



Southland

**NZDA**

New Zealand Deerstalkers Association

**The**

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**Southern Hunter**

**DECEMBER 2025**



## **Club Night**

**No club night December.**

## **President's Report**



Hi all The Xmas period is creeping up on is fast .

She's a hectic time of year for most which makes taking time to unwind in the hills or the

bush even more important and enjoyable. As I'm writing this were gearing up for the

Wyndham A&P Show Kids Hunting and Fishing competition ,Its a great even an even better excuse to dust off the 22 and spotlight and get the kids out learning all about pest management and introduce them to firearms safety. Massive thanks to all the Sponsors this year and all the Volunteers that make it all happen . Were got a massive prize pool again and all the kids will go away with something thanks to Backcountry cuisine & Farmsource.

We don't have a meeting this month .February is our next catch up so all the best I hope Santa treats you well stay safe and we'll catch you in the New year.

Cheers Shaun Mckelvie

Southland NZDA President

## Editorial

The past month has brought a few important shifts for hunters across NZ. The big news is the release of the first Herds of Special Interest (HOSI) management plans for public consultation. These proposals cover Fiordland wapiti and the central North Island sika herds, and mark a move toward a more balanced, partnership-based approach to managing game animals. Hunters were encouraged to read the draft plans and have their say before consultation

closed on 8 December, Thank you Doug Gordon for writing a submission on behalf of the branch.

Changes are coming to Blue Mountains ballots. While the November ballot used the old system, DOC will introduce a new online booking and permit process for 2026. Keep an eye out for updates so you don't miss access windows.

Across the South Island, reports of rising deer impacts on native bush and farmland highlight why responsible hunting remains essential. Hunters continue to serve an important conservation role, especially where animal numbers are high.

Finally, a recent coroners report of a fatal accident is a sobering reminder that safety must always come first. Steep terrain and dense bush etc can turn a slip into tragedy — please stay vigilant, prepared, and cautious.

Wishing everyone a safe and happy Christmas and New Year period!



**On the snowline**

With Doug Gordon

By the time you read this the submissions on the Herds of Special Interest will have about closed (Midnight 8<sup>th</sup> Dec). How many of you took the time to submit that you supported these moves? How many deleted the messages on this, and kept on going doing? How many assumed as it is a government proposal it will happen.

How many of you took the time to read the following message from National Office on Thursday night? This should have awoken you, did it. We need to constantly push our case.

### **Advocacy Alert:**

#### MPI's New Deer & Pig Programme Announced

(For those who have not read this message from National office check your e-mails)

The Ministry of Primary industries has launched a programme to control deer on farm and forestry land (and perhaps Doc land as they are involved).

What is alarming is that from what I have been told the Minister of Hunting & Fishing was not consulted, nor it appears the Game Animal Council. Of course, NZDA was not involved. But others appear to have been missed no mention of Iwi and Hapu being involved. (A lot of Māori hunt and own land containing game). Was the Minister of the New Zealand Food Safety Authority informed, Were the Feral Game processing industry consulted. Forrest and Bird were, why? There is talk of the use of the poison Brodifacoum, for which the caution period is 3 years! This stuff is dangerous one only has to look at the problems it caused in Malbrough when used there on possums at the turn of the century. Have we got adequate controls over such poisons if used in large amounts on and near farmland. I can find no mention of buffer zones around poison areas for stock, only for feral game.

The near last thing New Zealand needs is poison residue turning up in Milk or Meat products. (The Last thing is passing is Foot & Mouth believe me).

I have received a couple of Hyperlinks on this situation over the last week as well.

[Newsroom Article 1](#)

and

[Newsroom Article 2](#)

This problem has been around and building for some time. Access to farmland for hunting and also through to Doc land beyond. Has been difficult to get. Farmers don't want people they don't know on their land or are saving the hunting for themselves. Doc must accept a lot of blame for not negotiating solid access to the land that they have acquired, for recreational hunters to use.

Of course, poor reporting (by the media) like not asking what NZDA think, do not help the situation.

The commercial venison industry is currently expanding again and will help if markets remain good. They are trying to contract landowners as clients in at least one place. Most likely paying the farmer for something that is crown property until legally shot.

I Believe NZDA and recreational hunters can have a role to play in some areas if given a chance and behave themselves when they get that chance. No cowboy acts. Some areas we should be able to help with others, like QEII covenant lands and small size blocks there are safety issues to consider. But we currently are not being considered it seems.

This is all but another chapter in the battle for the control of our game animals, what twists and turns will the New Year bring. Remember we are due a General Election next year. Have a merry Christmas be safe out there.

Post Script.

The above was written on the morning of Friday the 4<sup>th</sup> Dec. update below.

There was a second Advocacy update pm Friday from NZDA National office (headline below) which you should have received see the headline below.

Advocacy Update: Minister Meager Responds to MPI's New Deer & Pig Programme

Which is more helpful NZDA along with the Game Council now in on the discussion. I will leave you to read the details. Good work Gwyn & NZDA and Minister the Hon James Meager in getting recreational hunters' seats at the table. Still expect some more twists and turns come New Year. Some will not be happy we are at the table. This can be a good Xmas present for NZDA Members but there is a lot more work to do to make it so.

