

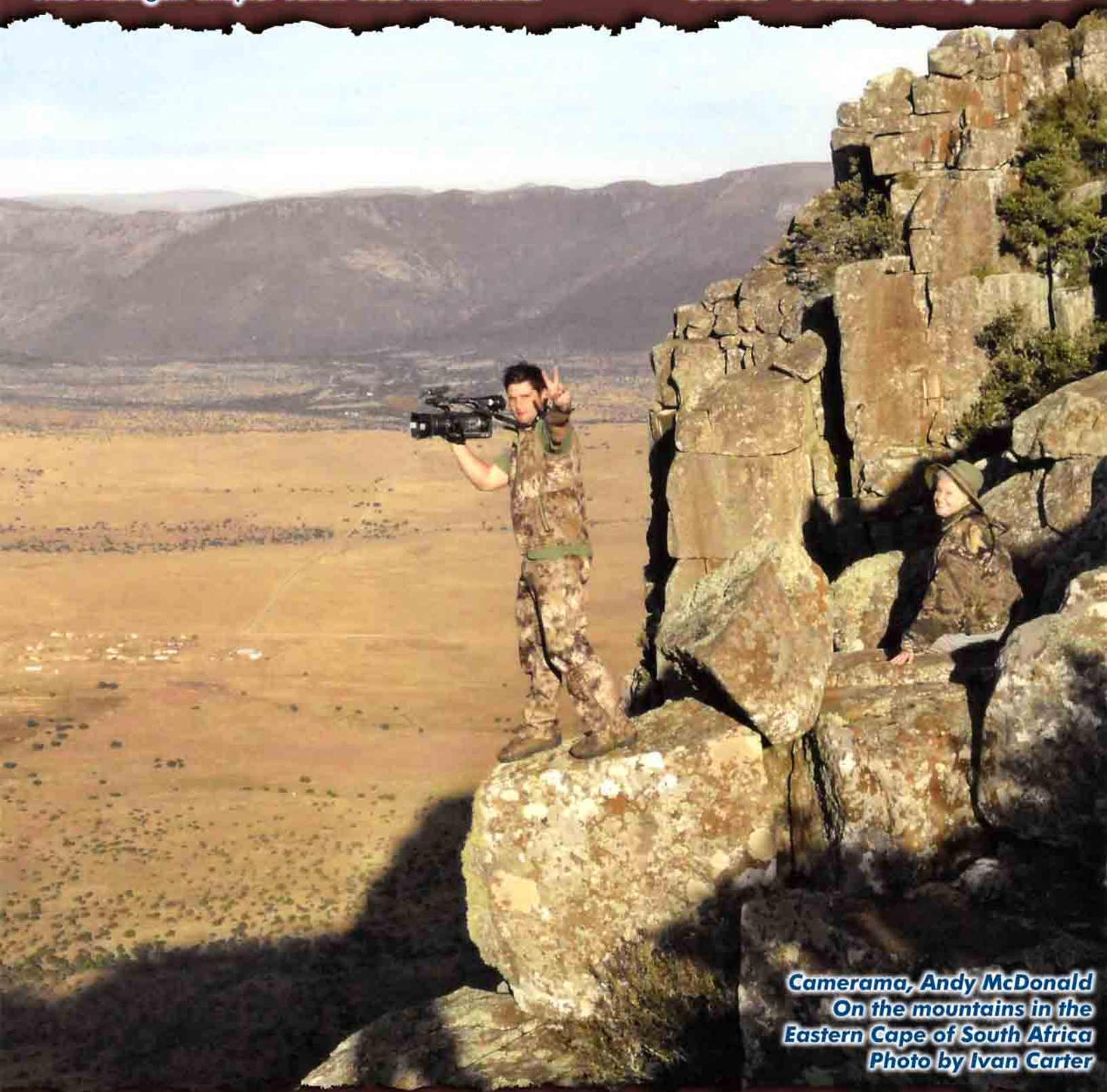
FRONT SIGHT



SCI
FIRST FOR HUNTERS

Mid-Michigan Chapter Safari Club International

October - December 2015, Issue 32



Camerama, Andy McDonald
On the mountains in the
Eastern Cape of South Africa
Photo by Ivan Carter

CHAPTER MAGAZINE AWARD - SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL
FIFTH YEAR IN A ROW



JOHAN PIETERSE SAFARIS



SOUTH AFRICA
ZIMBABWE
MOZAMBIQUE



[WWW. JP SAFARIS.CO.ZA](http://WWW.JP SAFARIS.CO.ZA)
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Chairmen are listed first

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Members of Mid-Michigan SCI or Isabella County Sportsman's Club may use the shooting range located at 2872 W. Millbrook Road just east of Winn Road. The lock combination is 2506 and changes yearly on February 15th. Please carry membership identification on you when you visit the range.



The Front Sight is the official publication of the Mid-Michigan Chapter of Safari Club International, keeping club members informed about local club activities, and encouraging and defining good sportsmanship. The Front Sight Magazine is published quarterly: January, April, July and October. Distribution 400+.

Check our own www.midmichigansci.org website for copies of the Front Sight, listing of events, and fundraiser auction items.

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In order to help us bolster new membership, Jay's Sporting Goods of Clare and Gaylord is generously offering a \$35.00 gift card for every new member to our local chapter. Contact Kevin Chamberlain for more information. National SCI Dues are now only \$35.00 so it has never been so easy to join us.

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter Meeting Schedule

* SUBJECT TO CHANGE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Type</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
October 5	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
December 7	Board	4:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Membership	6:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
January 22	Big Buck Night - Board	3:30 p.m.	Comfort Inn
	Big Buck Night - Membership	5:00 p.m.	Comfort Inn
February 26-27	Mid-Michigan SCI Convention		Soaring Eagle Resort

Reservations required. Please call and leave a message at 989-330-4463 or email Maxine Warner at maxiwar27@gmail.com

President's Message

I hope everyone had a safe enjoyable summer and spent as much time as possible with family and friends. Seems like summer is winding down, so fall must be right around the corner. It doesn't really seem like fall hunting seasons are close because I am writing this greeting after a day of meetings at the National SCI Board meeting in Tucson, AZ and the high temperature has been right around 100+ degrees both days I have been here so far. Nonetheless, the calendar says it is almost September, and that means most small game hunting opens in two weeks.

In the past several weeks many of both the social media and network media companies made sure almost everyone knew who "Cecil the Lion" was. Once again "these communications" certainly did not paint hunters and the hunting industry in the best of light. While I still do not know whether there were any illegal activities in the process of harvesting this lion, the rest of us hunters were certainly "guilty by association" in some people eyes. Just yet another reminder, there are many people that want to take away our ability to hunt, our access to property to hunt, exert pressure on airlines not to ship legally hunted game etc. etc. if they can, by whatever means possible. There is some strength in numbers, therefore, I would encourage each of us to talk to other like minded individuals and get them to join our SCI Chapter. Membership is only \$35 National and \$25 Local, very inexpensive for what we get.

Enjoy the fall season and introduce someone to hunting if you can!

Sincerely,

Joseph H. Mulders
Joe Mulders

President, Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI



Editor's Message

With all of the recent publicity about hunting, Safari Club International becomes an even more important tool in finding ethical outfitters and professional hunters to trust when we plan a hunt. I want to urge everyone wanting to go on a guided hunt to check out the hunt reports and talk to other hunters who have used the person or company you are interested in. Word of mouth and learning of the experiences of others can help you in making good choices.

We are looking forward to the Victory Hunt in Michigan on September 19 and 20 when we can take our grandchildren on a hunt of their very own. We have already been scouting to see what whitetails are visiting our properties and Don has been very busy planting, fertilizing, and spraying fields to entice the local deer to spend more time on our property. A good evening out is a pizza in a deer blind but make sure the wind is in your favor because of the wonderful pizza smell.

This fall there are many species to hunt in Michigan and I want to encourage all of you to invite someone who has not hunted to join you for a hunting experience. We usually think of our children and/or grandchildren to introduce to hunting for the first time but also think of a neighbor, friend, or other relative who just might be interested but not have an opportunity to go.

We all need to be a positive influence about hunting. Hunters pay for conservation and have contributed approximately \$5.6 billion for wildlife since 1939. More than 38 million Americans hunt and fish. Americans hunt 282 million days per year. More Americans hunt and shoot than play golf. Teenage girls are the fastest growing market in sport shooting. According to research 72% more women are hunting with firearms today than just five years ago and 50% more women are now target shooting. 73% of Americans approve of hunting with only 10% thinking that hunting should be illegal. Hunters are among the most influential of all voting groups. Since 1979, SCI has spent nearly \$400 million on hunter advocacy and wildlife conservation. Encourage your family and friends to join us today!!!

Keep Hunting and
Keep Writing,

Mary J. Haster



Mid - Michigan Chapter Safari Club International • www.midmichigansci.org APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

I hereby apply for membership _____
FIRST MIDDLE LAST

Fill out both mailing addresses as well as email. Please indicate by placing a X in the appropriate box where you would like to receive club correspondence.

If at all possible we would like to utilize your email address for this purpose. ☐

☐ HOME

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

☐ BUSINESS

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

MEMBERSHIP DUES (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)

18 +	1 Year	\$ 35 National Dues	\$ 25 Local Dues	= \$ 60
	3 Years	\$ 150 National Dues	\$ 75 Local Dues	= \$ 225
	Life	\$1500 National Dues	\$300 Local Dues	= \$ 1,800
	Over 60	\$1250 National Dues	\$200 Local Dues	= \$ 1,450

Check/Cash attached \$ _____

Bill my credit card: VISA MASTERCARD DISCOVER (PLEASE CIRCLE ONE)

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____ NAME ON THE CARD _____

APPLICANTS SIGNATURE _____

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Mt. Pleasant, MI 48804-0486

Book Review

by Josh Christensen

Title: GOOD CALL: REFLECTIONS OF FAITH, FAMILY, AND FOWL

Publisher: Howard Books

Copyright: 2014

Author: Jase Robertson

List Price: \$25.99



For those of you who watch the A&E show Duck Dynasty the author of this book will be very familiar to you. For those of you who haven't watched the show, the author of this book is the son of the man who started the Duck Commander company; a company that makes some of the best duck calls on the market today.

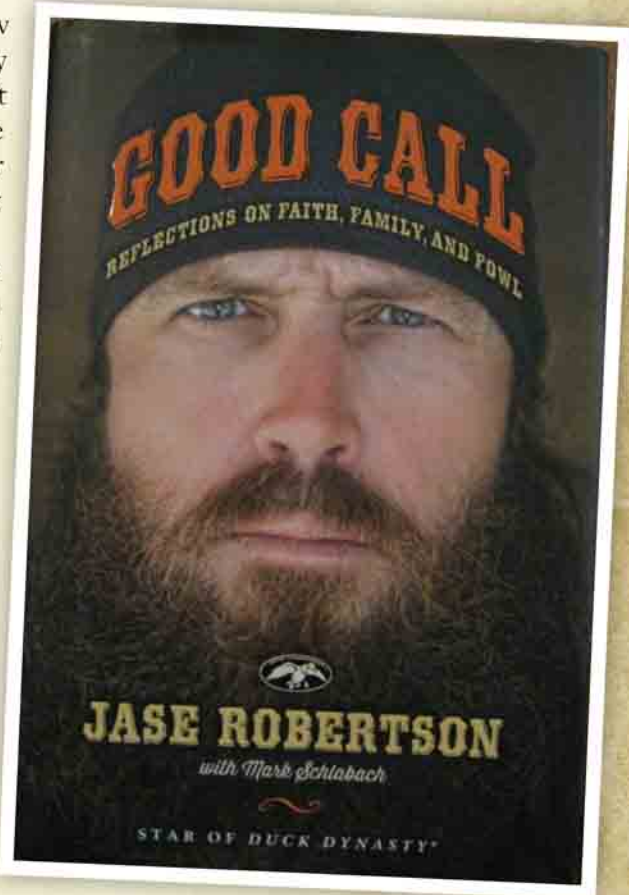
Throughout the story Jase discusses the importance of his faith and how his faith has helped heal problems that have occurred in his family.

