Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA |

March 2025





Nelson Lakes Management Hunt Opportunity May 2025 – details further below. Register to join this great opportunity to hunt in a great area, help manage the herd and retrieve some meat.





THIS MONTH

EDITORIAL

Renew Your Membership and be in to Win

Nelson Lakes Management Hunt

Range Matters

Molesworth Mission – A Northerner's Story

Roar Safety – Annual Refresher Information

CLUB NIGHT

No Club Night March

Hunt & Fish March Specials

MEMBER BENEFITS

IMPORTANT LINKS

Editorial

Hi Hunters and Shooters

Final heat kick in the summer weather is here, I was in Molesworth last weekend and certainly it was a bit hot after midday to do much!

Some key points for this month, with more information further below on each topic:

Membership renewal – invoices are out and as a very tantalisling reward there is a fantastic prize up for grabs for all who renew before the end of March. Be in to win! We hope you are watching the "Advocacy Alerts" coming out of National Office, Gwyn and his team, supported by the Board are working very hard to get solid and considered submissions in on a large range of matters that affect all hunters and shooters – firearms law, public access, public land management and more. This work is critical to prevent runaway trains in terms of Government policy that is at odds with common sense and our basic rights to access and enjoy the public estate. So please don't underestimate the value in your membership to support this; no other hunting group does so much.

Nelson Lakes Management Hunt – This is based on last year's successful organised management hunt and an opportunity to - fly into country usually only accessible on foot, contribute to the herd management in the area, and get some serious meat back home. Please register your interest soon!

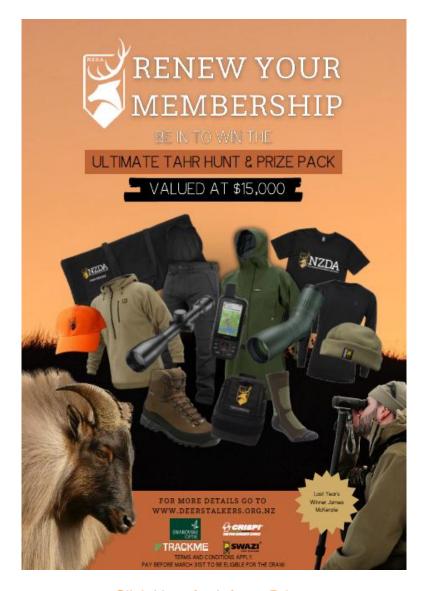
Roar Safety – This is a super exciting time of year as autumn is a key hunting period for game animals and of course later on, the game birds. No apologies for rolling over the key messages - just like the diligent cabin crew on our airlines; they remind everybody, every flight, about being safe and what to do when things go wrong, because...IT MATTERS! So, whether you are roar hunting or just getting out more as the weather cools down, take the time to check on the messages and links below - whether you are an experienced or new hunter.

Club Nights – we had a pretty good turnout to our session at Hunting and Fishing (thanks H&F!) last month although it seems not too many were keen to try their voice in a roar competition. We are trying to conjure up Club Nights that are fun, interesting and interactive; especially we are keen to see more family members attend too. So, this is your chance to tell us what you would like to see over the coming year by emailing our Secretary dave@nzdanelson.co.nz. Some members have mentioned a buy/sell/swap night, there are members able to do a pracical workshop on pest trapping, we can rerun the "How to Ballot" seminar and more (or a mix of these on the same night). So please send in your ideas. Or maybe you would like to present something! Please don't be shy, these activities need people to get in and engage. Many thanks to Carina for the effort she (and Noksee and Greg) put in last week.

Hunting Story – a North Islander's perspective - Fellow Board and Bay of Plenty Committee member Tim Taylor joined me for his "first look" into Molesworth hill country and chamois. I greatly enjoyed his company, fresh perspectives and obvious enjoyment (in some pretty thorny situations!). His story is below but I confess to adding a few pictures of my own to his and doing the captions! Editorial license.

Good Hunting & Safe Shooting - Richard Wells

Membership Renewal Time! Be in to Win.....



Click Here for Info on Prizes

It's time to renew your NZDA membership, and we're excited to share that renewing by March 31st puts you in the draw for an unforgettable West Coast tahr hunt during the late rut—plus an epic prize package, all valued at over \$15,000!

