



# MOUNTAIN ECHO

Newsletter of Nelson Branch NZDA November 2020



Neill Cliffe (Range Officer) scores targets under the watchful gaze of competitors and dads.

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# Editorial

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“and a new hand at the helm”.

The result of the election was no surprise. Labour were sure to do well on the back of the “Jacinda affect” and the demise of New Zealand First was predictable once shooters votes moved to Act.

What was an outcome welcomed by many was the size of the Labour vote that left a strong Green result with reduced political muscle and resulted in the removal of Eugenie Sage.

The change of Minister of Conservation will bring a change of policy in a number of areas. Although the incoming minister will be bound by existing legislation and guided by her departmental advisors there is every reason to believe that the passion for culling game herds and restricting netting of flounder and possibly whitebait will not be so evident.

What is also possible is that the appointment of a minister with a background of consultancy in the agricultural/horticultural sector will result in a less contentious relationship between conservation and agriculture. This may have an effect on environmental stakeholders such as Forest and Bird and Fish and Game.

Game Animal Council, NZDA and Fish and Game will be seeking to establish a relationship with the new minister, and it will be very interesting to see how useful Nicole McKee is in her position as Act’s conservation spokesperson.

The success of Labour does mean that there are no changes foreseen in the firearms area.

NZDA is involved in the police convened working group to provide a blueprint for the regulations that will govern how firearm ranges will operate. One very important part of this work is the requirement for all range activity to be conducted by qualified range officers. Just what is meant by “qualified” raises a lot of questions that will need to be answered in the next couple of years. In the meantime, NZDA is getting its house in order with range construction standards and range officer training so that the implementation of imposed standards will not be too traumatic.

On a brighter note Nelson branch recently ran a Swazi sponsored shoot for junior members and we have the Ken Horner Memorial Shoot coming up on Sunday 6 December.

Also, in the near future is a helicopter safety training opportunity. This will be advertised through Facebook and on the branch website. Members intending to participate in the DOC assisted hunting opportunities where helicopters are used must be safe around the machines and this course is recommended.

One last note – The branch club night had Alex Monaghan as the guest speaker. As a professional hunting guide his expertise is in judging trophy potential “on the hoof”.

His presentation was invaluable for those hunters who actively chase big trophies and for those of us who dream of doing so. The branch committee was proud to have welcomed Alex and looks forward to other guest speakers on topics important to hunters.

Bill O'Leary

# Game Animal Council welcomes new Minister of Conservation

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## Media Statement

2 November 2020

Game Animal Council Chair Grant Dodson has congratulated Kiri Allan on becoming the new Minister of Conservation.

“As the statutory organisation responsible for large game animals and hunting we are looking forward to working with Incoming Minister Allan and making progress on ensuring sound game animal management practices fit alongside the conservation of our indigenous species,” says Dodson.

“The recent inclusion of valued introduced species such as deer, chamois, tahr and wild pigs in *Te Mana o Te Taiao - Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020* provides a blueprint for a way forward that recognises both the vast benefits and challenges of these species in New Zealand.”

“The Game Animal Council looks forward to continuing our work with DOC in developing a deer management strategy that contributes to good conservation outcomes as well as better quality deer herds. We are also keen to make progress on proposed herds of special interest, which can assist with better management of specific game animal herds for both hunting and conservation purposes.”

“The conservation portfolio is also about facilitating New Zealanders access to the important recreational, commercial and food gathering opportunities that exist on our public lands. We look forward to supporting Minister Allan in making sure that Kiwi’s right to access and harvest is preserved.”

“The Game Animal Council also wishes to acknowledge the contribution of the outgoing Minister of Conservation, Eugenie Sage,” says Dodson.

The Game Animal Council intends to send a briefing to the incoming minister in the coming days.

### Contact:

Grant Dodson, Chair

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

# Ken Horner Memorial Shoot

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## December 6

10am

### Ken Horner Memorial Shoot at Murchison Range

Hunting rifles only. Slings permitted

\$5.00 range fee. \$2.00 "Guess your score".