He also explains different parts of his childhood that have made him the man he is today. Such as, coming from a poor family (from the wrong side of the tracks), and getting hooked on hunting at the age of eight when his dad took him on his first duck hunt. Hunting is also something that helped Jase connect with his father during his difficult childhood.

This book reveals things from the Robertson family that isn't discussed on their television show, like their families problems with alcohol and how it almost tore their family apart. Something else revealed from the book, which is sometimes joked about on the show, is the fact that Jase was given first right of refusal to take over his father's company, but declined because he enjoyed making the duck calls and didn't want to deal with the business side of things (he thought it might interfere with his hunting time).

Regardless if you watch Duck Dynasty or not, this book is a good read that explains how hunting and faith can keep a family together no matter what hurdles life throws at you.

This book gets 9 out of 10 bullseyes



**Mid Michigan Chapter of
Safari Club International**
presents

Big Buck Night

Open to the Public

Friday, January 22nd at the Comfort Inn
2424 S. Mission • Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
Adults \$25 • Kids under 12 \$20 • Under 5 yrs. FREE

Call 989-330-4463 for a reservation.

Bring your rack that you shot in 2015 and get it
professionally scored plus get in the FREE gun drawing
with your scored rack.

Whitetail and Mule deer

Trophies for Non-Members • Two Prize Gun Drawings
Youth Hunters Awards • Awards for Members &
Non-Members • Special Guest Speakers •
Reduced Rate on Rooms • Free Membership Drawing
All tickets are pre-sold. Must have ticket prior to event.

**Sign your
kids up**

(9-15 years old) for
**FREE Hunter's
Safety Classes**
beginning
June 1, 2016

**RSVP by
Dec. 30th**

Limited Seating
Call (989) 330-4463

For more information
contact:

Mike Strobe

cell (989) 506-1113
mstropecustombuilder@
gmail.com

REGISTRATION STARTS AT 5 PM DINNER AT 7 PM

*Dinner includes two entree buffet, salad bar and dessert table
Cash Bar • Free soda for the kids*

CONSERVATION AFFAIRS

By Larry Witte

SCIENTIFIC FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ACT (SFWCA) UPHELD

The Michigan Court of Claims earlier this year dismissed a lawsuit by an animal rights group seeking to overturn the Scientific Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act. The decision is a victory for science-based resource management in Michigan.

Passage of SFWCA in 2014 reaffirmed the authority of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to use science to designate and manage wild game species including wolves. In addition it provides for free hunting and fishing licenses for active military personnel and appropriate funding for rapid response to aquatic invasive species.

Following passage of SFWCA the animal rights group, Keep Michigan Wolves Protected, filed a lawsuit claiming the law was unconstitutional. The suit was heavily financed by the Humane Society of the United States.

DNR GETS \$37.5 MILLION IN FEDERAL EXCISE TAXES

Federal excise taxes that hunters and anglers pay when purchasing certain gear, import duties paid on boats and a portion of gasoline tax attributed to small boats and engines brings in \$1.1 billion for the Wildlife and Sportfish Restoration Program. Michigan will receive \$37.5 million of which \$26.6 million will go to fund wildlife restoration efforts and \$11.1 million for fisheries restoration projects. Of the \$26.6 million for Wildlife restoration efforts \$4.4 million will go to hunter education programs in the states.

Michigan ranks 5th out of 55 states and territories for wildlife restoration dollars received and 7th out of 56 for sport fish restoration funds due to the number of licenses sold and the abundance of public land and water in the state.

CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD)

At the time of this writing three free-ranging Ingham County white-tail deer exhibited CWD symptoms were killed and tested at DNR and MSU labs and determined positive for CWD. The determination was confirmed by the National Veterinary Services.

CWD is deadly to deer populations and is transmitted by animal to animal contact and by a contaminated environment where blood, saliva, urine, and feces from infected deer are present.

Action being taken by DNR and MDA includes:

- Creating a CWD management zone which includes Clinton, Shiawassee, and Ingham Counties.
- Implementing a deer feeding ban in the 3 counties.
- Preventing private salvage of road killed deer which will be tested for CWD.
- Removing a significant number of deer for testing within 2 miles of where CWD deer were found.

The DNR continues to ask the public for help in reporting deer that are unusually thin or exhibiting unusual behavior (for example, acting tame around humans and allowing someone to approach).

To report:

- A suspicious-looking deer, call the Report All Poaching hotline at 800-292-7800 or fill out and submit the online observation report found on the DNR website.
- Road-kills found in the Core CWD Area, call the Wildlife Disease Hotline at 517-614-9602 during office hours. Leave a voicemail with location information and staff will attempt to pick up carcasses on the next open business day.

HIGHLY PATHOGENIC AVIAN INFLUENZA

At the time of this writing 5 Canada geese have been confirmed with Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (H5N2), all in Macomb County. Avian Influenza is a virus carried by migrating waterfowl which can infect domestic poultry including chickens, turkeys, quail, ducks and geese. No known cases of H5N2 have been found to date in Michigan domestic poultry. Risk to humans is considered low.

In order to prevent the spread of H5N2 in local goose populations DNR largely suspended round up and relocation of nuisance birds during the year.

COURT UPHELDS DNR RUSSIAN BOAR INVASIVE SPECIES ORDER

Earlier this year the Michigan Court of Appeals overturned a Marquette County Circuit Court order and upheld a 2011 Invasive Species order issued by DNR prohibiting Russian boar in Michigan. While this is a win for DNR the issue goes back to local courts in the U.P. Litigants may argue that their animals are technically not covered.

DNR REPORTS 2014 DEER HARVEST DOWN ACROSS MICHIGAN

A Michigan Deer Harvest Survey Report on the 2014 hunting seasons found that approximately 615,000 hunters statewide harvested 329,000 deer, down about 15 percent from 2013. The decline was greatest in the U.P. where the harvest was down 36 percent. Several factors including back-to-back severe winters that reduced deer populations and early winter in 2014 resulting in more than 3 feet of snow on the ground in some areas of the U.P. before November 15 contributed to the decline.

DNR reports that the deer harvest has risen and fallen since the early 1960's:

- The number of deer harvested hit a low in the early 1970's below 100,000 statewide.
- Mild winters and changing forest conditions resulted in rising deer populations with harvest reaching 400,000 by late 1980's.
- Tough back-to-back winters in the mid-1990's reduced populations and harvest but rebounded again to nearly 600,000 by the end of the decade.
- Deer harvest has remained below 500,000 since the early 2000's.

POACHERS BEWARE!

Thirty-seven new conservation officers completed the 22 week Natural Resources Conservation Officer Academy in June and will be completing 18 weeks of field training partnered with experienced officers in time for this fall's hunting seasons. Michigan DNR Conservation Officers have a wide variety of training related to natural resources and are certified police officers with authority to enforce criminal laws.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

If you have worn shorts and a coat at the same time, you might live in Michigan. Jeff Foxworthy



HUNTING AWARDS PROGRAM

BY JOANNE WITTE, CHAIR

To refresh your memory, hunting awards for our Mid-Michigan Chapter of SCI are decided as follows:

Score sheets are collected for a two year period. Before our Hunter's Convention in February, the sheets are categorized by country and species. The top entry for each species receives a gold award, the number two animal receives a silver award and the number three animal receives a bronze award. Animals are also separated by method of take so there could be two gold awards in one category if one animal is taken by rifle and one by bow.

The continents of North America and Africa receive numbers one, two, and three awards each; the other continents receive one award. The winners are decided by which animal scores closest, numerically, to the top in the International Record Book. To find this score the rank of the entered animal is divided by the total number of ranks in the International Record Book. Estate deer and turkeys are in categories of their own and are not eligible for the top awards in North America. Exceptional Estate deer, Estate Elk and all species of turkeys will receive their own awards only if they score in the top 10% according to the International Record Book.

Other Major Awards are for the Crossbow Hunter of the Year, Muzzleloader Hunter of the Year, Handgun Hunter of the Year, Bow Hunter of the Year, Men's Hunter of the Year, and Women's Hunter of the Year. These awards are voted upon by the Awards committee. This decision is made on the basis of

which hunter had the greatest achievements during the past two years. We do not consider more than the past two years of activity. For the Women's Hunter of the Year, she must have taken at least three animals. Because we have so few women submitting score sheets often we do not have a winner in this category. We have not had a Handgun Hunter of the Year for many years either.

The Men's and Women's Hunter of the Year can only be won once in a lifetime. This allows more hunters to get a chance to win this award.

The period for score sheets this year is:

DECEMBER 1, 2013

TO

DECEMBER 1, 2015

Send your score sheets to me, Joanne Witte, 11219 Birch Park Drive, Stanwood, MI, 49346. You may contact me at 231-598-9427, or email at witte1939@charter.net.

Please remember to send pictures and to notify me if some score sheets are youth entries. Children and grandchildren of members under age 17 are eligible for youth awards.



Mid-Michigan SCI Members,

Please join us this hunting season in supporting our SCI Sportsman Against Hunger program. Shagana's Meat Processing in Clare has teamed up with us again this year by processing the first 25 deer donated to the program at half price, \$42.50. The SCI Sportsman Against Hunger program does have limited funds that would allow us to cover the cost of 15 deer. Anyone donating a deer is welcome to help out by covering some of the costs themselves. For example, you could cover the \$42.50 yourself or split the cost with us putting your cost at \$21.25. This generosity would help us stretch out our funds and reach our goal of 25 deer.

Remember both meat and money are a tax deduction. If you can't help cover any cost and want to donate a deer, we will cover the cost up to 15 deer.

Also, anyone cleaning out freezers for this year's hunting season can donate meat that has been processed in the last year. All meat you give to us will be donated to soup kitchens and pantries in our own community.

You do not have to be a SCI member to donate to this program. Please tell your friends and family.

Shagana's is located at 11285 Schoolcrest Ave., Clare, MI 48617. If you are coming from Mt. Pleasant, you will take 127 north to Clare exit 156. Continue north on McEwan until you see Witbeck's grocery store. Turn right on Schoolcrest Ave. and head east until it dead ends into expressway. Shagana's will be on your left.

If you have any trouble getting the deer there yourself, they can be dropped off to me, Mike Strobe, and I will make sure they get there. When you drop off your deer at Shagana's, specify that it is for the SCI Sportsman Against Hunger program and we will take care of everything from there. I am very passionate about this program and look forward to doing bigger and better things with the program.

This year we have teamed up with NAC Taxidermy and Burch Tank & Truck who believe in this program as much as I do. Together we hope to make this program bigger and better. They also can be contacted for information about the program, Nick Giuliani from NAC Taxidermy at (989) 644-6289 or Matt Veale from Burch Tank & Truck at (989) 400-9536.