What You Could Win:

- West Coast Tahr Hunt
- Swarovski Z5 Rifle Scope + ATC Spotting Scope
- Swazi hunting apparel bundle
- Garmin 67i GPS + TrackMe plan
- Crispi Nevada Legend Boots...and more! Renewing is quick and easy: just follow the link in your renewal invoice email.

Nelson Lakes Management Hunt

We are calling on all members of your NZDA branch for Registration of Interest in the 2025 animal management hunt in Nelson Lakes National Park (NLNP).

This is a targeted management hunt in collaboration with DOC, the objective being to reduce the ungulate population of the area, particularly red hinds and all pigs and goats encountered.

Recent reports from WARO operators have confirmed high numbers of deer are still present.

The management hunt will take place in the area shown on the attached map. We require an uptake of between 32-40 hunters to make this hunt viable.

On your return we would like hunters to make a donation of boned and cleaned meat to local food banks. There will be a drop-off point provided near to the landing site.

The details of the hunt are as follows:

- 1. We will be using a Squirrel B3 from Murchison Helicopters to fly groups from a site on Mt Ella Station where parking will be made available.
- 2. Fly in 8th May and fly out 11th May. There is a backup weather contingency slot of 15th 18th May . Plan is early morning departure from heli site on the Thursday morning and mid-afternoon return on the Sunday.
- 3. Estimated return flight cost per person is \$550 \$650 depending on the numbers. It is the same price per hunter irrespective of your allocated block.
- 4. Hunters will be in teams of up to five and allocated blocks by the NZDA project team. Maximum helicopter payload for hunters plus gear is 650kg.
- 5. If you wish to hunt with someone you know, we will try to make this happen, however this is not guaranteed.
- 6. This is alpine mountainous terrain which requires a reasonable level of fitness, experience in remote outdoor locations and appropriate gear and

equipment.

- 7. The management hunt is open to members who have paid their full subscription for the 2025/26 membership year and who have a full firearms licence.
- 8. You will be required to pay a bond to NZDA Nelson branch prior to being allocated a block. The bond is only repayable in special circumstances or if

the hunt is cancelled.

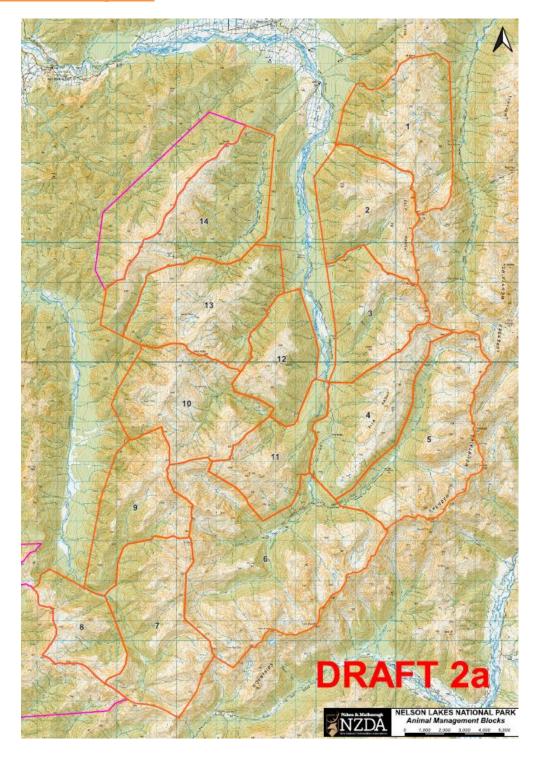
9. Members are being asked to indicate which weekend they will be available for (8th-11th or 15th-18th) and preference will be given to those available for both.

10. We may need to make last minute changes to teams & blocks if we have people pull out at short notice. All hunters are expected to accommodate any such changes.

If you would like to participate in this management hunt, please follow the link at the bottom of this email and complete the on-line form.

