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THE REPORT

July 2025

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ROAR**
mountain
monarch

**TURTLE
TROUBLE**

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**SPRINGFIELD
2020
BOUNDARY**



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- 6 Letters & News
- 8 A red roar mountain monarch
- 14 In the world’s firearm spotlight
- 15 *Politics in Focus* Police grateful for quick theft report
- 16 Springfield 2020 Boundary A traditional, light and accurate hiking hunting rifle
- 20 Stable, steady shooting for hunting success
- 25 SSAA Townsville A North Queensland icon
- 26 Turtle trouble in Cape York Digging to the ‘root’ of the problem
- 27 Shoot Off! Quiz
- 31 Floods causing more than a headache
- 32 SVORD Knives
- 34 Boom to burrow The tale of Australia’s canned rabbit trade
- 39 Get a grip on the hunt Bog Deathgrip Clamping Tripod

- 41 Book Review *Australian and New Zealand Knifemaking, 2nd Edition (2025)*
- 44 Frontier Furniture and Timber Products Getting creative with firearms
- 52 *Politics in Focus* Money talks Fighting animal extremists requires funding and partnerships
- 53 A secure gun equals a secure sport
- 54 Is your H2O PH8? Get ready to hydrate!
- 55 A ‘burning’ question regarding sporting ammunition
- 56 Urban indoor shooting galleries An unsung introduction for city sporting shooters
- 58 Wheelie Good Shooters SSAA Townsville
- 61 The Post War SMLE No. 4
- 63 Classic Cartridges The 9mm Luger
- 65 Culling and hunting ethics 101
- 66 Eat WILD Herb & Horseradish Crusted Venison Rack



8



16



26

As of this month, SSAA Queensland is thrilled to announce that *The Report* magazine is now the official publication of your Association and will be produced 11 times a year. The magazine will be available to all Queensland members, be distributed throughout the country and be available for purchase by non-members through on-line newsagencies.

This marks a homecoming of magazine production for us, with the first Queensland Association magazine being printed in 1962 before a national journal was created with the input of our own editor Gordon Nelis in the early 1970s.

Shooting and hunting laws and regulations have always been state specific, but ironically, the introduction of the National Firearms Agreement (NFA) in the late 1990s saw states interpret the laws and multiple regulations in different ways. It became harder to communicate firearm laws to our members through a national magazine, as there are eight states and territories in Australia.

A Queensland-based magazine will overcome those obstacles and, while the content will be proudly Queensland centric, the stories will no doubt appeal to readers country wide. To secure the future of the magazine, we engaged the services of experienced shooting editors Tim Bannister and Jennifer Martens, shooting industry business and marketing manager Karoline Wasiak and specialist media officer Sam Talbot. Readers may remember Sam from his shooting competition series, Talbot on Target.

As the previous SSAA National President and Publication’s Chairman, I have worked closely with all four of our new media team in the past and I look forward to seeing them expand our electronic and print media for the benefit of all our Queensland members. With the introduction of a monthly e-newsletter, new SSAA Queensland and Ipswich City Pistol Club websites and now the monthly publication of *The Report* magazine, we have made great ground in finding ways to communicate with members and support our hunters, disciplines and clubs. The behind-the-scenes work of our administrative staff, too, should not be overlooked. They are the ones ensuring your membership is up to date and provide the services that you receive with your SSAA Queensland membership, as well as working with our many club committee members and volunteers.

It’s an exciting time for SSAA Queensland and our 80,000 members.

Bob Green
SSAA Queensland General Manager

Letters

Stewartdale sanctuary

Hello Team,
I am relatively new to shooting and the SSAA, and I just learned about the large koala sanctuary at Stewartdale. I like the idea of SSAA having a massive conservation park, but I'm just wondering if shooting or pest control is done there as well?
Cheers,
Scott, Brisbane, Qld

Editor's note: Thanks for getting in touch, Scott, and welcome to both the SSAA and the world of shooting.
You're absolutely right that the Stewartdale property is home to a significant koala sanctuary, officially opened in 2014. It's also home to our Ipswich branch's shooting range, making it a clear example of conservation and responsible firearm use existing side-by-side.
In the lead-up to the sanctuary's opening, and continuing today, conservation work has included careful pest management to protect native species and vegetation. Wild dogs, in particular, have been a persistent challenge, but thanks to the ongoing efforts of SSAA members and volunteers the area remains a safe haven for koalas.
As a SSAA Queenslander, you can be proud to be part of an organisation full of true conservationists.