- 2 sighters with a rest
- 5 shots prone @ 200 meters, metric targets
- 5 shots prone @ 200 meters, deer targets
- 5 shots sitting @ 200 meters, deer targets
- 5 shots standing @ 100 meters, metric targets

**Organiser** Maurice Horner

Nelson based members please note:

- Contact Bill O'Leary if interested in more info on the above shoot
- Packers Creek Range is not affected.

# Junior Shoot Sponsored by SWAZI

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The annual SWAZI shoot for junior shooters was held on Sunday 1 November on one of the few fine days recently.

Range Officers Graeme Ching and Neill Cliffe provided a variety of targets for 50m rimfire and 100m centrefire shooting. All the dads were invited to assist in coaching and all took a close interest in the scoring.

Of interest was that the majority of shooters used bipods and in centrefire the 6.5 Creedmoor showed a move away from traditional cartridges. As a result, some of the shooting was of very high quality with incredibly small groups.

It may be worth considering requiring next year's competitors to discard the bipods and use sandbags or daypacks for support.

Top scores were shot by	Clay Parkin	1st
	Brody Parkin	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Ben McLeod	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Congratulations to all who participated and thanks to SWAZI for sponsoring the event as part of the company's support for NZDA Junior Shooting



From left to right, Graeme Ching (Range Officer), Ben McLeod, Brody Parkin, Clay Parkin

# Member Survey Spring 2020

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Many thanks to all our members who completed our member survey recently. It's been ten years since we last did this, so well overdue and we were pleased with the high response rate of **98 out of 214 members emailed (46%)**.

The survey results inform your Committee on where we focus our future efforts. We were pleased to learn that the majority of respondents were happy with how your club is run. Key take-home messages for the Committee are:

1. Our advocacy role is important.
2. Range access is an issue.
3. Organised hunts are important.
4. Further training, education and how-to opportunities requested.
5. More attention needs to be paid to new members.
6. Email & newsletter are the preferred communications means.

Rest assured our advocacy effort is robust and ongoing. In the last two years we have consulted, engaged and submitted on;

- 2018 WARO permits.
- Cobb valley aerial 1080 drop.
- Nelson Lakes aerial 1080 drop.
- Hunter access to Nelson City Council Maitai and Roding reserves.
- OSPRI aerial 1080 operations.
- Arms Act amendments.
- Access opportunities for tenure review.

Range access has been an ongoing and often frustrating issue for members and the Committee equally for a number of years and all we can do is continue to lobby the land access managers as we do now.

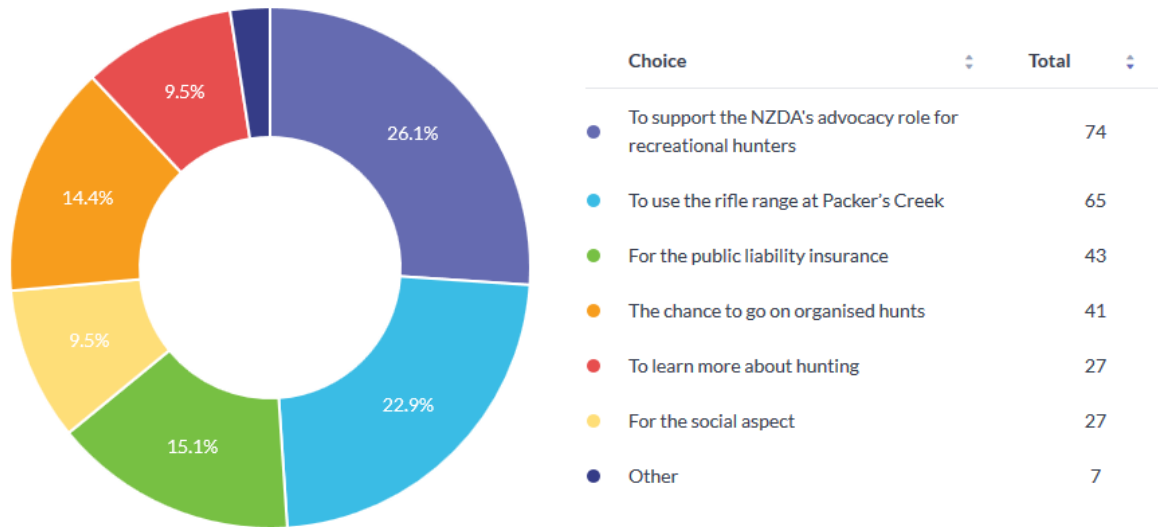
We have been running organised hunts on private land in the Maungatapu and Wairoa valleys since mid-2020 and have emailed upcoming ones in Richmond Forest Park recently. Curiously, response to the managed hunts has been quite poor so, given these activities featured highly in our survey response, we can only assume we need to market and advertise them better, watch this space.

