside the tent hard to find. Luckily in preparation for the early pick up we spent 1/2 hour at 3 am in the morning digging all the guy ropes and pegs out of the frozen snow. No mean feat in a snowstorm. It was still snowing when the chopper arrived at 8.20am, 10minutes early, what followed was bedlam, in short, I have never seen so much snow in a chopper as we just piled all our gear in, snow and all. The weather stayed that way for the next 4 days so we couldn't thank the pilot enough for getting us out when he did.

Next stop was a big feed in Hokitika and a couple big flat whites to warm us up. There has been a lot of talk about DOCs Tahr culling programme, but we saw good numbers of both nannies and bulls. Are we going Tahr hunting next year?..... definitely!

Eric Hall

# Nelson Lakes – Go Local!

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Blue Skies!



Blue Waters





Smoko Break





A sight for sore legs.....



Fat and Glossy





### Morning Glory

A bit was learned here by the Editor.....

- the wasps were not too bad
- I can carry 12 kg and a rifle in and managed 20kg with fat venny added, out.....but it hurt
- I nearly made a fool of myself in a deceptively gentle looking river (which got waist deep, was running fast and I had worn out legs and no stick) as felt "too tired" to walk up half a km to an easy crossing and was pumped after shooting the stag. Good lesson.....
- but.....Nelson Lakes is cool!

# Going Places? – Show Me a Sign!

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New Zealand is full of wonderful places and the traditional “AA” signs to show the way. This is an evocative set in north Canterbury and its easy to imagine the history associated with these once very remote high country runs.

Can you find a “it’s a good sign” pic? Send it in and we will publish what we think is the best one each month!

Send to The Editor [richardw@nzdanelson.co.nz](mailto:richardw@nzdanelson.co.nz)



# Trapped!

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Weasel caught reaching for rabbit bait.....the bait was in trap for 2 weeks and still attracting. I have now caught 62 stoats and weasels on a 8 ha block in 2.5 years starting with 2 traps and now running 15 DOC 150s and 200s.

## Where's Wabbit??

Greg is still looking for really good bait of our stoat and ferret traps at Packers Creek Range...and REALLY good bait means fresh rabbit, skin on or even just skins! So if you have a place where you can shoot more rabbits than you care to eat please keep a few for Greg! Just remove the gut bag...no more than that and freeze then contact Greg Couper [gregc@nzdanelson.co.nz](mailto:gregc@nzdanelson.co.nz)



# Meat Solutions – James’ Deer Processing Demo Night



Nearly 30 members took the chance to get the “good oil” from James of Meat Solutions on cutting a whole deer carcass.

James ran a few wee competitions:

- Guess the finished product weight from 32kg deer? – Winner Jay Quinn with 17.5kg (only 200g off!)
- Time to remove ribcage – Kyall thompson with 2 mins. 30 secs (22 secs out!)
- How many wild deer has James shot? Grant Unsworth wins with nil (0)! James needs some help here?





Watching the knife fly – members view James butchery skills



## Member Benefits – Don't Miss Out

Remind yourself of NZDA membership benefits and supplier discounts by clicking here: [Benefits and Discounts](#) and NZDA Benefits APP

NZDA MEMBERSHIP & DISCOUNTS APP

Available Now!



We are excited to announce the NZDA Membership App is now live and can be downloaded today!

How to download the app

1) Go to Google play or the Apple store and search for NZ Deerstalkers. Select Install or GET.



Also, our local Hunting and Fishing stores (Nelson and Richmond) are offering Nelson NZDA members 10% discount on many items as well as to be in the draw for a PLB – see below [www.nzdanelson.co.nz](http://www.nzdanelson.co.nz)

# Fish and Game News

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Our Fish and Game reporter Jake has been away hunting in Southland (good to hear!) so will double down on F&G news next month!

Meantime an important message on river and lake biosecurity in our region

## Lake snow is an invasive freshwater diatom (*Lindavia intermedia*) that is in Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa

In late 2019 *Lindavia intermedia* was found in the Buller River headwater. It has now been confirmed to be in Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa, Nelson Lakes National Park.

This microscopic algal species is a relatively recent introduction to New Zealand, first found in 2002. It is becoming increasingly common in New Zealand lakes, to date known from lakes in Otago and Canterbury, and several in Waikato on the North Island. In the northern South Island it is only known from Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa and Maitai Reservoir.

Under certain conditions, *Lindavia intermedia* can produce lake snow – a sticky, mucus-like substance that hangs under the water and can be a nuisance because it sticks to fishing gear, boats, motors, and people. Fortunately, it is not toxic to humans or livestock and poses no risk from food sourced from the lakes.

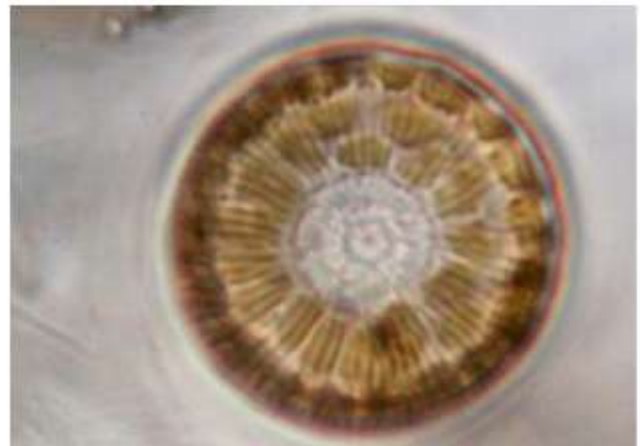
Little is known about the potential impacts of *Lindavia* on the ecology and health of the lakes. DOC is working with scientists and other agencies to develop monitoring and research.

### How was it detected in Nelson Lakes?

Over the summer of 2020/21, DOC rangers worked with Tasman District Council (TDC) and Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research to take samples from Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa.

It was found that there is *Lindavia* in both lakes but the diatom is not producing lake snow. The diatom was at a higher density in Lake Rotoiti and increasing, so experts predict that it could produce lake snow there in the near future – possibly in summer 2021/22.

*Lindavia* does not always produce lake snow. In some lakes, such as Lake Wanaka, lake snow is regularly formed, whereas in other lakes it is only occasional. It is unknown what will happen in Lakes Rotoiti and Rotoroa in the long term.



*Lindavia intermedia* under magnification (top, photo by Phil Novis, Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research) and lake snow on a filter (bottom, source: [www.waikatoregion.govt.nz](http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz))



New Zealand Government

Website: [Fish and Game Nelson](http://Fish and Game Nelson)

[www.nzdanelson.co.nz](http://www.nzdanelson.co.nz)



# Club Night – 7.30pm Tuesday **31<sup>st</sup> May**

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**Survive and be Alive!**

**Julian from Land SAR with expert advice on survival when things go wrong**



# Red Deer Lodge

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Information on costs and bookings of the Red Deer Lodge at Lake Rotoiti [Red Deer Lodge](#)

Contact for Accom: [info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz](mailto:info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz)

**Always remember to advise you are a Nelson member.**

## 2022 Branch Committee, Information & Contacts

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All details can be found on our refreshed website: [Nelson Branch Committee](#)

Website [Nelson Branch NZDA](#)

Facebook [Facebook Nelson NZDA](#)

## Other Key Links - click on the blue

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NZDA National Association [NZDA](#)

DOC Hunting Portal [Hunting Conservation Land](#)

Fiordland Wapiti Foundation [Wapiti](#)

Game Animal Council [GAC](#)

COLFO [COLFO](#)

Mountain Safety Council [MSC](#)

NZ Police (Firearms Law) [Firearms](#)