For those of you located nearer to the Big Rapids area, you can take your deer in to Colin Kelly at Kelly's Deer Processing located at 19077 13 Mile Road who offers a 24-hour deer drop-off during the deer season. You can contact Colin at 231-796-5414 or colin@cks-place.com. He will process your deer for free under the Sportsman Against Hunger program and donate it himself to one of 25 different locations to which he donates. He is also the one that makes jerky from venison and sends it to our troops. You can check out his ad nearer the back of this magazine.

If you have any questions, please contact Mike Strobe at 989-506-1113 or by email mstrobecustombuilder@gmail.com

Thank you for your support and happy hunting,

Mike Strobe

SCI Mid-Michigan Chapter
Mike Strobe, Chairperson for Sportsmen Against Hunger
1100 Bollman Dr. • Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858
Cell 989 506 1113 • mstrobecustombuilder@gmail.com

Bison Hunting

by Jenna Koch (age 13)



It all started at the 2015 SCI Fundraiser in Mt. Pleasant. I left the Saturday night dinner table to check the booth displays with my cousins. When I returned, my Grandpa was beaming and told me he had just purchased a buffalo hunt for me. I instantly felt nervous because I had never shot a buffalo. Luckily I had a few months to mentally prepare for the hunt.

It was April 18th and the sun was shining as my Dad and I drove to Ionia. We met my Grandma and Grandpa, Don and Mary Harter, at Roger Froling's Ranch to shoot a buffalo. I was anxious and nervous but knew I'd do fine considering my past hunting experiences hunting deer. Once we arrived, I was shocked at how many buffalo there were and how big of an animal they were. Once my grandparents arrived, we discussed with Roger where the best place to shoot the animal would be. I was surprised that the safest shot for the animal was not behind the shoulder but behind the ear. Then the stalk began.

Grandma, Roger and I all climbed into the Ranger heading to go pick out the buffalo he had in mind for me. Roger had just got some new breeding bulls so we had to be careful not to shoot one of those. We were chasing around the buffalos trying to separate the one I was planning on shooting.

Once we separated the animal where I could get a safe shot, we got out of the Ranger and I set my gun up on a tripod and prepared to take my shot. I found the spot I was supposed to aim on the buffalo. I took a deep breath, let half of it out and squeezed the trigger. Boom, the buffalo dropped before I even heard the shot. Grandma and Roger were impressed with my shot. I had hit it perfectly, exactly where they told me to!

I was so excited to have harvested my first buffalo. Thank you to my grandparents and Roger Froling for donating the hunt. It was an experience that I will never forget.

IBEX IN TURKEY

by Dan Catlin



November 15th 1985 found me walking through a dark Northern Michigan forest with my father by my side. We were trudging through crusted frozen snow in one of Michigan's many public-land hunting areas as I set out in search of my very first big game animal – the whitetail deer. Because of the long loud walk through the crunchy snow pack, I was sure I wouldn't see a deer. The darkness in the tall stand of pine trees began to show the first signs of light, as the crystal clear sky glowed with the sun on the eastern horizon. Within minutes I could see; and within seconds of that I heard the distinct sound of something big walking my way. Being on public land, I was sure it would be another hunter; but to my surprise it was a deer. Not just any deer...a 5-point buck! I raised my Marlin 30-30 lever-action rifle, lined up the iron sights directly on his shoulder and fired the shot that would make me a hunter for the rest of my days. My Dad and I were so very proud!!!! Fast forward 30 years to 2015 and I was heading to the mountains of Turkey in search of a Bezoar Ibex...Amazing!

In 2014 I booked this adventure with Shikar Safaris at the Wild Sheep Foundation's annual convention in

Reno, Nevada. Shikar Safaris is also a contributor to my local Mid-Michigan SCI Chapter and many of our members have gone on hunts with them. All my pre-hunt research and background was met with positive feedback in regards to hunting in Turkey, and with Shikar Safaris.

My flights went off with out a hitch and my cameraman, Andy MacDonald, met me at Istanbul International Airport. In addition, this great opportunity to hunt Bezoar Ibex would be captured on film for future episodes of Trijicon's World of Sports Afield, airing on the Sportsman's Channel. Andy and I were met by Shikar Safari staff and they booked us on a one-hour flight to Anatolia which is located in south central Turkey, right on the Mediterranean Sea. The next morning met us with incredible views out the window of our five-star hotel and set the tone for the remainder of our trip.

At this point our interpreter and guide, Halet Kilic, picked us up and we did a little

sightseeing tour of Anatolia before meeting for lunch with Kaan Karakaya, owner of Shikar Safaris. We had another breath taking view at lunch from the



restaurant which set along the shores of the Mediterranean. Kaan explained we would be hunting a mountain range about three hours east and a little north of Anatolia. There are local guides in these villages that monitor the Bezoar ibex movements and give us a head start on locating animals. After lunch we started out on the road with great excitement and anticipation of what lie ahead for us.

As the daylight began to fade, we rolled into the little village where we were to stay. I had the option of staying in a hotel about 45 minutes from the mountains we were hunting or stay in a house right in the village that lay at the base of the mountains. I opted for the vacant house which allowed us 45 minutes extra rest and less driving time each morning. By the time we got there it was dark. Our house was cold and damp inside. There was a wood heating furnace located directly in the center of our room. We promptly built a fire and retired to the couches that we had to sleep on and called it a night. My initial thoughts were, this isn't a five-star hotel but it sure beats sleeping on the ground in a tent.

Morning came early when Halet woke us at 4:00 a.m. to get the day started. We went to a little café in the village that opened just for us so we could have breakfast. After taking on some much needed calories we drove to the base of the mountains, watched the sun rise and started putting some "glass" (binoculars) on the mountains. It wasn't long before we were seeing ibex and started to climb up for a closer look. At that point I was very thankful for the hearty breakfast we had eaten.

Our morning consisted of spotting and stalking up

into the snow covered peaks in search of the majestic Bezoar ibex. Although we saw lots of ibex, nothing sparked the interest of our guides' well-trained eyes. It was nearly noon so we started our decent off the mountains. On the accent, we had a very hard-packed frozen crust of snow to walk on, which was more like walking on a hard-top road. On the decent however,

the sun had peaked out and warmed the air to around mid 40's which started the thawing process of the snows hard-packed surface. Now, with my 235 lb frame plus my pack, rifle and gear, I began sinking past my knees on every step. I was much bigger than the guides, therefore they continued on with little difficulty; but certainly chuckled at my challenged hike down the mountain.

Once arriving back at the truck, we ate lunch that was cooked over an open fire. It is amazing how good warm food tastes while out in the wilderness. The remainder of our day was spent driving to high points and glassing the mountainsides. At one particular location at mid-day, we spotted what most certainly could have been our prized ibex. However Halet and I both agreed, that this was day one and if we didn't disturb this group we could always come back later and relocate them. From there we pushed on to yet another breath taking location and began to glass.

Something special happened at this spot. Once the guides looked with their binoculars, it became a hurried dash to retrieve the Lieca spotting scope. This was the most excitement and emotion shown thus far and I knew something spectacular had to be on that mountain. I was now seeing it with my own

binoculars and was quickly directed to look through the spotting scope. You see the communication barrier is an issue but the body language told the story far before Halet translated the words. My first glance through the spotting scope confirmed my suspicions. There was not only one giant ibex over a mile straight across the mountain range, there were at least two giants.

It was now time for a game plan, and with only about an hour of daylight left, the decision was already made for us. We didn't have time to make a climb to collect any of them, so we just had to watch and put them to bed for morning.

After dinner and retiring to our now warm vacant house, Andy and I spent over an hour lying on our couches in the darkness talking about the next morning's climb. The

excitement of seeing these incredible ibex stacked up on the mountain was more than we could take when trying to fall asleep. We had to get some rest because Halet informed us that at our 4:00 a.m. wake up we would skip breakfast and just have a snack. We needed to make this climb under the cover of darkness to relocate the ibex for a shot opportunity at daylight.

We soon drifted off to sleep. In what seemed like only minutes, Halet was knocking on our door. We were up, dressed and packing up the mountain by 4:30 a.m. We walked in a line as quietly as possible for nearly two straight hours. As we neared our resting point to await the daylight, a distinctive sound beneath my feet triggered memories of 30 years earlier. We had reached the snow pack and sounded like a herd of cattle crunching through the crusted snow. Again my thoughts were that we wouldn't see anything while making this much noise. But to my surprise, as the night gave way to day, we could see the first ibex ram laying at the very top sky lighted to the rest of the world below.

We were already laying in place with a range of 355 yards to the top. Halet asked if I was comfortable with this distance and I assured him I was. At this time I dialed my Trijicon AccuPoint, 5x20x50 to 300 yards. I believed that the up-hill angle would make this 355



yard shot be more like 300 yards. We just stayed still as everyone anxiously awaited the ibex to stand up for the day. By now we could see that there were multiple ibex laying all over the rocky face and I really had my pick of which one. There were two in particular; one non-typical that had one of his horns growing out the side of his head, and another who's horns were atypical and grew way high off his head. I immediately locked in on this one and knew he was "the one!"

The sun began to shine on the rocky cliffs and one at a time the ibex began to stand and stretch. At this point they worked from our left to right. As the tall sweeping horns of

the ram I wanted worked his way in and around the other ibex, rocks, and scrub-brush, I looked for an open space to pick my shot. Just as I planned and hoped, he stepped in this

spot clear of the other ibex and my crosshairs settled in...just behind his shoulder as he stopped to look down the mountain. Like so many times before, as the sight picture settled, the squeeze of my trigger was instinctive and the shot rang out in the crisp early morning air. Now the ibex were scattering everywhere. I had no idea if my shot was true; but felt very confident it was. As I turned to look for feedback from my guides and cameraman they began to point at one ibex that had split off and ran straight down the mountain rather than across the top with the others. The excitement and smiles told me the shot was true!

We all started the climb for my trophy and once we located him, the thoughts and emotions were a bit overwhelming. The young boy that walked through the forest in Michigan to collect his very first whitetail deer is now a man hunting the rugged mountains of Turkey. There lay my prize...and a majestic prize he is. This trophy will be forever in my trophy room to represent the hunting heritage my father introduced me to 30 years before.

After only a few days of hunting, I was finished with my quest. When trying to book an earlier flight home, Kaan made me aware of another species of ibex located on the Datca Peninsula. This area was approximately

an eight-hour drive from Anatolia to the west. The peninsula was approximately 80 miles long and only 10-15 miles across. Therefore it was surrounded by the Mediterranean Sea on one side and the Asian seas on the other. The ibex were a completely different color and the horns were more curved as they grow off the ibex's head. Kaan explained that I had another seven days left so if I'd like to hunt this Datca ibex I was welcome to do so.



After our beautiful eight-hour drive along the Mediterranean seashore we arrived in a beautiful little village. We met with local guides and spent the night in a little apartment over a downtown business area. The next morning we woke before daylight, had a nice breakfast in a local restaurant, and made our way to the mountains just outside the village.

We glassed for the first hour and then made our way to the seashore. They took us to a little Turkish fishing harbor on the Asia sea side. Our guide paid a Turkish fisherman to take us along the shoreline to glass the rocky faces and mountains along the sea in search of ibex. What a treat! This was way beyond my wildest dreams and wishes when booking the hunt.

This boat was maybe 14' to 16' long and went so slow and steady that we had no problems glassing. We moved along the gentle chop of the crystal clear aqua blue waters and within an hour located ibex not far from the shoreline on the rocky cliffs. The plans were quickly made to have us taken ashore for a climb and closer look.

