

The Southern Hunter

Southland Branch NZDA Newsletter

October 2025



A Promising looking Albert Burn head basin.

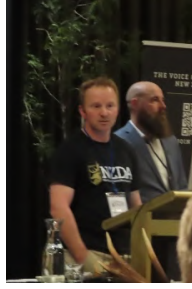
Monthly Meeting

7.30pm Wednesday 15th October at the Branch Club Rooms, Longbush Hall
24 McKerchar Road off State Highway 1 between Kennington & Woodlands

Speaker

TBC

Presidents Report



Hi all as i write this it is opening day of the Fishing season most of the rivers are very high .I hope you've found some clean water somewhere to fish.

We've had a few changes in the background after many years of Writing the newsletter Doug Gordon has stepped down and is helping Luke Payne write the newsletter going forward, massive thanks to Doug for his time and effort over the years and his ongoing help to ensure a smooth change over. Ray Phillips has also Stepped down from the committee but is still about to help out where needed and with Douglas scoring. Thanks Ray I'm not even going to attempt to guess how long you've been on the executive you've put a massive amount of time and energy into the club over many years and I thank you for that. If your a new member signing up you'll notice Paul and Jason have taken over the membership role from Andy . Andy has been wearing a few hats over the last few years and its great to spread the work load between the committee.

Things are still pretty quiet on the hunting front for myself anyway but the days are getting longer and calving is almost over so we'll try get out soon, hopefully go find a goat with the kids for the goat hunting competition 👍.

Catch you at the next meeting

Cheers Shaun



Mya & My heads from this Roar Euro Mounted ready for the wall.

Editorial



Hi everyone,

I'm Luke Payne, and I'll be taking over the newsletter from Doug Gordon. A big thanks to Doug for all his work – you've left some big boots to fill! I'll do my best to keep you updated and entertained, and if you've got stories or photos to share, please send them my way.

As Shaun has commented there have been a few changes happening behind the scenes at the club recently. Some roles have shifted around, so we really appreciate your patience as we settle into these transitions. A big thank-you goes out to those who have stepped up and taken on new responsibilities – your support means a lot. And to those who have recently stepped back, we're very grateful for the time, effort, and energy you've given to help shape the club into what it is today.

The spring flush is on its way, and with it the deer are starting to move about more. Yearlings can be an easy target this time of year – and a tasty addition to the freezer!

Just a timely reminder: the club relies on volunteers. If you feel you can lend a hand in any way, please don't hesitate to approach one of the executive members.

Happy hunting,
Luke.



Many years ago, Doug Gordon used to write articles for the Branch newsletter under the byline "On the Snowline" He has decided to revise this for future articles he may write since passing the Editorial Duties on (to Luke Payne) after over 12 years as editor.

On the Snowline

With Doug Gordon

There are murmurings of a revival in the Feral Venison industry, mainly to deal with the number of wild deer currently on private land. A few new processing plants are planned, plus several operators ramping up their food bank supplying operations.

But even with all the talk of the numbers of deer out there, is there enough to supply all these new operations economically for any length of time, I have my doubts!

There is one plant where the talk is they are planning to process 30,000 a year. That is processing more wild deer per year than any plant has to my knowledge since 1975/76 and the last of the boom years of Venison recovery. To achieve this, they would need to average around 125 a day, day in day out! But they are very unlikely to get the continuous supply of animals to achieve this. Rough weather will shut down helicopters. (Note how accidents to helicopters has gone down this century now that they pick the weather and conditions.) Mossburn plant then had chiller capacity to hold several days' supply of skin on carcasses to help even out fluctuations even then we would run out. None of the current plants I have seen have that capacity, chillers cost money. Will farmers want helicopters around during the Roar when many either make money from or have their mate's trophy hunting? Note WAR operations are now out on Doc land during the Roar, Easter & Christmas. How long will commercial operators have social licence to operate during fawning? Farmers are unlikely to want helicopters around during lambing or calving either. Several operators are most likely each counting the same deer as ones they are going to harvest. The number of Deer available to harvest will also be affected by how far 1080 is spread.

So, to achieve 30,000 they need to perhaps look at processing at the rate of 200 per day when animals available. A rate the 1975 rebuilt Mossburn factory only achieved for one week during its life. *(That was the week before Christmas 1976 were we did 1000 deer. Christmas eve was a Friday we finished at 7pm I was going to my parents at Balclutha for Xmas day. I got to Gore at 8.30pm and did my Xmas shopping by 9pm, thanks to late Friday nights. The staff had two kegs of beer that they were shouted to drink. They did not get through one before going to sleep. We were back at it early the next week)*

The price being offered for carcasses is nowhere near as good as it was back in the boom days of venison recovery when helicopter running costs are considered, or staff wages. So, chasing deer as hard as they used to will not be viable. The casual ground shooter sales to the packing houses is out. Need to be a registered supplier (with the packing house) prior to hunting. In passing a lot of the rubbish supplied to game packing houses came from these casual suppliers, we should avoid such in the future.

