



MOUNTAIN ECHO

Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA April 2021

Reporter:

How do you feel about 2021?

Deer:

I'm pretty excited about the ammo shortage.



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Next Club Night

Tuesday

27 April @ 7.30
pm

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Editorial

I am starting this editorial in the last week of March – early for the April newsletter I know; But-

Yesterday I had time to read the consultation document Police have put out with proposed changes to the firearm regulations. Overnight I started thinking about the implications for hunters if the proposals outlined in Section 5 of the document come into force.

The proposal is that firearms carried in vehicles would be secured to a fixture and ammunition would be secured in a locked container secured to the vehicle.

Now on first reading I did not see this as a big problem but on reflection (overnight) I realised that I regularly travel with several firearms and in duck season or travel to a clay target shoot the slab(s) of ammo would take a big box in a small boot.

I regularly transport other shooters along with their firearms and ammunition and the proposal that all this is secured at multiple pick up points starts to make compliance really inconvenient and impracticable.

My son manages a school clay target team, and he sources, and transports team firearms and ammunition on training and competition days. NZDA HUNTS instructors do the same thing.

In summary and in my opinion the proposed regulations for carriage in vehicles will be pose significant problems for firearm owners and result in non-compliance by otherwise law-abiding licence holders.

Range matters

Section 6 of the Arms Amendment Act 2020 has big implication for how ranges are managed.

By 2022 all ranges will need to be certified by police and must be managed by qualified range officers when in use.

This has real issues for organisations running ranges.

The cost of inspection and certification will be significant and there is a requirement for re certification after five years. Ranges such as Murchison or the small “sighting in” facility at St Arnaud will need some head scratching to meet the new requirements.

At a national level, police organised courses are planned to produce police approved range inspectors who will provide the reports through to the Police Commissioner for formal range certification.

NZDA is running training courses for range officers to meet the new requirements as far as we understand these but are worried that the requirements may be more demanding than we consider reasonable.

At a local level, the Teetotal sighting in facility at St Arnaud has required a review of the conditions under which it is used. Consultation between DOC and NZDA has resulted in a published set of basic rules for safe use of the facility and to keep the area tidy. Local shooters and an increasing number of visitors use the facility and value it being made available and able to operate alongside other recreational activities.

Conclusion

Well, that is all from me. Your editorial team wish all our hunters a safe and productive roar. Make sure you shoot some hinds for meat (who wants a rank stag?) and to keep the growing animal population in check.

Bill and Richard.

Teetotal “Sighting in” facility

Notice to all users.

*An Open Area Hunting Permit is required to use this facility, apply online at:
<https://huntingpermits.doc.govt.nz/huntingpermits/start>*

A .22 permit must be obtained from the Rotoiti/Nelson Lakes Visitors Centre (open 8am-4:30pm) to use this calibre rifle in the facility.

Most local shooters who need to sight in rifles or introduce youngsters to safe gun handling appreciate the opportunity of using the facility on the Teetotal Recreation Area.

The facility has a purpose-built bullet catcher and is backed by a ridge that acts as a back stop. There is a table at 100 metres to provide a seated and supported firing position and a small mound at 50 meters for prone shooting.

Signs on the access tracks advises the public that the area is used for shooting and orange marker poles behind the 100-metre table and down both sides define the area set aside for shooting.

Let's Keep This Facility Safe by following these basic rules.

- The maximum distance shooting is permitted is 100 metres.
- All shots should be aimed at and captured by the bullet stop.
- Paper targets only should be pinned to the face of the bullet stop.
- No other target is acceptable (eg. cans and bottles)
- NO shotguns

Important

The rules must be followed to prevent ricochets off the ground.
All shooting must be conducted or supervised by the holder of a NZ firearm licence.

House keeping

Be a tidy Kiwi and remove all targets and empty cartridge cases.

Safe firearm usage is a legitimate recreational activity and is supported by DOC Nelson Lakes and the Nelson branch of New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association. To find out more, visit www.doc.govt.nz



All shooting should be under the eye of a person acting as a range officer to safeguard against the intrusion of walkers. All unlicensed shooters must be under direct supervision. Maximum permissible distance is 100 metres (at the benchrest). (Photo source: Nick King).