After we all made it safely to the rugged rocky beach, we started our climb and continued for nearly 2 1/2 hours before a lone ibex ram was spotted laying in the sun at the very top. We were in the bottom of a valley at this point and hurriedly started up the mountain directly across from the ram so we could set up for a shot across the canyon. This was straight up on loose, rugged bolder rocks and the fear now was having them fall on the person behind you; which in my case was cameraman Andy MacDonald. The ram was the only ibex we could see and as we got closer to a shooting position, it spotted us and stood up to investigate. Now we all scrambled to get in position for a steady shot. My guides were so stressed and pressuring me to shoot fast. My interpreter Halit however, encouraged me to

take my time and make a good shot. I certainly agreed with his logic. Therefore, I settled in as the ram watched our direction. I didn't have time to range the shot but estimated it around 250 yards so I made no adjustment to the scope. Again my instincts took over as the sight picture settled just behind the ram's shoulder. The rifle reported through the canyon and the distinct sound of a solid hit returned in the report. The ram jumped straight down hill as other ibex we couldn't previously

see began to run from our left to right. As they cut through the open areas and over the top out of sight, my ram did not follow. We were all certain my shot was true and my trophy lay above us out of our sight in the cliffs.

Now was actually one of the most challenging parts of the hunt. Recovering my trophy from the steep mountains and cliffs above us. My guides felt it was too risky for all of us to make the climb, so they sent one man on a two-hour hike to locate the ibex. His voice came from above and although very clear, still in a language I couldn't understand. The cheers from the rest of our Team below however were unmistakable...my trophy ibex was down and my shot was true! Now for the difficult task of lowering my ibex down a 300- foot cliff to where we waited below. This took approximately another hour to accomplish as a rope had to be secured to the ibex's horns and the trophy lowered down ever so gently. With only 30 feet to go until the trophy reached us in the canyon his horns hung up in some brush growing out from the rock face. The man lowering the ibex now had to make his way down to cut a limb, which released the ram. This triggered a chain reaction with the slack rope and the ibex fell the last 30 feet. Luckily no one was hurt and the ibex was just fine too. The team of guides quickly set up for pictures; then skinned, cut and quartered my trophy within 30 minutes.

The hike back down the mountain and out to the seashore was the most gratifying of the hunt. I was leaving this beautiful land a successful hunter with not only one amazing trophy, but two incredible trophies. There are so many people to thank for this opportunity I wouldn't even know where to begin. But without a father that introduced me to hunting over 30 years ago, this story would have never been written... Thanks again Dad!

TURKEY GRAND SLAM

BY JOANNE WITTE

Larry and I hunted Gould's turkeys in Durango Mexico at Rancho El Durango from May 2 to 6, 2015. This was to be the final turkey for our Grand Slam. There are six types of turkeys in North America. They are Eastern (in Michigan and the Eastern US), Merriam's (in Western states), Rio Grande (in Texas and Western US), Osceola (in Florida), Ocellated (in Southern Mexico) and Gould's (in the mountains of Mexico.) We had them all except this one.

Our journey began with an overnight stay in Grand Rapids before catching a 6:00am flight to Atlanta, then Mexico City and finally Durango, Mexico. On May 2 we made it to the airport on time, got a wheelchair for Larry, made it through TSA OK, and boarded on time. There we sat for 50 minutes while they fixed a "minor mechanical problem". We were very glad we had a 4 hour layover in Atlanta.

We left Atlanta on time and arrived in Mexico City where a very nice attendant pushed Larry's wheelchair. The Mexico City airport is terrible. They have flights listed on an overhead board but no gates are listed. Also there is no convenient place to get something to eat. We were parked in a general holding area and were very grateful to see the wheelchair attendant return and get us to the correct gate.

After arriving in Durango we had no trouble locating Lobo who drove us to the ranch. Our luggage even arrived without incident. We did not take our own shotguns so that made the trip much easier. Later, Larry would regret leaving his modified shotgun with a pistol grip at home.



The ride to the ranch lasted about 1 ½ hours. We started out in the flats and drove toward the Sierra Madre mountains. The trip up the mountain was beautiful but the road was very narrow, steep and rough. We finally arrived at the ranch where there was a locked gate and a gatekeeper.

We reached the ranch house about 9:00pm where a very good supper awaited us. We met Alonso Ayala, the owner, and several other hunters. There was a young fellow from Houston TX who was there for the second time this year. On his first trip he shot a turkey with 22 inches of beard (two beards) and this time he wanted a bearded hen so he could have full mounts of both birds. Dr. Eric Gustafson, a resident of Mexico and partner in the hunting operation at the ranch, was there. He did not hunt but knew lots of history of the ranch. There were two other hunters from Ironwood Michigan. They were Richard and

Bernie, owner and manager of a plywood plant in Bessemer Michigan. Richard lives in Monterey for most of the year while Bernie and Richard's sons run the plant.

Our room was very beautiful and the bathroom was very nice. We had a king size bed, several dressers, and a huge closet. The only drawback was the lack of lighting in the room. We have found this to be typical in remote hunting areas. There were times we had to use our flashlights to see what was in our bags. We decided we would not completely unpack until the next day when we could pull up the shades and see better. The older we get the more light we need!

Our hunts began the next morning by getting up

at 4:00am so we could be in our blinds before it got light. Breakfast was sliced mangos, papaya, kiwi, fresh squeezed orange juice, muffins, cookies and, of course, coffee. The plan was to have a real breakfast about 10:00am when we came in from the morning hunt.

We chose shotguns from the supply at the ranch. I chose one very much like the one I had shot at home. Our turkey guns at home have scopes so I had to practice with open sights before we left for our hunt. The lack of a scope did not bother Larry.

My guide was Lobo, a very knowledgeable and energetic young man. He spoke some English but I only know about 5 words in Spanish so it was surprising how well we communicated.

We went to a pop-up camo tent blind set up about 30 yards from a mechanical feeder at the edge of a small clearing. Lobo made a little opening in the netting in the front of the blind for me to shoot through. I had a very small field of view. The terrain was very hilly, mountainous and heavily timbered in some places.

Lobo had a small cooler box with water and granola bars as did all the guides. He carried in a chair for me and checked to see it was the right height to shoot from.

Just as it got light 5 hens came to the feeder from the woods behind it. Very soon a gobbler came from the right. Lobo said it was a good one with about an 11 inch beard. The guides were very good at judging the length of the turkey beards and spurs.

I got the gun up, sighted very carefully down the rib to the bead and shot. The bird went down. Lobo rushed out to make sure it was dead. Unfortunately I had shot off part of the beard so Lobo picked up the hairs one by one and later tied them together. Sure enough it was an 11 inch beard but it had no spur on one leg and ¼ inch spur on the other leg. At 7:30 am the first morning we headed back to the ranch.

I HAD MY GRAND SLAM OF TURKEYS

The rest of the hunters straggled in. The young man from Houston had his bearded hen.

We had wonderful breakfast of omelets. Then it was time for a rest until a big dinner at 2:00pm before going out for the afternoon hunt.

For most of our down times we sat on soft leather couches on a covered pavilion separate from the house. There were pillows and fleece throws on the couches that we used often because it sometimes got a little chilly out there.



We were hunting at about 8,200 feet above sea level. That could lead to altitude sickness for those of us who live in Michigan which is about 600 plus feet above sea level. We had read an article on altitude sickness and it said to take aspirin if you got a headache, the most common symptom. I suffered a little the first night and day but because I was having surgery on my foot shortly after we got home, I could not take aspirin.

The ranch has been in Alonso's family for 50 years. He lives in Monterey most of the time but comes to the ranch when he has hunters. In addition to turkey hunting they also hunt Coues deer. They raise cattle on the ranch and harvest trees. They plant about 5000 pines a year so they will have a regular crop to harvest. They

also imported elk hoping to get a huntable population. In the summer they operate camps for children.

The grounds around the ranch are beautiful with several fountains, many plantings and beautiful stone fences. Alonso said they get electricity by a generator and solar power. If the fountains are running the generator is on.

About 25 ranch hands live in houses near the main house. Alonso has a manager who runs the day to day operations. The families with children make arrangements for the children to live in the town at the foot of the mountain during the week so the children can go to school. They are at the ranch on the weekends. This is a BIG operation.

Larry's guide was Calaco. They saw lots of turkeys and Larry shot one but they could not recover it. Larry had a great deal of trouble using the shotgun. At home his shotgun has a thumbhole stock with a pistol grip. Since having his right wrist fused he has no movement in the wrist and it is almost impossible for him to hold on to a regular shotgun.

The food we had was very good and very interesting. It was not at all like our Mexican food here in the US. We had shrimp wrapped in whitefish, shish-ka-bobs with shrimp, bacon, and vegetables, steak, several different kinds of pasta, poached salmon, prickly pear salad, flan, mango cake, and every night we had a very good soup. I got the recipe for the spinach soup. We had hibiscus iced tea to drink that was very refreshing. Our big meal was at 2:00pm and a lighter meal at about 9:30 or 10:00pm when the hunters returned.

Each day at lunch we were given a slip of paper with the name of the area we were to hunt. We went to a different area every hunt. It took 15 to 20 minutes for the guide to set up the blind, hide the truck, and get back to the blind for the hunt.

I decided to shoot another bird with a beard I would not shoot off--hopefully. For my afternoon hunt it was a very long bumpy drive. From the blind I watched many colorful birds, saw cactus in bloom and a Coues deer. One bird that looked very much like our red headed woodpecker is called an acorn woodpecker. About 7:00pm a flock of turkeys came in but they were all hens and toms with 9 to 10 inch beards. I wanted one with a bigger beard.

Larry went back to the same spot where he had been. Calaco had seen several big turkeys there that would not come to the bait. He moved the blind to the other side of the feeder hoping to lure one in. No luck.

The next morning I saw many jakes and hens. There was a big gobbler beside my blind but it would not come in to the feeder so I could get a shot at it.

Larry went back to his same spot but again no luck.

For the afternoon hunt I was so close to the house I could have walked back if need be. Lobo and I got there at 3:00pm and did not see a bird until 7:00pm. I began to think this was a bad spot but Lobo said the birds roost in the trees behind our blind.

Sure enough about 7:00pm 2 hens came. Lobo had spotted a tom about 300 yards out in the field beside the tent that I could not see. Eventually he came to the feeder. Lobo said he had a 10 inch beard and 1 inch spurs so I shot him. He had a 10 ¼ inch beard and ¾ inch spurs. Spurs really make a big difference when scoring the turkeys.

Larry spent extra time in his blind but did not see a bird that had both a long beard and good spurs. Even though he did not get a bird he had a thrilling hunt with lots of action. He also enjoyed his guide very much.

Eric took me up to see the lovely chapel on the hill behind the main ranch house. It was being renovated so I could not see it at its best. Eric said the ashes of Alonso's father and brother usually sat on the altar. It was a very steep climb up the hill and I was glad I had my walking stick. Coming down was easier.

The last day of the hunt Lobo and I went coyote hunting. We saw some beautiful scenery and some cactus in bloom, but no coyotes. When we got back to the ranch Larry had already gone out to hunt. He and Calaco took sandwiches and intended to stay longer. Unfortunately still no bird.

That afternoon I packed and read my book while sitting on the leather couch covered with a blanket. It was chilly but still nice to be outside. Larry continued to pass up birds looking for the right combination of beard and spurs.