Most venison is eaten in Germany & Europe during their Autumn. There will be some considerable capital tied up in the product if paid for when processed, until sold (September, November). Unless things have changed lately venison with for Germany, the common species Red & Fallow must be processed separately. And labelled, Red is "Hirsch" & Fallow goes by "Dam Wild" (note scientific name for Fallow is Dama Dama.) It is all lumped together on the NZ market. As most of you know there is a marked difference between Red & Fallow in taste. It is a lottery what you get served in NZ. In passing we are perhaps lucky that we don't have to ID the Lamb & Mutton we export as to sheep breed! To me Southdown is tops Romney but average. Though there is now some Identifying of Beef in NZ as to breed! So, developments are going to be interesting, a reduction in numbers where recreational hunter access is restricted, by either actual access or the cost of access is needed. But we need balance not more boom & bust. The numbers

controlled, and sufficient breeding stock left to maintain numbers for recreational hunting and a stable feral venison industry to maintain the control as needed. No more dreams (by some parties) that every time the industry booms the Deer will be shot out and be no more. So, they chuck out any sensible Ideas for stability in deer numbers for hunting both recreational & commercial. There was such a stability plan being developed in the early 1990's the next boom and a change in the Minister of Conservation scraped that. Deer are here to stay they need managed better.

Wanted

Stories, ads, letters to the editor, or whatever for the newsletter, send to or contact the editor. Guest Speaker's needed, Ideas wanted, who do you want, and names needed, suggestions to Executive

Club Hunts

None advised,

If there is anything you are interested in doing please contact a member of the executive .

**All hunts for Southland Branch NZDA Members (with full NZDA membership)
as Public liability Insurance required.**

New Members

Please welcome them.

Daniel Muller, Branton Buckley, Calvin Jenkins, Daniel Bremner, Peter Oneill, Bruce Diprose, Ryan Mcivor.

BRANCH CONTACTS



enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz



<http://www.southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz/>

[Branch winners at National competitions](#)

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

Executive

Wayne Ashmore, Tony Caldwell, Gareth Coyle, Nathan Dawson, Paul Fitzek, Scott Hall, Dave Howden, Jason Leishman, Jamie McCallum, Ray Phillips, Scott Thompson, Nick Whyte.

Life Members

John DeLury (National & Branch), Ray Phillips (National & Branch), Roger McNaughton (National)
Doug Gordon (Branch), Dave Howden (Branch), Neville Miller (Branch)

Rayonier Hunting Liaison: Shaun, Luke & Andy

Huts & Lodges (Red Stag & Wapiti lodge): Neville, Shaun & Dave

Hall & Library: Luke, Jamie & Wayne

Club Hunts: Wayne & Jamie

Invercargill Rifle Range: Shaun & Andy Nesbit

Invercargill Pistol Club: Doug

NZDA Range Officers: Shaun, Tom, Wayne, Andy & Luke

DOC Liaison: Ray

AGM, Trophies & Douglas Scoring: Shaun, Doug, Wayne, Luke, Ray & Andy

Competition Committee: Shaun, Tom, Andy

Hunts Coordinators: Andy, Shaun, Tom, Wayne, Luke, Nathan

Douglas Score Measurer's:

Judge/Coordinating Tutor: Ray

Judge/ Tutor: John DeLury,

Level One: Shaun, Tom, Wayne, Luke & Andy

Website manager: John Delury



Southland branch has registered for the National Goat comp this year.

We will have measuring days at our monthly meetings

October 15th, November 19th

At the Branch Hall 24 McKercher road 730pm. Or if you can't make a meeting Invercargill Hunting and Fishing are also accepting entries

Anyone questions get in contact

enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz

<https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/events/national-events/national-wild-goat-hunting-competition/>

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!



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Better Hunting
Aotearoa

Better Hunting education

The Game Animal Council has an online hunter training platform, Better Hunting. It is free to use for hunters and other backcountry users wanting to develop their hunting and outdoor skills.

Better Hunting can be used on a laptop, tablet or phone. Courses can also be accessed offline through the free mobile app. Just create an account and get learning. The platform saves your progress as you go so you can dip in and out as often as you like.

[Go to the Better Hunting platform.](#)

Available courses

The Better Hunting platform is made up of separate modules across different subject areas:

- **Hunting Essentials** includes New Zealand specific outdoor and hunter safety and skills with everything from weather forecasting, navigation, river crossing, first aid, preparation, access, game animal management and other bushcraft and hunting skills.
- **Firearms Essentials** is about learning safe and successful firearms use. This includes maintenance, sighting in, storage and transport, and technique.
- **Pig Hunting** is an introductory course to pig hunting in New Zealand, exploring important theory and dog handling techniques and how to get into practical training.
- Better Hunting also includes skill-building games, digital trip intentions, ballot calendars and more.

Rifle Sighting In At Invercargill Pistol Club

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 .22R)

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

1st October Doug Gordon 0276372206

8th October Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

22nd October Doug Gordon 0276372206

29th October Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

3rd November Doug Gordon 0276372206

12th November Andy Nesbit 021 538 676

Invercargill Rifle Club Cobb Road Rifle Range

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.

Wapiti Lodge, & Red Stag Lodge Mavora



Wapiti Lodge



Red Stag

Bookings to
Neville & Carol Miller
Phone 03 216 8654 Cell 02108219528 e-mail
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.**

Southland Branch Polo Shirts



The following are in stock and available for purchase @ \$35 each Sizes Medium, large, Xtra Large, and XXL. Available at Branch Meeting or by emailing enquiries@southlanddeerstalkers.org.nz

Subject line Polo Tee Shirts

Payment prior to delivery by online banking to the Branch Account 06-09250270758-000 with details of *your name Polo Shirt and Size.*



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