We will continue to organise interesting talks and "how to's" at our monthly club nights - our president Greg, gave an excellent piece on re-loading tips at the October meeting for example.

Thank you to our new members suggesting we up our game to welcome and encourage their involvement further, you are vitally important members and we are planning some events aimed to engage with you more.

Here are the results of the survey:

## Q1 Why did you join the Nelson Branch NZDA?



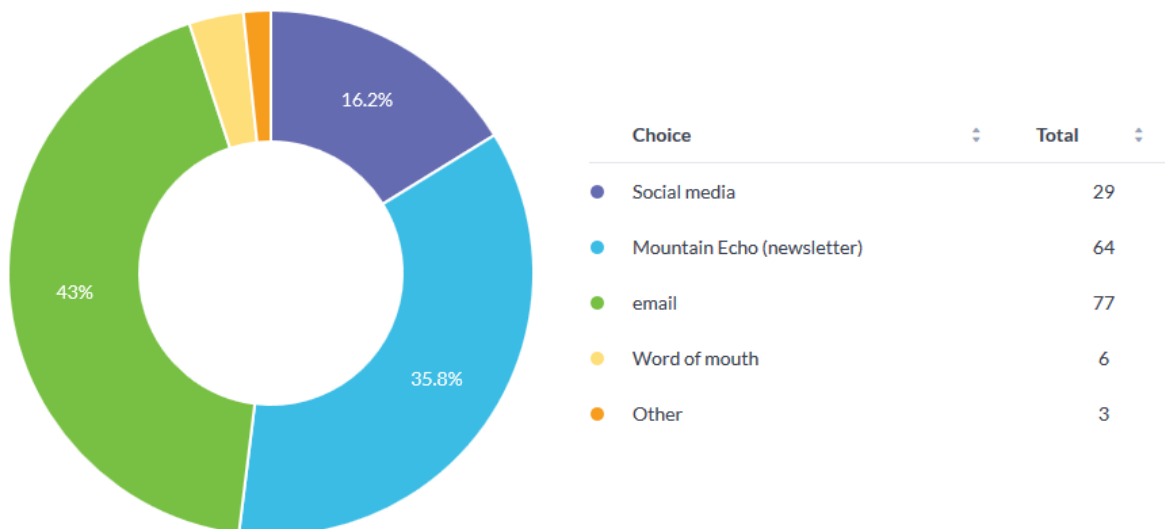
## Q2: What else would you like the Nelson Branch NZDA offer you?

Answer	No.	Example of Responses
Happy how it is	27	
Organised Hunts & where to hunt info	15	greater liaison with Council, DOC and landowners reopportunities, fly-ins to NPs for culling
Better range access	12	all year round, mid-week, 1km range, more and greater access flexibility
Stronger advocacy for gun laws, 1080	7	NZDA part of a national advocacy group with SSANZ, COLFO, etc.
Training & teaching	5	reloading, map reading, GPS, lost in bush, rifle accuracy, what to pack
Fun days/BBQ/Social events	4	
More child focussed activities	2	bringing in the next generation, reach out to schools
Make new members more welcome	2	Feel like a spare prick at a wedding, being ignored at monthly meetings
Not sure	1	
More meetings	1	
info on pesticide ops and ballot block reminders	1	
Sharing of branch resources	1	firing ranges
Buddy system for new hunters	1	
start sub branch at St Arnaud	1	
club members only hunting block	1	balloted including hut
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>81</b>	

