



MOUNTAIN ECHO

Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA June 2020



No country for old men

This magnificent animal (estimate 15 -16 inch) parked up on a razor ridge with sheer drops either side and unrecoverable if taken by a very long shot.

Editorial

Unlocked and loving it.

The past several weeks has been an opportunity to get out and release some of that pent-up frustration at missing out on the roar and the traditional duck opening at the beginning of May.

While I appreciate that for many hunters and families the lock down of schools, businesses and general life will have resulted in major stress and financial loss I can only celebrate the sense of release that I have enjoyed and intend to continue enjoying.

In the past two weeks I have hunted tahr at Tekapo and ducks in Nelson. I have spent nights in a mountain hut with other hunters and enjoyed time

Contents Overview

Editorial

Tahr Hunting
Photos

Tahr being
Collared

No Second
Buyback

Revenge is
Sweet

Fish & Game
Report

Red Deer
Lodge
Information

Committee
Members

**Next Club
Night**

To Be Advised

with friends and grandkids. I am committed to valuing the good things in life while accepting that bad times and experiences are part and parcel of life. So with Level 3 behind us, hopefully forever, it is back to business as far as NZDA and our Nelson branch is concerned.

By the time this newsletter goes to print Packers Creek Range will have opened over Queen's Birthday Weekend with the South Island Benchrest Championships. The following Saturday 6 June the range will be back in business but with requirements to sign in for Covid tracking. These requirements will be mandatory for persons using the range.

The branch AGM will be advertised for the end of June with the date and venue to be advised shortly. The Fish and Game rooms may not be suitable if the current restrictions on social distancing are still in place.

Membership issues are being worked on by Greg and Richard and with a special thanks to Carina it was reported to the committee that progress is being made in identifying and contacting members who have been missed in the renewal process for the current year.

Branch hunts are looking promising as Mike and Aaron have progressed several hunting opportunities close to Nelson City.

Well that is all from me. I have at least one more ZOOM meeting to get through before things get properly back to normal, but the world looks so much better than it did a month ago.

I hope it is the same for each of you.

Bill O'Leary

Olivia O'Leary Tahr



This was Olivia's second tahr and a genuine hard-earned trophy with a big climb and a long wait for the animal to stand up and present the shot.



Tahr Being Fitted with Collars

**NZ Game Animal Council
Media Statement
21 May 2020**



Perth Valley tahr trial a success

Zero Invasive Predators (ZIP) and the Game Animal Council have released findings from a research programme to assess tahr survivorship through the Perth River predator removal operation.

Before the operation began, which included the use of aerial 1080 using a modified application technique, Game Animal Council personnel fitted 21 tahr with radio transmitter collars. Results showed that tahr survival was extremely high, in fact none of the monitored tahr died as a result of the operation.



“Tahr in the Southern Alps are a highly-valued game animal species and a world-renowned hunting resource, which is why the Game Animal Council was pleased to work with ZIP and contribute to this project,” says Game Animal Council General Manager Tim Gale.

“We are excited about this research; it is vitally important that we fully understand the impact of predator control operations on game animal species.”

“Hunters have questioned the effect of 1080 on tahr, both for the impacts on their hunting resource and because of potential kea by-kill. This study provides scientific evidence of high tahr survivorship, allaying those concerns.”

ZIP Innovation Director Phil Bell says, “ZIP really appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with the hunting community, and in particular with the Game Animal Council, on this project. The results speak for themselves. Hunters can now feel confident that tahr are not at risk from 1080.”

The full report, authored by Geoff Kerr, Professor of Environmental Management at Lincoln University and former Game Animal Councillor, is available [here](#).

This project also benefitted from advice and feedback from the New Zealand chapter of Safari Club International, the New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association, the New Zealand Professional Hunting Guides Association and Department of Conservation.

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No Second Buy-Back

Kia ora tātou,

Recently we've had inquires relating to rumours about a second buy-back. New Zealand Police prepared a response to the inquirer and we thought it would be helpful to send our reply to FCAF members, as you may also be receiving similar questions. Our response was as follows:

- We're hearing rumours about a second buy-back round on prohibited firearms by NZ Police._

There is no second round of buyback on firearms and items prohibited in the Arms Act as amended by the Arms (Prohibited firearms, magazines and parts) Amendment Bill which took effect on 12 April 2019.