Figure 2: Paper targets only and must be fixed to the bullet catcher. (Photo source: Nick King)

Molesworth 2020 Ballot Hunt by Eric Hall

Today is Easter Sunday, two weeks into lockdown and it is raining so a great time to put hit the keyboard and share our time in the Molesworth this year. A lot of hunters would have missed out this year on their Roar hunt due the Lockdown, so we all felt we were a little lucky to get in out before the Government and DOC pulled the pin on all hunting.

I missed out on a Molesworth balloted block this year but a phone call from my mate Brian Davis while I was Queenstown saying that he was successful in drawing the Dog Stream Block had us back in business again for the first period starting 11th March.

Our party was Brian, his son Josh and his mate Kyle and myself. An early start on the 11th March saw Brian and I off to Lake Sedgemere our designated parking spot for the block via the Rainbow valley and a \$40-00 toll gate fee each way. Josh was catching up with Brian and I that evening and Kyle was driving up from Canterbury the next afternoon. Driving up the Rainbow on beautiful fine was great until we meet a truck at Hells Gate on what was the probably the narrowest section of the road. Having a Ranger and a truck passing each other was a little hairy to say the least. The walk into to our campsite was about 12kms across the wide expanse of tussock flats. We stopped halfway that evening and camped beside a creek draining out one of the many side creeks. Brian and I both climbed up high in the evening but saw nothing and very little sign. Josh duly arrived around 9.0pm.



The next morning Brian and I headed to our proposed campsite in the Dog Stream while Josh climbed up on the top of the main range overlooking the Molesworth and Rainbow Valley. He was meet by Kyle much later that evening after he did huge climb from the carpark. Brian and I climbed up high that evening and spotted four deer, three hinds and spiker a good omen for the next day.

Friday saw us in Dog stream climbing up high so we could look into the grassy guts that looked like a great place for a stag to hang out. Around 9.30am Brian spotted seven deer, a 7pt stag and six hinds but he was not worth shooting. We watched them for some time before I spotted another spiker and three hinds. The 7 deer eventually laid down in the tussock. Even though we knew where they were looking through the spotting scope the were difficult to pick up as they sat tight all day in very

little cover. This is no doubt how they survive in a tree less landscape. A radio schedule with Josh and Kyle at Midday told us that they had seen a number of chamois and Kyle had shot one. From high up on their vantage point they could see a lot of country. They could see two deer in a gut around the corner from us but still no stags of any size. We met up with Josh and Kyle later that day. As they came down on to the valley floor of Dog Stream Brian guided them onto a couple of handy yearlings with the help of our Garmin radios. A couple of easy shots and the boys had their venison to take home. They managed to carry all the meat out to the car, a distance of some 14kms, no mean feat.



The northern boundary of our block was a couple of kms below the Severn Hut on the western side of the Severn river. The map indicated a large side creek, so we were off early the next morning to check it out. We bumped into a few hinds as we walk up beside the Severn River. The side stream looked good but between the four of us we saw nothing, and the deer sign was minimal. The headwaters looked more like chamois country. Up high one could see animal tracks crossing the gravel screes. Later that day as we were descending the ridge behind camp, I spotted an 8-point stag in the evening light about 300m from our camp site. He looked very black, no doubt using the big wallow hole we found earlier in the trip. He was the best stag to date but not a shooter. We eyed each other for a few minutes before he walked off into the gloom. That evening we decided that we had given the block a good going over so decided to pull the plug a day early. Good numbers of deer seen but no Stags worth shooting.

The next morning on the way back as we climbed out of Dog Stream onto the vast tussock flat area we stopped for a rest. As I was putting my gear back into my pack a noise up the hill caught my attention. 80m away two what looked to be Buck Chamois came running pass us out of nowhere. I grab my rifle which was tied to my pack and slipped my suppressor on at the same time yelling out chamois to other boys. I ran around the hill side expecting to hear a gunshot thinking the Chamois might head up hill after seeing us. Coming to a creek I quietly looked over spotting the front end of a Chamois sticking out from behind briar bush 80m away. As I laid down to shoot the buck Chamois looked straight at me. The chamois dropped on the spot. The second Chamois came out the long grass a full flight but only got 50m before it was down. Josh and Kyle arrived to give me a hand to find the chamios and remove their heads. The chamios biggest measured 9 ½ inches with 4-inch bases so a great unexpected trophy out of nowhere from the Molesworth. The second chamois measured 8 ½ inches with 4-inch bases. The 10km walk back to the ute seemed to be little easier with two trophies tied to the top of my pack.