Register ASAP please - COMPLETE THE REGISTER OF INTEREST FORM HERE

If you have any questions please direct these to Dave Haynes, whose details are: david@solumconsulting.co.nz. Phone 0272 351 833



Range Matters



2024-25 Nelson Outdoor Benchrest Summer Series February Results

9.2.25 International Target

	T1	T2	
Greg Couper	248.13	243.13	491.26
Carina Jackson	241.07	246.16	487.23
Graeme Smith	242.06	240.08	482.14
Tony Carter	237.07	243.12	480.19
Graeme Vallance	235.04	234.06	469.10
Anne Marie Kidson	232.04	224.02	456.06
Michael Kidson	232.03	219.05	451.08
John Ronaldson	225.03	222.05	447.08

Points				22-Dec	19-Jan	9-Feb	Total
Carina Jackson	8	7.5	8		9	7	39.5
Greg Couper	7	7.5	7		10	8	39.5
Graeme Smith	6	5	6	7	7	6	37
Graeme Vallance		4	5	6	5	4	24
Michael Kidson	4	2	3	3	4	2	18
Tony Carter				4	6	5	15
John Ronaldson	2	3			8	1	14
Anne Marie Kidson	5			2	2	3	12
Simon Cotton	1	2	2	1	3		9
lan Harper				5	1		6
Simon Senior			4				4
Jan Newton	3						3
Donald Jaffray			1				1



If interested in using the Range always check the calendar on our website: <u>Nelson NZDA</u>
<u>Range Info</u>

<u>Always</u> be aware of and comply with our **Ranges' Standing Orders** – they are posted at the Ranges, but you should refresh yourself from our website:

Packers Creek - Standing Orders

Range Use Etiquette - Etiquette and Golden Rules Click Here

Murchison Community Range - <u>Standing Orders</u>

Packers Creek Range Access Reminder:

- 1. Check website for opening days and hours
- 2. Be at gate **before** 0900 hrs not after
- 3. All vehicles **must have** headlights on and conform to convoy (i.e. <u>follow</u> the duty officer in and out on Sharlands Road these rules are set by landowner/operator and are compulsory
- 4. Ensure you have your membership card and hiviz & hearing protection
- 5. Its wet up there, avoid driving on the grass

Any competition and event queries please:

call Graeme Smith - 03 5447138 or email lvhvbr@gmail.com

Molesworth Mission by Tim Taylor

Molesworth Station, it's one of those places that hunters dream about but very few visit. My interest was aroused while sitting in an NZDA meeting. Fellow board member, Richard Wells, started telling me tales of roaming hordes of deer and monstrous blue pigs. One day he casually asked if I'd be keen to tag along on a block he secured through the permit system and from there the hook was set.

At 118,787ha Molesworth is New Zealand's largest farm. It's public land managed by DOC and farmed under a management plan by PAMU. The management plan is place since 2013 is up for consultation this year, and recreational users of all types and us as hunters will need to be engaged. Farming and hunting appear to be complementary so hopefully common sense will prevail and access and management of the game animals on the land will continue.



First light on Molesworth – what it's all about.

Hunting in Molesworth is run by a "ballot" system (really a "first past the post" permit application like Stewart Island) administered by DOC. There are 38 hunting blocks, some of these are available all year round, while others are only available at specific times. The permit gives you access to a particular block for 1 week and you're allowed up to 6 ballot blocks in a year plus a roar block. Each block is known for different reasons – some are favored for their big stags, others for chamois or pigs, and a couple simply because you can hunt them all year round. An interesting rule for all blocks is that none can be accessed by vehicles off the designated major public roads, with the only exception being push bikes and horses (which require an activity permit and aren't suitable for all blocks). This largely restricts hunters to walking in from the road, and I'll admit that it's bloody frustrating because the distances are vast. It's little wonder most hunters tend to concentrate on trophy hunting as opposed to meat hunting but in a way it means hunting is very traditional, with long walks, heavy packs, and in the more isolated blocks, animals that often very rarely see humans.

After months of back-and-forth emails, the day finally arrived to head South. We met at Forest Camp in Hamner Springs. Cabins are \$40 per night and it's only 30 minutes from our block so we were to use this as a base for the entire week. I was initially skeptical about the need for this accommodation, thinking I'd want to spend every second in the block, but after the first 3 days on the hill, I greatly appreciated returning for a shower, some fresh food and being able to stash some meat in the freezer.



Ready to rumble – we worried the low cloud would make our job of finding chamois hard, but it burned off.

Our block rises from 700m at the creek to 1600m on each side, with numerous side creeks to explore. It's not quite as steep as Tahr country, but for this North Island bush hunter, it all looked vertical and I was soon to learn we'd be right up the top. Day one and 20 minutes into our hike Richard suddenly stops. "Bugger, I've left my binoculars in the ute". On return, he proclaims "that's the mandatory f**** up complete, we're right for the rest of the trip!" With the monkey off our back, we shouldered packs and continued towards our camp, 2 hours in the distance. The hike in was relatively straight forward, following cattle trails that zigzagged through amour piercing Matagouri and waist high rose bushes (shorts were a bad idea). We were in no rush, so we stopped numerous times to glass for animals and it wasn't long before we started picking out the bright orange coats of red deer shimmering in the distance.