### Q3: What would increase your involvement in the NZDA Nelson Branch?

Answer	No.	Example of Responses
Access to private hunting	1	
More personal time	17	
OK as it is	17	
Younger members	1	
Organised hunts	11	run a ballot for Molesworth
More get together and events	3	open day for non-meeting attendees
Not sure	7	new member
Calendar of events	7	training, navigation, comms about upcoming events, family shoots
Better access to range	2	
Friends & partners joining	4	
New member introduction	1	introductions at club nighths, better liaison
Friendlier club atmosphere	1	currently like a schoolroom.
Free beer and whisky	1	
Already involved a lot	4	
Family & children shooting events	2	
Too old	3	
Live too far away	3	
Make it easier to get involved	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>	

### Q4: What is your preferred means of following club activities?





# Karearea has hunters backing for Bird of the Year

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## Media Statement

2 November 2020

New Zealand's hunters have overwhelmingly decided to back the kārearea/NZ falcon in this year's Bird of the Year competition following a poll run by the Game Animal Council (GAC), the NZ Deerstalkers Association (NZDA) and Hunters for Conservation.

Given a choice between the kārearea, which was last year's hunters choice and another community favourite, the whio, 62% of hunters chose the kārearea to back in the Bird of the Year.

"Personally, I am a big fan of the whio," says NZDA's Gwyn Thurlow. "However, the hunting community has spoken and to be honest it won't be too difficult to vote for the kārearea in the Bird of the Year as it is New Zealand's original hunter and it is pretty cool seeing one out hunting."

"Many people probably won't recall but the kārearea won Bird of the Year back in 2012, and I don't think there has ever been a repeat winner, so if hunters could push it over the top it would be a wee bit of history."

"Regardless of which bird wins, Bird of the Year is a great opportunity to inspire and educate New Zealanders on the importance of preserving our native species and just how precious they are," says the GAC's Tim Gale. "It's also a bit of fun after what has been a pretty trying last six months or so."

"The fact is that hunters typically spend far more time in the conservation estate than most people and are passionate about the preservation of our indigenous species. We often just don't do a good job of talking about it."

Jason Van Beers of Hunters for Conservation concedes that entrenched perceptions have contributed to an imagined divide between hunters and conservationists

"There may always be aspects of conservation policy that hunting organisations do not agree with Forest & Bird on and vice versa, and it is really easy to get hung up on those. However, we have far more in common than is frequently acknowledged as can be evidenced by the thousands of volunteer hours hunters undertake as part of conservation projects every year."

As well as giving it their vote, hunters are encouraged to report sightings of kārearea to either the Wingspan National Bird of Prey Centre ([www.wingspan.co.nz](http://www.wingspan.co.nz)) or at [www.nzfalcon.org.nz](http://www.nzfalcon.org.nz).

Forest & Bird's Bird of the Year competition runs until 15 November and people can vote at [www.birdoftheyear.org.nz](http://www.birdoftheyear.org.nz).

**Contacts:**

Tim Gale, General Manager, Game Animal Council

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[tim.gale@nzqac.org.nz](mailto:tim.gale@nzqac.org.nz)

Gwyn Thurlow, Chief Executive, NZDA

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Jason Van Beers, Spokesperson, Hunters for Conservation

Phone: 0273629136

[huntersforconservation@mail.com](mailto:huntersforconservation@mail.com)

# Nelson Lakes Tiakina Nga Manu 1080

## Operations Results

provided by the team at DOC Rotoiti Nelson Lakes

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Kia ora koutou

We are happy to provide an update on the results so far of the Nelson Lakes Tiakina Ngā Manu aerial 1080 predator control operation.