Any buyback has to be approved and funded by the Government it is not an initiative that New Zealand Police can instigate.

- Could you confirm what type of rifles/shotguns is being considered in the second round?_

There is no second round for the buyback of already prohibited firearms.

You may recall that the Finance and Expenditure committee considered a Supplementary Order Paper (SOP) to the Arms Legislation Bill. They invited submissions on this SOP and some of you submitted on this.

In the Committee's report back to Parliament, which can be reached here:

https://www.parliament.nz/en/pb/bills-and-laws/bills-proposed-laws/document/BILL_91272/arms-legislation-bill

[1], a few changes were recommended. These included a recommendation to prohibit certain pump action centrefire rifles with large capacity magazines. They also recommended clarifying that semi-automatic pistols used in pistol clubs on pistol ranges could continue to be possessed as non-prohibited firearms whereas those MSSAs that fell within the definition of pistol by virtue of their length should be prohibited.

These clarifications can be found under section 2A of the Arms Legislation Bill (<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/bill/government/2019/0177/latest/LMS300081.html> [2]).

The Committee also recommended to the Government that NEWLY prohibited firearms should be supported by a future buyback.

The Schedule to the Arms Legislation Bill as reported back makes provision for future buybacks if a Government wishes to do this for any NEWLY prohibited firearms.

- And when do you expect this to occur?_

Any additions to the types of firearms prohibited will depend on the passage of the Arms Legislation Bill which currently awaits the Committee of the Whole stage and third reading in Parliament.

We hope that all FCAF members are staying safe and keeping well during the shift to Alert Level 2.

Ngā mihi,

JACK NOLAN

POLICY ADVISOR, NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY

Revenge is Sweet

By Philip Bianchi

“This story is not about hunting but an incident on a range with memory blurred somewhat after 40 years but recounted exactly as it happened.”

I was granted my first firearms certificate in 1976 and joined the Tyne Valley Gun Club. The club hired the Ponteland Rifle ranges for rifle shooting and had its own range for pistol shooting on private land. The pistol range was in the Tyne Valley (hence the name of the club) and on land that had been a working colliery. It had a pit heap about 80 foot high (about 25 metres) which formed a safe backstop. In front of the pit heap, the club had built a long mound of soft and fine power station ash as a bullet catcher and a line of old railway sleepers in front of that which had brackets to hold target sticks. The range was 25 yards (about 23 metres) and was the standard distance for Bisley and other formal target shooting with pistols.

There was a row of 20 booths at the firing line. As there was a large number of black powder revolver shooters that used the range, the booths had side walls between the shooting points to prevent the grease from the front of the revolver chambers splattering the shooters to either side. This meant that the range officer could not look down the firing line but had to walk along the line and check each booth individually to make sure that no one was handling guns and the weapons were safe.

Walter Harrigan owned the club and Alan Robson was the range officer. Walter charged a low annual fee, but the range fee was £1 each visit to pay for targets, maintenance etc. The range opened on Sundays between 9 AM and mid-day. Usually people got there for 9 AM but you could turn up and leave any time you wanted between those times.

One Sunday a few years after I joined the club I went for my usual shoot. I had got there for 9 AM and had shot and wanted to check and patch the target. I had exited the shooting booth and was waiting for everyone still shooting to finish and for Alan Robson to shout “Cease fire”, check the booths and announce “Clear to patch” when it was safe to do so. So far, so standard and except for the commands and checks that were used and needed on that particular range, normal for any range in the world.

It must have been about 11 AM or slightly later when a car drove into the car parking area behind the shooting booths at high speed. A man jumped out, ripped open the boot and picked up a cardboard box. He ran towards the firing line shouting “Cease fire”. Everyone still shooting thought that something had happened so naturally cleared their weapons, exited the booths and stood around to see what had happened and were waiting for instructions or the command to go forward and patch the targets.