We had 2 goals for this trip, the first was to secure my first Chamois and the second was to give Richard a good understanding of the block for future ballots. Richard had hunted this block in 2024, so he already understood where the Chamois hung out, but he admitted that he'd only scratched the surface and was keen to learn more about it.

Halfway up the valley there's a major, unnamed, side creek on the true right. The Chamois hung out at the top, so we set up our base of operations next to the creek at the bottom. Conscious that we didn't want to blow out on day 1, we decided to climb up to the saddle for an afternoon glassing session...nothing too serious, just to get an understanding of where the animals were at. Well that was the plan.

After a stout climb, we gained the saddle. The temperature had ratcheted up several notches, so we tucked in under some shady beech trees for our glassing session. That sweet smell of summer honeydew wafted through on the breeze while a chorus of Bellbird song welcomed us to the South Island.



"That's one nasty looking gully" I proclaimed. This statement was soon followed by "hey mate, you know that nasty gully, there's two Chamois standing at the bottom of it."

"Told you that's where they'd be" Richard replied.

As our eyes adjusted, the Chamois started popping out all over the place. We were glassing a large basin, with numerous vertical faces that rose up from a nasty-looking creek bed. Shooting something would be the easy part, I wondered how we'd ever recover it. Half an hour later I spotted a lone animal feeding on the scree face near to us. This face was attached to the ridge that we were sitting on, so it would be a relatively straight forward stalk and an easy recovery. We watched it for a while and the animal appeared to be significantly larger than anything else we'd seen. Being in the open we could clearly see that it had no kid so we decided it must be a lone buck. "I know it's day 1 but this seems like an opportunity we shouldn't turn down" I whispered to Richard. "I agree, go get into a shooting position and I'll let you know via radio if things change". I scuttled along the ridge and was just cresting a knoll when I froze. Picking up the radio, I whispered to Richard "mate, there's at least 3 Chamois asleep on that face and I'm in direct line of sight with them. I'll take my time and creep into position."

My Chamois was head down feeding in amongst the flax slightly below me, and I ranged it at 160m. Just as I was settling the bipod, I felt the wind shift on the back of my neck. Up came the head and it quickly trotted off across the scree. It was an open face and I was confident it would present me with an opportunity, so I remained calm and tracked it with the scope. At 206m the Chamois made the mistake I was waiting for. As the sound of the shot echoed around the hills, I expected to see it do a cartwheel, but instead it took off at high speed up the hill. I also saw a puff of dust where the bullet impacted. My initial thought was "crap, I've pulled the shot." Instinctively I reloaded and tracking it as it ran upward. A moment later it turned and finally cartwheeled out of sight. "It's down, congratulations mate" Richard said over the radio.

Rolling the Chamois over for a photo, Richard loudly proclaimed "it's a bloody nanny! Must have been barren." Smiles all round, we had completed our first goal within the first 2 hours of hunting. "Do you have a tape?" Richard asked. "Actually, I do, I scored it in a Christmas cracker!" She measured roughly 8.5" so I was ecstatic. With an entry hole in one shoulder, and a relatively small exit hole in the other, we speculated that the 7mm Rem mag 162 grain ELD X projectile simply wasn't designed for such a small animal and hadn't expanded so little wonder it ran. On the bright side, it left the skin in good condition, so we set to work.

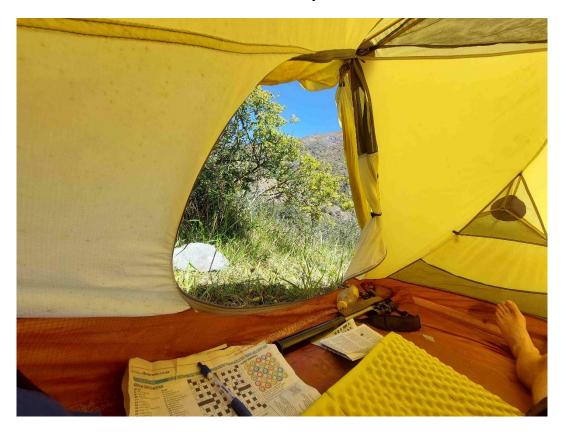


First day and First chammy!