The next morning we were up at 3:15am to start the journey down the mountain for a 6:00am flight home. The trip home was a disaster. First the ticket agent in Durango could not get us boarding passes all the way through to Grand Rapids. Therefore we had to pick up our bags in Mexico City, recheck them, and get boarding passes there.

There was a wheelchair waiting for Larry in Mexico City but the attendant pushed us off in the wrong direction. We tried to explain to him that we had to go the other way to pick up our bags but he did not understand English. Finally Larry stopped

him and said we need someone who speaks English. He found someone; Larry explained our problem and she got us headed in the right direction. Once we got our bags it was not too difficult to get them routed to Grand Rapids.

The attendant looked on his computer and told us our gate but when we got there another airline was using that gate. Once again, there were signs showing the flights but no gates were listed. Finally about a half hour before we were to leave I found the gate. However there was no wheelchair so Larry had to walk down a very long ramp.

Once we got to Atlanta we had to get the turkey fans and beards checked in at Customs. We knew they had to be cleared by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and we had the appropriate paperwork. However the agent said they had to keep the fans until Fish and Wildlife could clear them. They were placed in a freezer with paperwork saying they were to be kept frozen. So we boarded our plane to Grand Rapids with our turkeys in limbo somewhere.

After we got to Grand Rapids it was an hour drive home. We got home about 12:30am on May 7. Needless to say we slept in that day.

Our story does not end here! We had the May season for Michigan turkey hunting. Because I was having surgery on my foot on Monday, May 11 we decided to go hunting at home on Saturday, May 9. Larry very handily shot a big turkey at 7:00am using his own shotgun and I shot one just before noon even though we hunted in steady rain. Larry was scheduled for surgery on his right shoulder on May 26 so we were very glad we had our Michigan birds.

After we got in the house and opened the family room drapes we saw five grey foxes in our yard between the house and the river. There was a male, a female, and 3 kits. We have seen a fox in the yard off and on for about the last 3 years. Often we leave food scraps out for it.

We spent most of the next two hours watching the foxes. What fun! The kits tumbled and rolled and jumped around just like kittens. The female was standing on alert watching them and they nursed greedily under her on two occasions. Even though we were watching out the window the foxes appeared to be unconcerned. We have a big deck in front of our house



and we think they were probably born under the deck.

Our saga does not end yet. On May 8 US Fish and Wildlife in Atlanta called me to say they had cleared the turkeys. Then I called periodically to try to find out where they were. I could get no help from anyone—Fish and Wildlife, Customs, Delta Cargo. Finally I got an air waybill

number from Fish and Wildlife in Atlanta on May 28. Then on a whim I called Customs at the Grand Rapids airport. The agent said the birds were there but they had not cleared them. Later that morning he called to say the birds were cleared.

On Friday, May 29 we drove to Delta Cargo at the Grand Rapids airport to pick up the birds. The agent at Delta Cargo said they had been there for over 2 weeks, not frozen, waiting for Grand Rapids Customs to clear them. He said clearance came the day before but by then the birds were very “stinky”. Boy was that the truth!

I will probably have only a picture to document my Grand Slam of turkeys.

We had a great time hunting at El Durango and hope to go back but this time Larry will take his own shotgun. Alonso said there is a direct flight from Houston to Durango on Saturdays and it is much easier to import a gun into Durango than into Mexico City. He also said it is easier to import birds in Houston.

The Wildlife Gallery helped us get the necessary paperwork to import the birds into the US. They are an “approved establishment” certified by the US Department of Agriculture to accept birds from Mexico. The tannery staff is now trying to see if anything can be salvaged from my birds. We were told by staff that next time we can hire a Customs Broker to handle the importation of the birds.

We were told recently by US Fish and Wildlife in Atlanta that it was the responsibility of Delta Cargo to keep the birds frozen. When Larry called Delta Cargo in Grand Rapids to ask why the birds were not frozen he was told they have a freezer but it was broken and management decided not to repair it. It was extremely frustrating and upsetting to have the birds ruined by the incompetence of Delta Cargo after we spent so much time making sure we had all the correct paperwork.

Oh well. Better luck next time--maybe.

North Carolina Swan Hunt

by John Baker

Conversations with my father are always a bit unorthodox and sometimes jump from topic to topic without the second party knowing if he is on a new topic or the old topic. His mind works like a supercomputer. When he said "I found a guy to take us swan hunting" I was ready to keep him on point until I had all the info I needed. He found a guide service in North Carolina that specializes in Tundra Swan hunts.

We were going swan hunting. Can you even legally take a swan? After some research I discovered that swan permits are given in the state of North Carolina on lottery system. There were applicants for the 5,000 available tundra swan permits for the 2014-2015 season. The season runs from November 8th to January 31st. The application deadline is October 31st. We were set for a waterfowl adventure. My brother and brother in-law would be making the trip with us.

Our destination was the Pamlico Sound in North Carolina. With a browning 10 gauge in tow and a fresh box of Hevi-Shot we were ready for action. Upon



arrival our outfitter had set us up with two hotel rooms that were very well equipped. After a short dinner in the parking lot on the tailgate of the truck it was off to bed. It would be 5:00 am before we knew it.

Teddy "Tadpole" Gibbs met us at 5 am. Wow a waterfowl outfitter that showed up on time!! We have had several waterfowl trips where we sat around waiting for the outfitter or their helpers. We were met by the owner and one of his assistant guides. They were professional in every sense of the way. The trip was starting out on a positive. Skies were clear but windy. At least one out of two for the waterfowlers dream day in the field.

We were split into two groups. I would be hunting with my brother in law. After a short ride to the planted winter wheat field we dropped off at the blind and proceeded to set up the decoys while the guide parked the truck. The cowboy heater was coming up fast. We worked diligently to set up the decoys. The guide seemed happy with the spread we had made when he came back to the blind. We hunkered down for a sit. We did not sit ten minutes and the big birds



were flying. A pair of swans came in downwind across the front of our spread. It was over before it started. Both of our swans came thundering down. What a majestic animal. We shot two beautiful swans. It was high fives and picture time. We had the decoys picked up, birds tagged, and back in the truck within 30 minutes. (hunters are allowed one swan permit per year). The hunt was very similar to a Canadian goose hunt. The decoys were the same decoy's we use in Michigan for geese but spray painted white.

We drove to a neighboring farm where my brother and Father were putting on a poor display of wing shooting. We watched them shoot at, and miss two separate volleys of birds. We had a front row seat of the miss brothers in action. We were laughing hard and after the second set of birds were wondering if they had enough shells!! The miss brothers were both shooting 10 gauges and were trying to kill the swans via heart attack. As the 3rd set of swans came in, they knocked down one and then a second. Both were wounded and it took a footrace to finally finish the job. Our mission was complete. For some it just took more shells than others.



After lots of laughing and pictures we realized our hunt was over and started talking about planning our return trip. Our outfitter "Tadpole" took our tagged birds home to throw them in the deepfreeze. We were heading out in the morning and our swans would be frozen for the ride home and their final destination at the taxidermist.

We spent the rest of the day bumming around town and resting up. A great dinner was cooked on the barbeque that we brought along on the trip. The restful afternoon was a nice change of pace from our busy work schedules.

We had a great hunt. Our outfitter was nothing but professional. Jennetts Guide Service out of Engelhard, North Carolina has a 100 % success rate on swans since its inception in 1984. It's not hard to see why; with all the hard work he puts into his hunts. If you need more info or want to book a hunt with "Tadpole" call 1-252-925-1521 or email the Tadpole: teddy@jennettesguideservice.com or for more info about the hunting permit and license's you can visit the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission at (919) 707-0061.

ROE HUNT IN SCOTLAND

by Josh Christensen



The idea of hunting roe deer has been on my mind since around 2005, when I first made the goal of hunting on the six hutable continents. When looking at the continent of Europe I found the roe would easily fit into my work schedule as a school teacher. The roe is an interesting little deer that gets hard antlered in May, breeds in July and August but doesn't give birth until the following spring. This would allow me the opportunity to hunt in the northern hemisphere in the summer.

While researching for an outfitter on the internet I found that there was no shortage of hunting outfits for roe deer, but their locations and prices varied widely. In 2010, I noticed that the Michigan Chapter of SCI was auctioning a donated roe deer hunt that was a bit interesting; it offered a hunt for two roe deer, one of which would be taken on Her Majesty's royal estate in Scotland. This hunt peaked my interest so I began to research the company, International Adventures Unlimited, and found positive reviews.

Although I wasn't lucky enough to win the hunt at auction that year or the next year, it didn't stop me from trying and in 2012 I had the winning bid and plans were made to make the trip to Scotland in June of 2015. My wife, Sara, would be accompanying me, and we would make it into a two week vacation (the hunt was only for five days, with three days of hunting). We devised an itinerary to visit northern Scotland for three days, do our hunt, move on to London for three days and then travel by train to Paris for the final three days.

Travel arrangements were made, reservations booked and we were setting off for Scotland on June sixth from Grand Rapids International airport with a connection through Newark. Upon arriving in Edinburgh on June seventh we got our rental car and drove, on the wrong side of the road which was interesting, to Inverness. Inverness would act as our base while traveling around northern Scotland. Over the next three days we visited the site of the final battle on British soil (Culloden Battlefield), went to an ancient

burial ground, tried to find Nessie on Loch Ness and visited Plodda Falls, which has a waterfall over one hundred feet tall. We also immersed ourselves into the Scottish culture by trying haggis and drinking Scottish beer. The haggis wasn't nearly as bad as people had suggested back home. In fact, I enjoyed the taste and texture and had it multiple times.

On June tenth, we made our way back to Edinburgh and met our transport to Ballater, a mountainous region of Scotland, and the hotel we would be staying in for the hunt. That night Michael, the owner of the operation, explained how the next three days would go. We were told of our early mornings and late evenings for hunting because we were so far north (the same latitude as Sitka, Alaska) and the day light hours are longer than back home. We were also told about the daily touring opportunities his wife Danielle had planned for the non-hunters and hunters who finish their hunts early. Every hunter in camp was brimming with excitement and anticipation of what the next few days would bring and the 3:45a.m. wakeup call came quickly after going to bed.

The ground was covered with a heavy dew on the first morning, the eleventh, and the temperatures were in the upper forties, with a day time high approaching seventy with clear sunny skies. We were told this would be beneficial because roe deer don't like to move when it is cold and rainy, which is what the weather had been like the past few days.

We were on the road heading to the Balmoral Estate (the Royal families Scotland estate) by 4:15. The only people allowed to hunt on this estate are the royal family, their guests and people who hunt with International Adventures Unlimited. Sara would be hunting first out of the two of us. We met our stalker, Calum, and we began our hunt. Calum was dressed in traditional Scottish hunting attire with wool pants and a collared shirt with a tie. He was a young stalker at the age of 23, but had been doing this kind of work since he was 16. The Balmoral Estate is huge, at around 80,000 acres, and some of the hunters in our group went to the far reaches of the property, but we were able to hunt within the immediate vicinity of the castle.

The main method of roe deer hunting in Scotland is to drive around big areas of land and try to locate the bucks. Once one is spotted, we would drive on and find a route to make a stalk. It didn't take

us long to find roe deer, but most were doe. We did see one fairly tall antlered buck, but he didn't have the typical three points on each side that signifies a mature buck. We drove along the roads around the castle area one complete time and began the route a second time when Calum explained that it might take multiple times around the same area before seeing a big enough buck, because these deer are so small and can easily hide. A mature roe buck in Great Britain is only about 55 pounds and two and a half feet tall at the shoulder.