## Message from Senior Constable Peter Graham

You may have seen in the media that the Southland Police have teamed up with DOC and farm owners around the Mid Dome Conservation area in an initiative to educate hunters around hunting access to the Dome.

In the last ROAR local farmers were inundated with hunters crossing their private land without permission. Police were contacted and dealt with a number of hunters. One farmer had in excess of 18 people captured on game cameras over a two week period. Some of those captured were identified and spoken to and warned by Police. This unlawful entry creates a very real risk for farmers, employees, contractors and legal hunters who have permission and should have blocks to themselves.

Those spoken to did have the correct permits to be hunting on Mid Dome Conservation area but had not read permit conditions re-entry points and

also had not read that entry onto private land surround the Dome needs farmer permission beforehand. Obviously entry onto private land for hunting without the owner's consent is an offence under the Wild Animal Control Act 1977. The project will not limit any access into the conservation area and will hopefully increasing access as we work with DOC on removing some restrictions.

The initial phase of this project is education, we would rather educate responsible hunters so they don't make mistakes or inadvertently get themselves in trouble. The second phase beginning in March 2026 will be more about enforcement as we target the unlaw hunters who give responsible hunters like you and me a bad name.

One thing Police will be targeting through the summer and into the ROAR is spotlighting from public roads. This is unlawful and the Act gives us some very strong powers to stop, search and seize property from those located unlawfully hunting. This includes seizing vehicles, firearms, tracking gear and normally results in a license warning or revocation review.

As part of the initiative Dept of Conservation have updated their permits with current farm owners contact details and will be upgrading signage at entry points to the Dome. In addition DOC are considering allowing limited access to areas not under wilding pine control when previously the whole conservation area would have closed.

The key message to hunters is ensure they read and understand and follow the conditions of your permit.

Don't just assume you know where your access is.... check your GPS or mapping Apps. Do your homework and if unsure contact the farm owner for information and permission.

Thanks and safe hunting

## Club Contacts

[enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz](mailto:enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz)

[Southland Branch Website](#)

Office Bearers

President: Shaun McKelvie 027 635 0490

Vice President: Luke Payne 027 828 2619

Secretary: Andy Nesbit 021 53 8676

Treasurer: Scott Hall 027 859 3533

Membership: Paul Fitzek / Jason Leishman

Newsletter Editor: Luke Payne [ssj4\\_luke@hotmail.com](mailto:ssj4_luke@hotmail.com)

## Pistol Club sighting in

With the start of daylight saving the Invercargill pistol Club range will be again available. To Financial Members for the sighting in of Rifles on Wednesday nights from 5.30 pm finishing 7pm. At the cost of \$10 per person. Ear & Eye protection required Bring one's own targets with staple gun or on cardboard box.

Please Note with the changes to the Law NO Semi Automatics allowed. (Other than .22LR)

To use this facility, you MUST contact the rostered person in charge no later than the previous Sunday night.

10<sup>th</sup> December Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

17<sup>th</sup> December Wayne Ashmore 027 810 1814

4<sup>th</sup> February Doug Gordon 0276372206

11<sup>th</sup> February Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

25<sup>th</sup> February Wayne Ashmore 027 810 1814

4<sup>th</sup> March Doug Gordon 0276372206

11<sup>th</sup> March Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

25<sup>th</sup> March Wayne Ashmore 027 810 1814

1<sup>st</sup> April Doug Gordon 0276372206

## Invercargill Rifle Club

As honorary members of the Invercargill Rifle Club, Southland Branch members now have the opportunity to use the Cobb Road Range for sighting in of rifles and also participating in programmed Invercargill Rifle club events.

You will need to bring

- Firearms Licence and Deerstalkers membership card.
- Ear and eye protection
- Target capable of being stapled to the target frame
- Rifle (bolt out) + ammo – Up to and including .308/7.62 calibre Bipod or other front support and rear support.
- The range will be operated by a designated Rang Officer who will make themselves known at the range.
- General format will be
- Allocation of target frame
- Validation of rifle being able to hit target at 100m. Shooting 200m and beyond after validation

If you are interested in attending and for further details, please first contact

Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

Shaun McKelvie 027 635 0490

**NRA/F Class shooters – make sure you arrange someone to pull targets and RO, you may be the only shooter at the range.**

[Click here for full Summer Calendar](#)

## Wapiti and Red Stag Lodges

Bookings to

Neville & Carol Miller

Phone 03 216 8654 Cell 02108219528 e-mail [nandc43@gmail.com](mailto:nandc43@gmail.com)

or [43 Bain St Invercargill](#)

Please Note the Red Stag Lodge is on Doc land a hunting permit is required to have firearms at the site. **Deposits for any bookings to be received within seven days or bookings will be cancelled.**

## Sponsors

We're proud to be supported by a number of generous sponsors who help make our club activities and events possible. Their backing plays a vital role in keeping our community strong and ensuring members can enjoy the outdoors.

Please support them where you can!