Day two and three were a mixed bag. The weather had cleared to perfect blue skies so the heat forced us to manage our hunting differently. The animals in the valley also appeared to have changed their habits, moving a lot higher, possibly due to the heat or possibly from our scent wafting around. We both scored a blue pig on day two, but day three was a complete bust. It was time to head out to Hamner to resupply and come up with a new gameplan.



This boar walked right past Richard in the bush and was silly enough to pause and let the old "Sakoriser" do its job



Heat of the day – Richard relaxes indoors with a few puzzles, waiting till evening.

While demolishing a Porterhouse steak we agreed we'd seen enough of the main valley, so we settled on heading back in for a day hunt to explore an unnamed creek that runs parallel to the main area. Standing next to the ute the next morning, I'll admit that I wasn't stoked with this idea. Richard's plan of climbing the ridge to glass appeared to be an absolute gut buster, and the thought of carrying out an animal in the heat wasn't appealing whatsoever. He managed to twist my arm, and later I did have to eat my words as it was a lot more achievable than I'd initially thought. I'll give you that one mate, your experience shone through.



Worth the grunt. And little did we know there was a reward over the hill in background

Gaining the main ridge, the morning's hunt became a series of short climbs to the next glassing spot. Yes, the climbs were a bit of a grunt, but in reality they only took 20-30 minutes and we were pleasantly surprised at how quickly we gained altitude. There was deer and pig sign everywhere, and the gully below just screamed animal habitat, but despite this, we only saw a couple of deer shimmering off in the distance. At 1592m we decided to call it. I find it hard to describe what it was like up at this point because I am absolutely petrified of heights so this isn't the sort of country I'd usually find myself in. I'd been so caught up in the adventure that I found myself running on a massive adrenalin high. It was a great feeling.

"Let's grab a couple of photos before we head back down, this view is amazing" "Sounds good to me" Richard replied.

"Wait, is that a bloody deer?"

Sure enough, approximately 200 m below us, a lone hind was feeding in amongst the tussock completely unaware of our presence. We'd been searching all morning for a meat animal and hadn't seen anything that would have been within range, yet at the very last minute, she'd come along. It was meant to be.

"You get into a shooting position, and I'll be ready for a backup shot" Richard whispered.

The sound of the shot capped off what had been an amazing four days. Without saying it, both of us knew that our hunt had come to an end, and securing this hind in amongst the golden tussock was a great way to finish. Weighed down with prime venison, it was a very content couple of hunters who made their way back down the ridge. Bring on the roar ballots!



Last day, last basin, last chance! Well taken Tim!



"The Spaniards are how big?" Tim learns the sharp facts about South Island plant life!

Roar Safety – Things to Be

Be - Legal

Make sure you are up to date with your public or ballot land permits (or private landowners' permissions) GAC Licenses and Permits Information and read the permit conditions......



Hunting Permit

Permit Number: 00750163

Permit Validity Period: 2024-01-27 08:32:55 -

2024-05-26 08:32:55

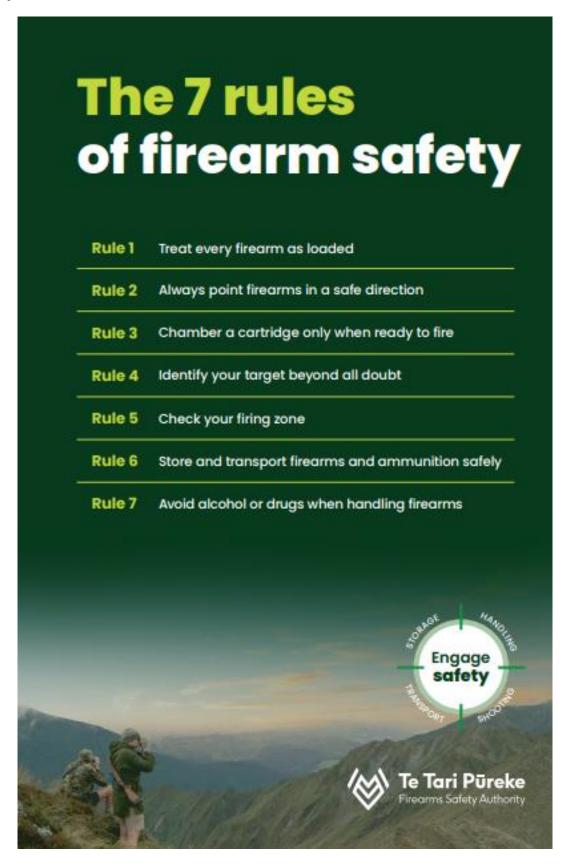
Permit Conditions:

- No firearm other than a high-powered centre fire rifle may be taken into the area, unless the permit is issued for shooting rabbits on which case LOW-POWERED SMALL CALIBRES CAN BE USED. Where this permit is issued only for game birds (as noted on the permit), only 12-20 gauge shotguns are permitted.
- 2. Hunting wild animals during the hours of darkness is prohibited.
- 3. This permit is not transferable and must be carried while hunting and produced on demand to any warranted officer or any other authorised person, and may at any time be cancelled by public notice issued by radio or published in a newspaper of the district.
- 4. Carcasses, offal and rubbish must not be left in stream beds or within loom of huts, campsites and tracks.
- 5. Care must be taken that streams, rivers and lakes are not polluted. All animals are to be killed as humanely as possible.
- 6. No fires to be lit in the open air without a fire permit.
- 7. No aircraft landings in wilderness areas.
- 8. Accessing and hunting on farmland requires the farmer's permission. Note: Other persons (trampers, fishermen, DOC rangers, guided groups etc) may be in the hunting area.
- 9. Hunters using a firearm must abide by the NZ Police Arms Code and hold a valid firearms licence.

.....as well as your firearms license, ensure team mates are too. Remember the rules re carriage and storage of firearms while out hunting.



Read more on the Firearms Rules here: FSA Rules

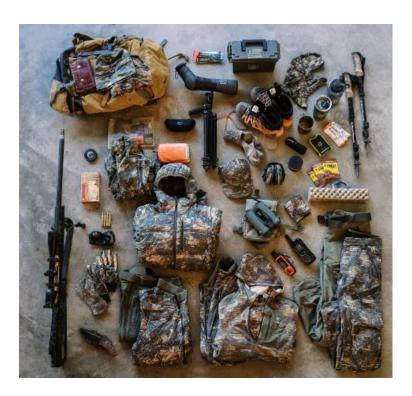


Be - Informed and Flexible



Do your homework with maps and Google Earth – hunting spots, vegetation/terrain, camp sites and crossings - even if you have been there before, especially if its new ground. Have a plan – you can use MSC Plan My Walk - and a Plan B for weather or other events.

Be - Prepared



Check all your gear and check again!

Be - Visible to Humans



Deer are colour blind..... People are not.

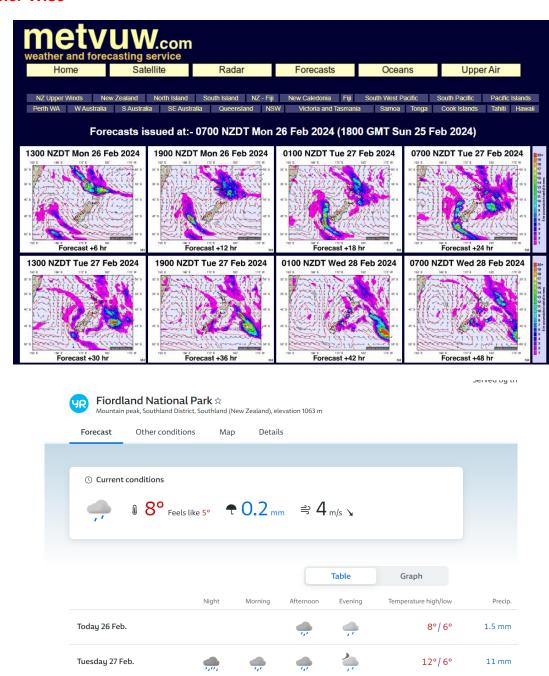
Be - River Safe



Don't cross when you should not, no river $\underline{\mathsf{HAS}}$ to be crossed despite what you might tell yourself!

Watch this MSC video for a refresher MSC River Safety

Be - Weather Wise



Use all the great Apps and websites, there really is NO excuse these days to not have a good grip on the next 5 days weather at least. I use YR and MetVUW all the time but there are other popular sites.