It wasn't long into our second revolution around the property when we spotted a doe and a mature six point buck. We glassed him for a few seconds before moving along the road to a position above them, on a hill. We parked the vehicle near some stables and began our stalk, Calum in the lead followed by Sara then me. We climbed over a fence and started our way towards where we last saw the deer. As we were cresting the hill we parked behind we saw the roe doe and then the buck run into the hilly wooded area to our right. We quickly backed out to the vehicle and drove around to the area they were headed, to see if we could find them. We didn't spook the deer and the wind wasn't blowing toward them so we weren't sure why they took off, but they did. Through conversations with roe deer hunters they all seem to say the same thing, that roe deer have a sixth sense. Many of them seem to know when something isn't right and will bolt never to be seen again. We were hoping this didn't just happen to us.

We took our time, driving slowly, through the wooded area the roe deer had run into, looking on both sides of the vehicle, but to no avail. It appeared they had disappeared on us. Calum thought we would still have a chance at that buck, but wanted to check another place before circling back around. The other place did not produce any roe deer for us so we drove to the area where we first saw the six point and doe then circled around to where we last saw them. As we crept along Sara, was the first to spot a deer ahead of us to the left on a hill in the woods. Calum stopped the vehicle and shut it off as we glassed the area and saw that it was the doe and buck we had made the failed stalk on earlier. This time the buck was in front of the doe slowly grazing.

A plan was hatched for us to ease out of the truck and stay low to conceal our shapes from the deer as



we moved along the road to close the distance. We were able to creep within 80 yards of the deer and get up to a fence that Sara could use as a solid rest to shoot from. Calum set his .243 with a “modified” barrel (it had a sound suppressor on it) on the fence and Sara knelt behind it and when the buck turned quartering away from us she squeezed the trigger. The buck dropped in its’ tracks as the bullet entered behind the front shoulder and exited out his chest.

Congratulations, handshakes and high fives followed as Sara and I reveled in the fact that she just had the opportunity and succeed in shooting one of Her Majesty the Queens’ deer. When I say it was the Queens’ deer that is exactly what it was, you see in the United Kingdom the wildlife belongs to the land owners, not the government. So this deer was on the Royal Estate, making it one of the Queens’ deer. In the past people would be punished severely for shooting one of the royal families deer, but today commoners like Sara and I were allowed the opportunity.

Pictures were taken where he was shot as well as in front of the Balmoral Castle, which was less than a half mile away. The morning hunt was a huge success and it wasn’t even 6:45 yet. Michael was notified of the completion of our morning hunt and joined us and also took pictures.

One of the perks of finishing so early was we were able to make it back to the hotel and partake in the day trip Danielle had planned for the non-hunters, which included driving to the coast of the North Sea, where within its’ coastal cliffs stood an old picturesque castle as well as visiting two other castles on the interior of Scotland.

Once we returned from our historical journey we settled in for a wonderful three course meal before the hunters would depart for the evening hunt. That evening another hunter and I traveled to a neighboring estate of about 20,000 acres to hunt. My stalker for this evenings hunt was Duncan, a tall man in his twenties who was also decked out in traditional wool pants, collared shirt and a tie. Introductions were made and

then we were off to drive around the property to look for a mature roe buck. It was fairly warm, still in the 70’s, so the deer weren’t moving very much yet.

We did spot several roe doe and red deer hinds, but no buck early on. At this point Duncan wanted to stalk an area that was holding a big one he’d been after for several years. This area was very thick with bushes six to seven feet tall surrounding a swampy area. Earlier in the spring, Duncan had used a brush hog to mow down a path through the tall bushes so we had an easier path to stalk. The wind was in our favor as we started along the trail. We saw one roe doe before we

made our way into the swampy area, where we would see another doe and multiple buck rubs. But it wasn’t meant to be on this day because as we were walking through the swamp a roe buck started to bark, yes they bark like a dog to alarm others. He was barking from the thick bushes area we had past about ten minutes prior. The buck continued to bark for the next five minutes which told Duncan that was our buck, because he would always bark much longer than the average roe buck would. I could tell this buck was one Duncan really wanted because he had alluded him for so long, but he would have to wait to take another hunter after him because the buck was on to us and we had no chance.

Next, we drove to several other locations and began to see the deer were on the move. We saw three or four roe bucks, but none were mature enough according to Duncan so we continued on. Around 9:45 we were driving to a new location and observed a roe buck in a large horse pasture off the paved road we were traveling along. Duncan knew this buck and told me he was a nice six point but wanted to check another location before we made an attempt to stalk this buck. We drove on and Duncan told me of trying to put a stalk on the buck in the pasture, but his attempt failed due to the cars and motorcycles driving by scared him off.

The other location only produced a doe and a small buck so we made our way back toward the pasture. Our plan was to park the truck about three quarters

of a mile from the pasture where the woods were fairly thick concealing the truck from the deer. Once parked we got out of the truck and proceeded towards the field. As we closed the distance we observed that there wasn't one deer in the field but three; a doe the mature buck Duncan knew was in the area, and another buck still in velvet.

The deer were about three hundred yards away on the far end of the field, which was down in a bit of a dip or valley. Directly in front of us was the old stone fence followed by a knoll that would get us to within 160 yards. So we went into stealth mode and began to duck walk toward the fence. Once we made it to the fence the knoll concealed us as we crawled over the fence and then began to inch our way toward the top of the knoll. Then one of the horses noticed something crawling around in its' field and it was very curious as to what we were. It began trotting around and snorting, which I thought was the end of our stalk. We froze for a few minutes hoping the horse would lose interest, but that didn't work because now another horse came and joined the first one. Now we had two horses running around and giving us too much attention. Duncan decided we needed to push forward and see if the deer were still there. He began his belly crawl to the top of the knoll and quickly waved me up. The deer were still there and instead of running off, like I thought they would, they too were jumping around like the horses. They must have thought the horses were playing and decided they would too.

The rifle was set up on bipod legs and the deer were ranged at 154 yards. Duncan and I were now side by side as we discussed which buck was the right one. "He's the one in the middle", Duncan instructed, then they jumped around a little more. "Now he's the one right behind the white horse", was the

next thing I heard. The horses had moved between us and the deer obscuring my shot opportunity. It didn't take long for the horses to run off and allow me to take the shot. I got the buck in the crosshairs, clicked off the safety and before I knew it the bullet was on its way. The shot hit its mark

as the buck ran only about 75 yards before dropping. Not only did this rifle have a very light trigger pull it also had a modifier and the other buck didn't even move. In fact, he was still grazing in the field.

Handshakes were made as the excitement of the hunt was retold. The horses made this hunt very interesting and one I'll not soon forget. Photos were taken and then I looked at my watch, it was 10:30 at night and we still had shooting light. The buck was a very nice representative of a roe buck with six nice points.

Our first day of hunting was over and it was a very successful one, not only for Sara and me, but for the majority of our camp. Five out of the six hunters in camp had at least one deer down and two of the guys were done with two deer each.

That night was a short one as I didn't get to bed until 11:30 and my wakeup call was at 3:00 because we had about a two hour drive to a different piece of property that had some whoppers. When talking to Michael about the opportunity of shooting a very large roe deer he told me of a property he could hunt that was very strictly managed fairly far from the hotel, down in the lowlands that were filled with farm fields. This valley is only about 50 to 75 feet above sea level and was once a marsh land, but is now very fertile with plenty of good minerals in the soil. He equated the deer there to whitetail from Illinois with larger antlers and body size. This property is 1800 acres and only five roe buck a year are harvested from it.

After a long drive through the mountains and





country side of Scotland we arrived at the farm we would be hunting. My stalker for this hunt was Peter, an experienced hunter in his sixties with a personality that was very enjoyable. Peter was the type of guy that has a wealth of knowledge and can talk about any topic brought up. Introductions were made and Peter, Michael and I loaded up in Peters' truck and headed out around the property. Peter was very aware of the animals on his property and where they usually would be hanging out.

The morning was a bit chilly, in the forties, with the skies clear and the sun starting to rise to warm things up. We first saw two doe as we were leaving Peters' driveway which he said was a good sign. Not long after that we spotted a buck and doe out in a hay field about 400 yards out. The buck was heavy in the antler, but he wasn't very tall so we moved on.

The property had a variety of crops, including wheat, rape, beans and hay. I noticed the vegetation was much higher than in the mountains where we were hunting before. The wheat was about two and a half to three feet tall, making it difficult to see any deer that were feeding or hiding in it. And the rape (a different kind of rape than we have here) was at least four feet tall concealing the deer altogether. Each field was about 900 yards deep and 300 yards wide.

In this farming area the roads were set up like those in Michigan in square miles, and as we continued around the rectangular shape of the property, we spotted a few more roe deer, but they were either doe or smaller bucks. We did see three deer in the rape field, but we didn't get a very good look at them because the vegetation was

so high we would only see them when they jumped. It was almost comical to see them bound along, it looked like the "whack a mole" game in arcades where the mole comes up and then down before you can do anything.

As we got close to the end of our first drive around the roads on the property we stopped at the field directly across the road from Peters' house to glass, like we did at all the open fields. This was the field where we saw the doe and smaller heavy horned buck earlier in the morning. Michael was the first to see a buck at the far end of the field. We were all able to get our binoculars on him for about sixty seconds before he disappeared into the wooded area at 900 yards from the road.

From our brief look at the buck we knew he was worth another look because we could see his antlers above his ears at that distance. Peter drove his truck down the two-track along the left hand side of the field for about 100 yards before we got out and started down the track on foot. We walked about 200 yards from the truck before taking another two-track to the left around an area of woods to conceal our movement. That trail circled us back to the field we saw the buck in and we were about 200 yards from where he entered into the woods.

When we came to the field where we glassed the big roe, we saw a buck walking out of the little woods the buck went into, but this one was the smaller one from earlier that day. We figure the bigger buck must have pushed the little one out of the woods when he entered.

Peter explained that the piece of woods the roe buck went into was small and he would most likely come back

out the way he went in and we should try to wait him out. The plan was for me to crawl out onto the two-track on the side of the field and lay in the prone. If he came back out into the same field this would afford me a good opportunity to have a shot. After about ten minutes of waiting Peter instructed Michael and me to stay where we were and watch for the buck as he would go to look around the side of the woods where the buck might have gone into a wheat field.

Three to five minutes later Peter returned and let us know the buck wasn't in the wheat field. About that same time the buck reemerged from the woods into the field we glassed him in. He was about 220 yards away. I was in the prone and was able to get him in the scope only to have some taller grass obscure my line of sight. By moving my position slightly I was able to reacquire my target. The buck was moving slowing from my right to left and then he began walking towards me. When he was at about 200 yards he stopped and ran back into the woods. He never saw us and the wind was in our favor...the sixth sense.

At this point Peter told us to stay on this field while he would go see if the buck went to the wheat field. It didn't take Peter long to come back and motion for me to hurry along. I ran up the trail to where Peter was and we entered a wooded hedge row on the edge of the wheat field. I was quickly able to see the buck, but all I could see was his head because the wheat was up so high.

He was moving from right to left at 175 to 200 yards. As I looked around I recognized from this wood line I would have to take a standing shot into the field. Peter pointed out an old rickety fence post I could use to try to steady myself. As I grabbed the post and placed the rifle on my hand I quickly realized this post wasn't going to be as sturdy of a rest as I wanted. The buck walked up to a set of vehicle tracks, where someone had driven through the wheat field, and started walking along them, right towards us. As he got closer, I set the crosshairs of Michael's .270 on his chest and hoped that he would soon turn broadside.