The man ran down the range and reached into the cardboard box, lined up twelve garden gnomes on the railway sleepers, ran back to the firing point, pulled out a Colt Python (blued with a six inch barrel in .357 magnum – not my preference, I preferred my S&W Model 19 with a 4 inch barrel) and proceeded to shoot the gnomes, reloading

from a speed loader half way through. I will say that he was a good shot. Twelve shots, twelve factory .357 magnums and twelve garden gnomes bit the dust or, more accurately were blown to dust and fragments and the fragments bit the dust and mud.

I had my binoculars around my neck so I looked at the gnomes or what was left of them. Some were shot off at the knees, some had only the shoes and the mound that formed the base left. I noticed that someone had taken the trouble and care to paint the gnomes and what was left of the moulded shoe buckles had been carefully and neatly painted gold or silver. Against the glossy black boots, they looked as smart as a rat with a gold tooth, to use an expression used on Tyneside. The rest of what was left of the gnomes that I could see had been equally carefully painted in bright colours and the remains of the blue, red, yellow and green trousers and black boots made a forlorn sight. One of the gnomes' heads had fallen in front of the railway sleepers and lay on its side, facing the firing point, still cheerfully smiling, his snow white beard and his bright red hat intact and still on his head. It was a sad and pitiful sight.

The man pocketed the revolver, shouted "That will teach the f***ing bitch to f*** off to her f***ing mother and f***ing leave me". He marched up to Walter, threw the range fee at him with a "There is your f***ing range fee" and returned to his car.

There was a stunned silence and he turned before climbing into the car. He waved his arm at everyone. "And you f***ing f***ers can f*** off as well". The car was reversed at high speed, tore off in a shower of gravel and we heard it go up the dirt access track at some speed.

No one moved, no one said anything. We had all witnessed his shooting skills and no one was particularly inclined to make an issue of it. Besides, all the guns and magazines were unloaded and we were all trying to come to terms with what we had seen.

There was a few moments of silence and Alan Robson cleared his throat. "Clear to patch" was his only comment. Indeed, what else was there to say?

Fish & Game Update

- Fish & Game (both nationally and regionally) had a busy few months leading up to the gamebird season. Mostly this was due to the disruption that covid caused to the originally gazetted season. A satisfactory outcome was achieved, and the season commenced three weeks later (23 May). Feedback from the vast majority of hunters was positive, with many delighted that a season was to take place.
- All Fish & Game staff went out ranging on the original Opening Day (2nd May), and were pleased that zero shots were heard across the region. Staff from all 12 Fish & Game regions were out on the same day, and no waterfowl hunting was detected in any region, though there were cases of hunters shooting pigeons/geese.
- Opening Day was relatively quiet in the Tasman area, with clear skies and calm conditions. Due to covid, we did not utilise honorary rangers however our compliance team caught up with a good number of hunters, with zero offences detected – a great outcome.



- Fish & Game carried out a release of sixty 8-20 pound rainbow and brown trout into Lake Argyle. This caused quite a stir and resulted in the Lake receiving significant attention from anglers, with some of the monsters caught in subsequent days.
- We also released a tanker load of trout into the Rai River. This fishery was made a winter fishery last season, and this has been really well utilised by anglers.
- Last year the Fish & Game Council decided to extend the Branch/Leatham season, allowing fishing to take place until the end of May. This was due to the fact this fishery is now dominated by rainbow trout and spawning takes places later than brown trout. Again, this has been extremely well received by anglers and has seen considerable effort during May, which is very pleasing to see.
- A number of mallards have been banded in the Waimea area. These birds have been banded as a hunter interest project to provide information on the habits of mallards from this area. If you harvest any of these birds, please get in touch with us. At least one banded bird was harvested on Opening Day.

Red Deer Lodge

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

Contact the Calders: info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Use the website at www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz

Saying you are a member

2020 Committee

Committee:

President: Greg Couper gregc@nzdanelson.co.nz

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

Secretary: Warren Plum warrenp@nzdanelson.co.nz

Treasurer: Aaron Shields

Members: Bill O'Leary, Graeme Smith, Graeme Ching, Mike DeGray, Neill Cliffe, John Noakes, Mike Grant, David Haynes, Immo Neumann

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, 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