Weather YR Link YR

MetVUW Link MetVUW

Metservice Link Metservice

Windy Link Windy

Weather Watch <u>Link WeatherWatch</u> (great maps of Pacific area and so long view of what's coming our way)

Be - HeliSafe



Flying is fun but be sure you know how to keep yourself, your pilot and the aircraft safe while loading, boarding and disembarking. Check out this free online DOC Course especially if you are new to choppers. DOC Helisafety



Be - Sure of Your Whereabouts



Make sure your navigation gear is working, you have backups (at least a compass), check batteries and powerpacks. Ensure your team know how to use it.

Be - ready for that moment....

<u>For the worst</u>.....**always have a PLB**, first aid gear and ensure your intentions are known by your people back home - you can use online tools such as <u>AdventureSmart Intentions Form</u> and use Hut Books when available



And the best....be ready to enjoy yourself! Double check everything and then you can relax and enjoy your autumn hunting experiences!



Fred Bear's Hunting Top Ten Tips!

- 1. Don't step on anything you can step over.
- 2. Don't look for deer; look for movement (and remember, it's what they're looking for, too).
- 3. Always approach downwind. In the cool of the day, move uphill; in the heat of the day, move downhill.
- 4. The best camouflage pattern is called, "Sit down and be quiet!" Your grandpa hunted deer in a red plaid coat. Think about that for a second.
- 5. Take only the gear to the field that allows you to hunt longer, harder, and smarter.
- 6. A rainstorm isn't a reason to guit the hunt. It's a reason to stay.
- 7. Camouflage your appearance, your sound and your scent.
- 8. Be sure of your shot. Nothing is more expensive than regret.
- 9. Hunt where the deer actually are, not where you'd imagine them to be.
- 10. Next year's hunt begins the minute this season's hunt ends

(Fred Bear did not in fact write these, however they're great advice!)

I don't know who Fred Bear is – The Ed.

Last Club Night - February



Christie from Stone Glacier talks about great packs designers by and for hunters and gives a demo too! Check out these ultralight packs here Stone Glacier Website Thanks Hunting and Fishing!





Plenty of Winners at Club Night! Thanks Real Meals and others for the donated prizes.

Hunting and Fishing March Deals for

Members Only



Member Benefits - Know & Get Your Share!



A special insurance package has been developed by NZDA for members*.

As a NZDA member you and your family can feel safe knowing you are personally covered in a hunting related accident or while undertaking NZDA activities.

Insurance only covers financial members, and is often a requirement when hunting on forestry blocks, so with our insurance cover you can access more hunting opportunities.

NZDA and all our members are covered by <u>AIG Insurance New Zealand Limited</u> insurance when hunting and undertaking NZDA activities.

The insurance indemnity cover includes:

- \$10,000,000 for General Liability
- \$10,000,000 for Products Hazard Liability
- \$500,000 for Statutory Liability

*Excludes Associate Membership

A MAJOR PERK OF YOUR NZDA MEMBERSHIP IS THE OFFICIAL APP.



Save your membership fee by using the NZDA discounts - click here:

NZDA APP Discounts and More



SUPPORTERS OF NELSON NZDA HUNTS COURSES AND KAI RESCUE MORE INFO HERE:

MEAT SOLUTIONS

Important links

Red Deer Lodge

- Information on costs and bookings of the Red Deer Lodge at Lake Rotoiti Red Deer Lodge
- Contact for Accom: info@rotoitibaches.co.nz
- Always remember to advise you are a Nelson member.

2024 Branch Committee, Information & Contacts

- 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 orange.

Advocacy and Access

- NZDA National Association NZDA
- DOC Hunting Portal <u>Hunting Conservation Land</u>
- Fiordland Wapiti Foundation Wapiti
- Game Animal Council GAC
- Outdoor Access Commission OAC
- Walking Access NZ WAMS Maps
- LINZ Basemaps MAPS Link
- 141 Forest Access Information <u>141 Access and Permit Info</u>

Ballots 1 4 1

- Haast Ballot
- Wanaka Ballot
- Southland Waikaia Leithen Bush Wainakarua Catlins
- Fiordland Wapiti Foundation Ballot
- Caples & Greenstone RHA Ballot

Firearms and Safety

- COLFO COLFO
- NZ Firearms Safety Authority <u>Te Pureke</u>
- Mountain Safety Council MSC
- MSC Videos on everything safety and hunting Watch Videos
- Avalanche Advisory Avalanche Advisory Site