This was a crucial piece of work for the health of the native animals and plants in Nelson Lakes National Park. The operation was timed for winter 2020 to reduce the high mustelid (stoat) populations that resulted from the 2019 beech mast. It was important that the toxin was delivered before mustelids “prey-switched” to native species as their main rodent food source declined with winter. Local extinctions are a real possibility in this scenario even for larger birds. We were especially concerned about roroa (great spotted kiwi), kea, and kaka. For background information on beech masts and how they drive predator plagues:

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/our-work/tiakina-nga-manu/predator-plague-cycle/>

The Nelson Lakes Tiakina Ngā Manu aerial predator control operation completed delivery of 1080 bait pellets across 31,549 hectares on 8 September, after a non-toxic prefeed bait drop on 2 and 3 September. The weather at this time of year is very challenging plus there were Covid delays, but our contracted team Vector Free Marlborough Ltd, managed to choose perfect weather windows and the work went very smoothly.

During October the DOC team ran an extra monitor on the long-term footprint tracking index monitoring network to gauge the success of the operation on rodent (rats and mice) and mustelid (stoats and weasels) populations at Rotoiti and Rotoroa. On all the lines within the 1080 application area, rodent and mustelid tracking was 0% while the lines outside the 1080 application area returned rodent and mustelid tracking at various rates including extremely high tracking of mustelids at Rotoroa where there is also no mustelid trapping network. At Rotoiti where ongoing mustelid trapping over a limited area normally keeps mustelids at levels undetectable by the footprint tracking method, there is still a 3% tracking rate outside the 1080 treatment area. We have been very aware that the predator levels reached after a beech mast are such that our trapping work struggles to keep mustelids at the very low levels needed for successful breeding by kiwi and kea.

Monitoring of rodent and mustelids will continue over summer and will include monitoring lines in the Travers and Sabine valleys. This work will give us picture of the predator levels

that is more representative of the operational area, as well as present an ongoing picture of how long the suppression of predators is lasting.

One of the other target pests controlled by the 1080 work is feral cats. Camera monitoring before the operation at Lakehead (Rotorua) returned high numbers of cats at 5.36 cats per 100 camera hours. After the 1080 operation cat numbers had dropped substantially to 0.63 per 100 camera hours. The Friends of Rotorua continue to work with the DOC team to prevent reinvasion of feral cats by trapping.

Monitoring of kea, kiwi, all forest birds and long-tailed bats will continue over the coming summer months and will allow us to gauge the health of these populations and the benefits of the work. The kea monitored over the 1080 operation appear unaffected by the toxin and nesting is underway. Over summer the DOC team plans to work with the Kea Conservation Trust to survey for kea in the Travers and Sabine valleys.

The DOC team at Rotorua Nelson Lakes thanks you for your support of this work that is so important to native animal populations in the Nelson Lakes National Park. Some recreation activities have been temporarily curtailed, including hunting because of the caution period with this toxin, and we appreciate the patience of people affected by this. We also really appreciate the efforts that our neighbours are going to in keeping their dogs safe, and the extra work that was involved with moving stock.

Carcass monitoring is underway and will be used to inform the endpoint of the caution period for hunting. Warning signs remain in place until the caution period is over. Please check in with the pesticide summary and maps for updates. <https://www.doc.govt.nz/nature/pests-and-threats/pesticide-summaries/>

As always, please be in touch if you have any questions or need more information.

*As an example of our more exciting monitoring work, these photos were captured June – August 2020 outside 2 known kea nesting holes within the 1080 application area; they illustrate the obvious danger to the birds from stoats and cats. Photo monitoring in September and October (after the 1080 application) has returned no photos of stoats, cats or possums, and nesting activity is underway.*



# Coxy's Corner

## Notes for Hunters from Motueka DOC Office

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Hi Nelson NZDA members

I hope everyone has been keeping well and have been out there doing it. I was luckily enough to get into the hills on the few fine days we have had during the last month.