All up we saw close to forty deer and 15 chamois but no big stag's worth shooting. We all had a great time. We experienced awesome weather and some amazing country. We will definitely be applying for ballot block in 2021.

Hot Barrels

Eric Hall

Hunting in New Zealand

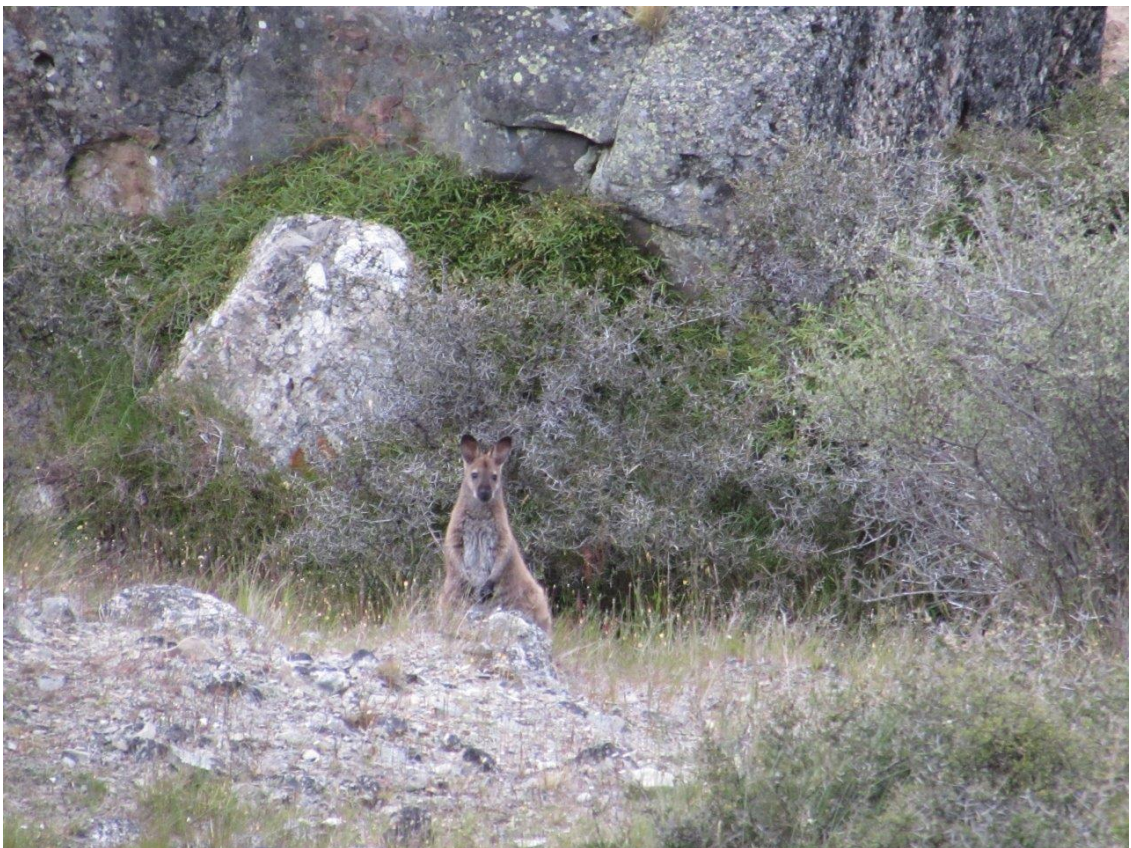
Steve moved to New Zealand from the USA and was wise enough to move to Nelson. A keen hunter in his home country he has taken up the opportunities available here. Certainly, some of the options here are very different! Deer aside, he has quickly become keen on chasing the bounding wallabies of South Canterbury.....with some of his pics and newfound wisdom below:



- 1) Wallabies love matagouri! And for a good reason. It is nasty stuff to get through if you are more than 30cm tall. If you can see them it is not a massive issue for culling, but if you want to recover the tasty beasts then something to consider.



2) Wallabies can get big! Not so big that you need to carry a bigger rifle (here a .223), but big enough to get the range wrong.



1) "If I don't move he won't see me" Which is usually the case.

For All Married Men



**OK, LAST NIGHT YOU DID THE DISHES ...
TODAY, YOU ARE FOLDING THE LAUNDRY.**

WHAT GUN AND HOW MUCH WAS IT?