The buck kept coming closer and closer, unaware of our presence. When he was about 90 yards out he turned and was quartering towards us. This was going to be the best opportunity I would have so I placed the crosshairs on his front shoulder and jerked the trigger. I didn't squeeze it like I should have, I jerked it. I thought at that instant that I had just blown my shot, but when

I looked to where the buck was standing he was gone. He had dropped in his tracks. We were all excited over the buck, even though I hadn't really concentrated on the antlers Michael and Peter had and they were sure to tell me he was a good one. Handshakes were exchanged and everyone was smiling, then the buck tried to get up and run away before falling right back down. My shot wasn't the best, it ended up hitting him in the spine but did the job.

After a little time, we walked up on the buck and there was no ground shrinkage. He was a tall and very heavy antlered old roe deer, with his bases growing so big they were grown together. Michael and Peter looked at the buck and his teeth and estimated he was about ten years old. He was a heavy antlered five point, one that Peter was very familiar with because it was living on the other side of the road behind his house for the past two years.

Once the buck was skinned out and we were all cleaned up, Peter invited us in for tea and short bread. We sat around the table exchanging hunting stories and the differences and similarities between our countries.

That afternoon when we got back to the hotel I had a long nap to try to catch up on the last few nights lack of sleep. That day every hunter in camp finished their hunt with a full day to spare. The next day, June thirteenth, all of the hunters and their wives went touring as we visited Queen Victoria's lake house, the inside of the Balmoral Estate castle and the church Queen Elizabeth and the royal family attends when they are at their estate in Scotland.

The remainder of our trip consisted of six days of touring. The first three days were in London where we saw and rode the London Eye (which looks like a giant bicycle wheel), we saw Westminster Abby, the Big Ben clock tower, the London Bridge, the Tower Bridge, the Tower of London (where the crown jewels are housed), Buckingham Palace and we took a day tour out to see Stonehenge. From there we took a train through the Chunnel on our way to Paris where we would spend our next three days. While in Paris we saw and climbed the Eiffel tower, saw the Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame and took a tour down the Seine River.

If you are looking for an exceptional hunt, with excellent food, picturesque scenery, great touring for non-hunters and a top notch outfitter look no further; a roe deer hunt with International Adventures Unlimited has it all.

AMERICAN WILDERNESS LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

BY BRENT CHAMBERS

"Please do not stop on the stairs or tarmac to take photographs. Proceed directly to the terminal." Those words spoken by the flight attendant upon rolling to a stop in the Jackson, Wyoming airport struck me as bizarre until I stepped out of the airplane and found myself instinctively reaching for my camera. She was right to warn us. The grandeur of the Tetons really did overwhelm passengers stumbling their way to the terminal. So began my week at the American Wilderness Leadership School in Wyoming's Bridger-Teton National Forest. The ride from Jackson to the campus in a large passenger van full of strangers was among the most memorable of my life. I was processing new people, stunning views, and the staff driver teaching our first lesson. That trifecta of engagement would remain, all day every day, until I reversed the journey back to the airport for the flight home.

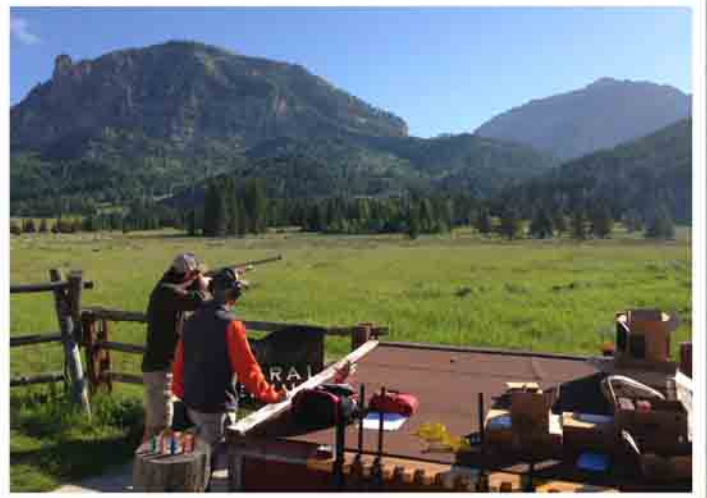
Instead of articulating the day to day, which I'll get to in a moment, I want to state the most important thing readers of this article deserve to hear: the American Wilderness Leadership School is without question the most valuable pro-hunting and conservation tool

currently functioning in the United States. I state this not because I am familiar with all of them, but because I witnessed teachers that had never knowingly been in the presence of a real firearm high fiving each other after breaking a clay target. I spoke with others that came to see venison as a true alternative to grass fed beef. Most importantly, I watched people who had negative and sometimes legitimate stereotypes about hunters replace them with a new, much more positive image. This happened in seven days.

This isn't to say everything went as smoothly as possible. The days were very long and tightly scheduled. Students quickly figured out that if you wanted to brush your teeth after a meal you had to inhale your food and sprint to your cabin to find a spare few minutes. Two hour lectures stretched past that mark without breaks. This did get frustrating but added to the intense camaraderie that rapidly formed among attendees. Regrettably, on a few occasions debate took place on topics that should be approached outside of the scope of the school's mission. Upon seeing an AR-15 among the examples of sporting rifles one teacher,

utterly new to everything the school was offering, asked the instructor if that was the type used to murder kindergartners at Sandy Hook. Things devolved for a bit and created some negativity that was hard to shake, but all involved in this conversation parted with civility. There were literally teachers from California districts so large that schools are simply given numbers instead of names and others, like myself, who came from areas in which hunting and conservation are relatively close to being a way of life for many. This presented obvious challenges that the instructors met quite impressively on nearly every occasion.

The setting for the school defies description. The campus, made up of a massive main lodge with dorm rooms, classroom, trophy filled annex, library, gift shop and dining facility, is flanked by a variety of shooting ranges, a 3-D archery range, cabins, maintenance facilities, and a fire pit. Flowing in front of this expanse is Granite Creek, all of which is surrounded by mountains. Hiking trails snake this way and that and ever present are mule deer, the occasional moose, and little critters known as chislers which provided a lot of Caddy Shack jokes. Days were a mix of classroom and field work. A great deal of time was spent on archery instruction, culminating in a 100 question test that led to National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) certification. Handgun, rifle, and shotgun were given fair time too as was ecology, wilderness survival, and local history. Time was made for pure recreation like white water rafting and hiking. The instructors were fantastic, particularly guest speaker Harlan Kredit, the longest serving ranger in Yellowstone's history. Our first meal was brook trout and the dining bar stayed that high the entire week. Coffee was plentiful and often enjoyed before breakfast on a porch facing the mountains. Woven through all activities were Dr. San Julian's lessons on conservation and the enormous

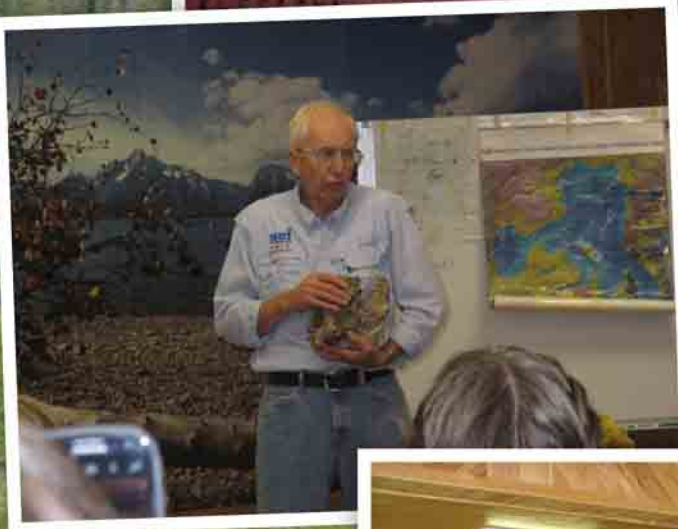


financial and personal commitment America's hunters stake in our wild places. He ended by asking the class if this work wasn't done by hunters and their organizations, who would take over this billion dollar challenge?

I am a dedicated a hunter and recreational shooter. Debating which era produced the best Model 70s or the ideal choke for pass shooting geese are conversations I love to have. Having said that, I've learned to keep that part of me quiet when in new settings until other, more universally accessible aspects of my personality begin to sync with new people. To that end it wasn't until the third day that my new friends at AWLS learned of my hobbies. By then they saw me as a professional peer with whom they had much in common. This led to me being a sort of after-hours representative of hunting, a challenge I feel I rose to

credibly. One morning I was doing a sunrise hike with a teacher named Kimberly from Ohio. A mule deer crossed in front of us and after we quietly watched its passing she asked me if I could really shoot an animal that beautiful during hunting season. I replied that I could, and then went on to explain my nearly spiritual relationship with killing, how my wife and I take great pride in having wild game being our family's primary protein source, and the honesty I feel in eating an animal killed on my own terms. Moments like this occurred regularly. An already incredible week was further enhanced by leaving feeling that not only had I learned, but contributed to the school's vital mission of demonstrating the conservation model ethical hunters embody. I am very thankful for the experience as it was unquestionably among the most powerful weeks of my life.





EASTERN CAPE OF SOUTH AFRICA

BY MARY HARTER



This hunt was from May 18 to June 4, 2014. We left Grand Rapids for Atlanta where we were joined by Ivan Carter, who had arranged this trip. We flew on to Johannesburg, South Africa. From Atlanta to Johannesburg was 15 hours and 20 minutes with a six hour time difference. We overnighted at the African Sky House and flew the next day to Port Elizabeth and were driven to Port Alfred where we met up with Phillip Price and Jonathan Smith at eZulu's Puti River Lodge which was 6,000 acres. EZulu is owned by

Phillip and Charles Price from the Eastern Cape and Luke Corbett from Oklahoma. EZulu was formed in 2007 by purchasing 14 different properties and is the largest privately owned property in the Eastern Cape. Andy McDonald was our photographer.

Don's goal on this trip was to harvest a rhinoceros which completed his "Big 5" and we both wanted to complete the "African 29". From this property you could see the Indian Ocean and we harvested blue duiker, bontebok, cape bushbuck, blue wildebeest,



caracal, blesbok, and cape kudu. Don also went to a nearby property called Oceana which specialized in photo safaris. They were doing some remodeling and wanted Don to harvest an old female rhino that hadn't had offspring in many years.

The first day we went out for blue duikers running pineapple fields with Jack Russell terriers using shotguns. They set me up where the duikers usually cross into a wooded area near a stream. Around came the terriers and into a thicket came the duiker. I shot through the brush and down he went. I had mine in the first ten minutes of the hunt for which they had allowed four days. Don shot his a little later. What a beautiful, plush area with a sensory overload with all the flowers, plants, sage brush smells, plus the pineapple. This seems to be a more prosperous area than other areas we have been in Africa. They have better homes, roads, stores, gas stations, etc. This area is full of game animals. Today we saw ostrich, impala, rhinos, kudu, blue wildebeest, giraffe, red hartebeest, emu, eland, sable, and zebra plus later I shot a bontebok and a cape bushbuck.

The next morning during breakfast, we received a call for me to go shoot a caracal. I went out with my guide, Jonathan (21), to where they had one treed. We heard the dogs and followed the sound down and around through trees like an apple orchard down along a swamp. Finally there he was and

after trying to get an open area through all of the tree limbs, I took the shot and down he came. I was lucky because they said usually when the caracal would see more people, it would jump and run.