I spent a few days hunting in the Leslie, Karamea, and Cobb valleys. Goat numbers along the river edges in the Karamea and Leslie valleys were higher than expected considering the lack of growth and cooler weather. I averaged 5 goats per 8 hours hunted. I also saw 2 red deer stags and another deer sex unknown.

The stags had dropped their antlers. The highest density of deer sign observed was in the Leslie valley.

The Cobb valley was less productive with about 1 goat per 8 hours hunted. I only encountered a red hind well up above the valley floor.

Contractors with dogs will be hunting in the Cobb, Karamea , Leslie, Wangapeka, Riwaka valleys and Mt Arthur Tableland targeting goats during Dec this year.

If any members are thinking of hunting these areas during Dec contact the Motueka DOC Office 03 5281810 or email myself [icox@doc.govt.nz](mailto:icox@doc.govt.nz) for more information.

Cheers Coxy!



Karamea River Oct 1<sup>st</sup> 2020

Dear Coxy is this Goat bailing your dog. Signed Editor

# Fish & Game Report

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## NELSON MARLBOROUGH FISH & GAME REPORT



**RIUWAKA RIVER HABITAT RESTORATION:** Staff were on the lower Riuwaka recently planting shrub willow at key points along the lower Riuwaka to try and provide better habitat for trout as well as native species. Historically, crack willow removal and subsequent rock armoring within this reach caused a significant reduction in trout habitat and indeed the trout population in this river. Shrub willow has recently been planted at the water line at strategic points and will grow to provide security and structure which trout require. These new plantings will provide additional habitat alongside weeping willows (see picture below) and flaxes which Fish & Game planted 4 years ago, which are now taking shape and beginning to provide better habitat for both trout and native fish species.

**GAME COMMITTEE MEETING COMING UP:** The Nelson Marlborough Game Committee is meeting later this month to discuss next years' game regulations. This is the chance for hunters to have their say on setting the regulations. Last year, for example, an extended swan season was introduced and the limit for pukeko was increased for Tasman/Golden Bay. If you want to raise anything with the Game Committee, please do do in writing by emailing [nelsonmarlborough@fishandgame.org.nz](mailto:nelsonmarlborough@fishandgame.org.nz)

**DRIFT DIVE SEASON UNDERWAY:** The drift dive season has commenced with the completion of the Lee, Kaituna and Travers Rivers. We aim to dive at least 20 rivers each year which provides a snapshot of the trout population at the time.

*Trout habitat created through weeping willows*



*Hunters made the most of the extended swan season in August*



## Red Deer Lodge

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

Contact the Calders: [info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz](mailto:info@starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz)  
Use the website at [www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz](http://www.starnaudholidaycottages.co.nz)

Saying you are a member

# 2020 Committee

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## **Committee:**

**President:** Greg Couper [terminatorproducts@xtra.co.nz](mailto:terminatorproducts@xtra.co.nz)

**Vice President:** Richard Wells [richardw@nzdanelson.co.nz](mailto:richardw@nzdanelson.co.nz)

**Secretary:** Warren Plum [plumstone@xtra.co.nz](mailto:plumstone@xtra.co.nz)

**Treasurer:** Aaron Shields [aarons@nzdanelson.co.nz](mailto:aarons@nzdanelson.co.nz)

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

## **Range Committee:**

**Convener:** Graeme Ching, [graeme-doreen@xtra.co.nz](mailto:graeme-doreen@xtra.co.nz)

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

**Hazard or Incident Reporting:** website email ([nelson.nzda@gmail.com](mailto: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:**

**Convenor:** Mike DeGray [miked@nzdanelson.co.nz](mailto:miked@nzdanelson.co.nz)

## **Hunts Courses:**

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

**Convenor:** Bill O'Leary [b.f.oleary@xtra.co.nz](mailto:b.f.oleary@xtra.co.nz)

**Members:** Lawson Davey, Alistair Ching

## **New members:**

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

## **The Mountain Echo**

Bill O'Leary and Richard Wells