Poison Operations

Molesworth Poison Operation 2021

Nelson Branch along with Marlborough Branch have had an update from OSPRI on the imminent poison operation and Greg and Bill recently travelled to Blenheim for a face to face meeting with OSPRI representatives.

This is the operation that was planned for last year but is now happening in May this year.

This aerial operation is a big one. From near Saxton Saddle in the north to include Bush Gully in the south and the Hydro road to the west and east to the Acheron River.

The operation will cover over 70, 000 hectares and be timed to avoid the roar. It will receive total coverage with deer repellent and two blocks (Saxton and Severn) will be trialled with different sowing rates in a further attempt to develop operational methods that minimise deer by kill.

Collared deer will be used to provide an indication of survivability and aerial surveys both before and after the operation will assist in estimating by kill.

Inevitably there will be deer deaths and hunters concerns have been consistently expressed to OSPRI and Molesworth management. These concerns are shared by all parties and OSPRI have been adamant that they do not want deer deaths and certainly not a repeat of the mortality of the last major operation.

The success or otherwise of the deer repellent will have a significant influence on the future use of deer repellent.

Nelson Lakes

John Wotherspoon has just confirmed that the contractors who conducted the Nelson Lakes 1080 operation in September 2020 have completed the post operation monitoring and the caution period has now been lifted and warning signage will be removed.

(This affects the Travers and Sabine valleys along with the Speargrass and Howard.
– all popular hunting areas.)

Fish & Game Report

NELSON MARLBOROUGH FISH & GAME REPORT



- **FACILITATED UPLAND GAME HUNTING:** A web page has been set up for the Tasman Pine Forests Ltd upland game hunting. On this site there is all the information you need to book a large hunting block. Visit fishandgame.org.nz/nelson
- **MALLARD DUCK COUNTS COMPLETED:** Annual mallard duck counts have been completed at 60 sites across the region. In Marlborough there was a significant reduction in the count of around 26%, and in Nelson/Tasman a decrease of around 15%.
- **TE HOIERE PROJECT:** Do you fish or hunt in the Pelorus or the Rai catchment? We want to hear your experiences of fishing or hunting around these rivers and valleys, including tributaries. We also want to hear about any changes you've noticed and your ideas for making these areas even better in the future. Fish and Game are a key and active participant in Te Hoiere Pelorus Project. Te Hoiere Pelorus Project is a catchment restoration project, aiming to look after the whole catchment from the mountains to the sea.

A key step involves the community coming together, and sharing their ideas for an Integrated Catchment Enhancement Plan (ICEP) for Te Hoiere Pelorus. The ICEP identifies the community's aspirations and prioritises actions towards achieving these aspirations. To share your ideas, please visit: <https://arcg.is/18qS4X>



Red Deer Lodge

Information on costs and bookings of the Red Deer Lodge at Lake Rotoiti

Contact for Accom: info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Use the website at www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Remember to advise you are a Nelson member.

2021 Committee

President: Greg Couper terminatorproducts@xtra.co.nz

Vice President: Richard Wells richardw@nzdanelson.co.nz

Secretary: Warren Plum plumstone@xtra.co.nz

Treasurer: Aaron Shields aarons@nzdanelson.co.nz

Members: Bill O'Leary, Graeme Smith, Graeme Ching, Mike DeGray, Neill Cliffe, John Noakes, Mike Grant, David Haynes, Carina Jackson, Mark MacDonald.

Range Committee:

Convener: Graeme Ching, graeme-doreen@xtra.co.nz

Members: Graeme Smith, Graeme Ching, Bill O'Leary

Hazard or Incident Reporting: website email (nelson.nzda@gmail.com) or contact member of Range Committee

Access, Rules and Safety: see website <https://www.nzdanelson.co.nz/range.html> and check your emails for updates or changes to range opening times.

Branch Hunts and Activities:

Convener: Mike DeGray miked@nzdanelson.co.nz

Hunts Courses:

Website: <https://www.nzdanelson.co.nz/hunts.html>

Convener: Bill O'Leary b.f.oleary@xtra.co.nz

Members: Lawson Davey, Alistair Ching

New members:

email nelsonnzda@gmail.com or go to webpage <https://www.nzdanelson.co.nz/index.html>

The Mountain Echo

Bill O'Leary and Richard Wells