They wanted me to hunt for more in the area but Don was going out for his rhino and I wanted to be in on it so off we went to Oceana. We got there just as Don was walking up the hillside after the rhino. It has taken over an hour just to locate them on this large photo safari area right on the Indian Ocean. The rhino was over the hill so I didn't see Don shoot but after he did over we went and got to join him for the recovery. This was a magnificent animal and one that was prime for harvesting. You could tell Don was honored to be taking this old rhino. Many people were here for the harvest and to document and test it. DNA was taken for a data base by Jaap Pienaar and the horns were micro chipped.

Later in the day Don took a blue wildebeest, a bontebok, and a cape bush buck. We looked for kudu in one area and found a rhino and her baby. What a beautiful sight! We walked down a hillside looking for kudu and there he was. I shot a kudu right a dusk at 250 yards. Jonathan was amazed.

We traveled to Zingela Lodge which was 75,000 acres having lunch at Salisbury Plain and meeting Luke Corbett along the way. We harvested red lechwe, roan, wart hog,



Copper Springboks

common springbok, white springbok, vervet monkey, common waterbuck, red hartebeest, cape kudu, black springbok, and cape eland. Several of our meals were cooked by Jonathan over coals from our bonfire which he shoveled up on a cement area that had a grate over it.

We traveled to the mountain camp at Bowers Hope which was 45,000 acres and 4,500 feet elevation to 7,000 feet on the mountain. It was much colder here. I went out early the next morning for vaal rhebok and was so blinded by the beautiful sunrise when they spotted the first one, I couldn't shoot. Finally around the side of a hill, they spotted another and I got him. I also got a black springbok which was around the next hill. We saw seven bull cape elands and Bets drove them across the mountain and down the other side where we set up for shooting. As they came down, Jonathan said to shoot the largest in the hind quarters so he would continue to come down the mountain and make his retrieval quicker for this one ton animal. Well, I shot him in the hind quarters but hit the femur artery and down he went and bled out. They still had to go up

after him. What a beauty he was with a huge tuft of hair between his horns all covered with mud -- and delicious. They had to rearrange rocks going up the mountain, drive the vehicle as far as they could, and then carry him down on a special tarp made with a head pocket and four hand holds.

That night we took a ten minute helicopter ride in a Robertson 44 to the top of the mountain to scout for aoudads. Surprisingly cattle were up on the top. They must have walked up through some crevasses to get there. There were water holes and grass on top but sharp cliffs all around the sides. We flew up again the next morning. Lolosh, our tracker, was scared to death to ride in the helicopter. He was quite a character and had a wonderful laugh. The guides and trackers went up first to scout. When we arrived they had several spotted. It was a nice day but crisp with no wind. I went to one side with Ivan, Andy, Jonathan, and Bets. Don went to the other side. I had to climb way out on the rocks and down till I could see straight down over the edge, about 300 yards to a rock slide below. They had spotted an aoudad to my right



about 70 yards away. We waited about 45 minutes until the noise from our arrival settled down and then he stuck his nose out at about 90 yards away and several yards down. He went back in before I had a shot but soon he came out and gave me the perfect broadside shot. I took it and he was down, fell a few feet but not over the edge and was dead and very visible. Now the retrieval by Bets. After many photos and congratulations we made our way back up the rocks trying to travel where the aoudads walked. Ivan and I stayed at the top and waited for the helicopter to take us back. The others retrieved my aoudad, gutted it, and road in the second trip back with the aoudad tied to a skid on the helicopter. After we got back and the rest got back with my aoudad, Phillip radioed that Don had one. Don came back with Phillip and they made a trip back for Don's aoudad. Don had a much more difficult shot of 250 yards but he connected.

We took the aoudads to a rocky area for pictures. We were both so happy because we had completed our African 29 with this animal, one of our many goals.

We went back out later in the afternoon for fallow deer for me and blesbok for Don. Don got a white one. I shot a fallow deer, which went right down but then got back up. The trackers had to cross a ditch to follow up on him. This was the only animal out of 22 that I took on this trip that they had to track. I usually



connect pretty good and they are "Dead Right There", a DRT.

The next day, we drove to another farm at Wildskutsberg, Hunter's Hill Safaris to shoot a tsessebe. This area was 30,000 acres with many, many animals. There were herds of tsessebe, scimitar horned oryx, mountain zebras, etc. plus they had fenced places with lions, red river hogs, sitatungas, Pierre David deer, axis, rusa, sambar, plus many more. We both drove around in different vehicles and finally I shot mine at 285 yards and Don shot his at 247 yards. The winds were blowing at about 50 knots.

Then we drove for another three hours to Barkley East where we stayed at a bed and breakfast and hunted for cape grysbok. It was very windy. We met the owner of the land where we were going to hunt and his sister rode with us. The owner had caught a huge grysbok in a porcupine cage the night before and showed us and then let it go. We saw many rabbits in the afternoon but no grysbok until after dark. With



spotlights we found six females and finally a male on a hillside and I shot it. It was a very cold night. Then back to the Sir Henry Barkley Bed and Breakfast and dinner of lamb, veggies, potatoes, and lemon meringue pie. The beds had heated bed pads which felt very nice after getting so cold out hunting.

The next day we had a long ride back to eZulu camp. We passed beautiful mountains and farms

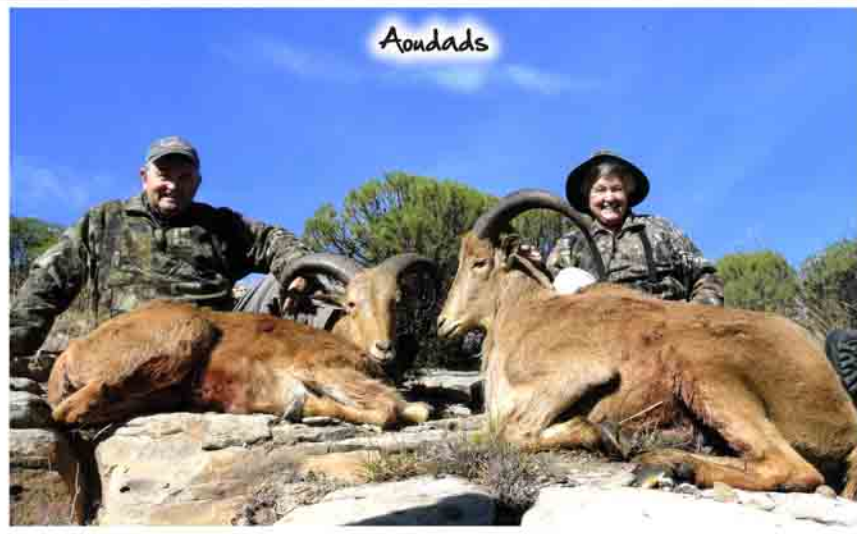
with black loam soil. They were growing corn, sorghum, oats, and had many cattle and sheep. There were lots of little villages. We stopped at a roadside store for fresh squeezed orange juice. Lots of citrus trees were in this area as well as fields of cabbage and pecan trees.

The next day, at our original camp, we hunted copper springbok. We found the herd and saw Don, on the other side, shoot one. Then I shot one. Mine had laid down in the grass to hide but Bets spotted him and I shot. He didn't even know we were there. He thought he was hidden and was even eating grass from where he was laying.

Don needed a common blesbok and I needed a white blesbok so Jonathan drove me to a nearby farm, picked up a farm hand, and drove to the rolling hills beyond the house. Numerous blesbok, angora goats, etc. were all over the hillside. We saw several white blesbok in a group, picked out the largest male and shot. I hit him but he just stood - a 275 yard shot. We went closer and I gave him a Texas heart shot which put him down. This was the last animal on my list. Don shot his before me at about 230 yards and then they had fun with the vervet monkeys.

They drove Don further south and hunted on some eZulu property but didn't see any grysbok. We ate prawns and line fish at the Ocean Buffet and stayed at Puti River Lodge on the ocean. It was warmer here and we had our wonderful ocean view again. We had a relaxing day and then went out to try to find Don a grysbok but couldn't spot one.

I had completed my list but decided to take a scimitar-horned oryx back at the Wildskutsberg, Hunter's Hill Safaris. They had a huge herd of them



and had also released their breeding stock for hunting because there wasn't much interest in people hunting them because we cannot import them in to the United States. They had a few people from Mexico wanting them but they were no longer importable to the U.S. and so they were going to get rid of their herd. They are a

beautiful animal and eZulu would mount it and keep it in their lodge so I decided I would take one. Jonathan and I drove for four hours to return to this place and I got a beauty. This was probably my last opportunity to take one as most hunting places are not going to keep them anymore. While they skinned it, we ate lunch, and then toured the ranch.

Don had driven about three hours for a grysbok but he was successful.

Our hunt was complete. We slept in. After breakfast we went shopping at a local craft store where locally made items were for sale. We bought placemats, wooden animal masks, and wool socks. The next day we left for the airport at about 9:30 a.m. as our plane was leaving Port Elizabeth at 2:35 p.m. We went to Johannesburg and then on to Atlanta and then Grand Rapids arriving the next day at 11:38 a.m.

What a wonderful time with wonderful people and lots of animals! They have thriving herds of many species especially the rhinos. We saw at least 100 during our travels. It is with hunter's dollars that these many species are flourishing and a valued part of the economy of this country. Let's hope the hunting can continue so the animals can continue. They are both beautiful and delicious. We each took 22 animals, Don completed the African Big 5 and we both completed the African 29.

Looking Ahead - to our Next Issues -

50th Wedding Anniversary Celebration

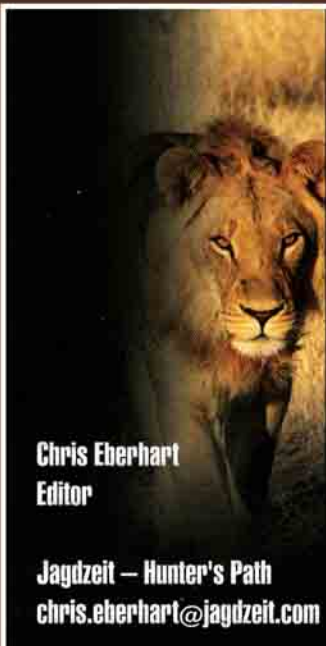
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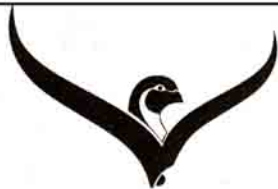
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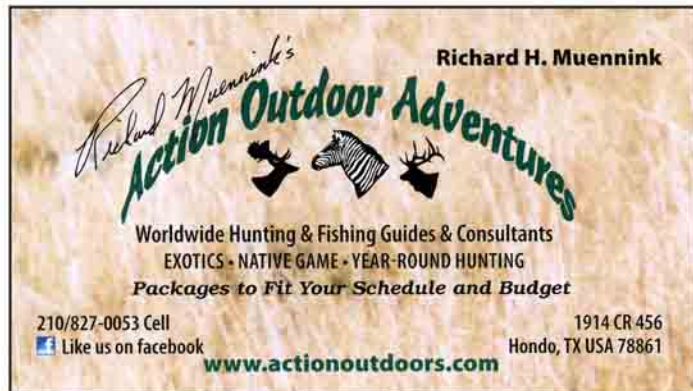
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