Change the name of Weapons Branch

With a new state LNP Government in power, how about they show us a sign of good faith and change the name of Weapons Branch? I have lived in four states and Canberra and not one of them call their firearms licencing departments or divisions 'weapons' anymore. I'm sure every licensed shooter would agree with me. Come on Police Minister Purdie, get with the times!
David, Brisbane, Qld

Knife knowledge

Rod Hoare's article, 'Blades: Which is the best for your task?', in the April edition of *The Report* was really helpful. The only knives I use are in the kitchen. Who knew there was so much to learn about a knife blade? I'll keep this as a guide when purchasing my next set of knives and I'll be sure to show my husband so he can choose the right knife for his hunting and fishing trips.
Kelly L, Sunshine Coast, Qld

Licensing FAQs

Hi Team.
I just came across the Licensing FAQs page on SSAA Queensland's website. This is a great section that I wish I had come across earlier – I could've saved myself a bit of time waiting on hold with Weapons Licensing. I appreciate the part where members can ask additional questions that are not listed and trust we will get help from people who know what they are talking about.
Members should have a good look around on your website, as there is quite a bit of helpful information.
Thanks,
Rob, T, via email

Too many calibres?

Is it just me or are there too many calibres? I think over the years we've gone a bit overboard and now there are just too many. Recently at a gun shop, I heard people talking about a new wildcat round I'd never even heard of. I'm all for innovation, but I think it's gotten out of hand.
I understand we're stuck with all the older rifles, but I think we should create some new global standards for all newly produced rifles. I don't mind if it's metric or imperial, I just don't want to have to switch back and forth anymore.
Sam, Ipswich, Qld

News

LET US KNOW YOUR THOUGHTS

We want to know your thoughts on shooting, hunting and the great Australian Outdoors so put pen to paper or hit the keyboard. Letters may appear in any of our electronic and printed media including our e-newsletter, websites and *The Report* magazine. Last names optional but please include your first name and town for publishing and SSAA Queensland membership number for verification purposes only.
Mail to: SSAA Queensland, Member Letters, PO Box 2443 North Ipswich, Qld 4305 or
Email: news@ssaaqld.org.au

How many do you own?

Did you know there are about 1,100,000 registered firearms in Queensland?
And there are almost 207,000 individual firearm licence holders. That means on average each shooter owns five firearms. Queensland holds the title of being the most popular state for the sport of target shooting and hunting in Australia.

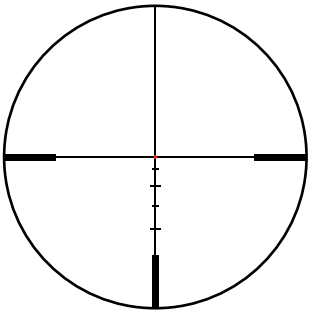
Thanks Ross

Proud shooter Ross Vasta lost his seat at the recent Federal election. Ross has always been a friend of Queensland shooters and, in particular, the Belmont range and SSAA Queensland. He often assisted us with political matters and met with us in Canberra many times. We wish him well in the future and look forward to seeing him on the firing line.
Ross proudly displayed his shooting targets in his Federal Parliament office, never shy of showing off his support for the shooting sports.



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RED ROAR

mountain monarch

By Brad Allen

Brad's stag where he fell and slid back down through the scrub.

It's common for life to get in the way of just about anything we enjoy doing, as was the case for me during the last red deer roar. I could only manage a three-day hunt on my regular hunting property, which failed to locate any quality stags, so when my mate Terry invited me to accompany him to one of his regular properties, I grabbed the opportunity with both hands, as I'd often listened to him

rave on about the abundance of deer, reds, fallow and chital on the property and was keen to see this gem-of-a-hunting area for myself.

As we drove into the property, a mob of four red hinds drinking at a dam in front of the homestead eyed us off before leisurely wandering away. A promising start I thought, as we pulled up at our accommodation shed and unpacked the vehicle.

"The odd red stag roar could be heard in the neighbouring property..."

As mid-afternoon rolled around, we kitted up ready for our first armed bushwalk, both of us keen to see what was about. The odd red stag roar could be heard in the neighbouring property as we made our way along the track that dissects the main ridge running through the property. "You'll only see reds above the track and the chital and fallow are always below it," said Terry. One has to wonder why that would be, but it appears to make perfect sense to the deer, who didn't disappoint, as it was only red deer that we ever saw above the track.

"They were all safe for now, as we wanted to scope the place out for trophy stags before taking any meat animals."

From our elevated position, we spotted a small mob of chital does in the semi-open valley, some bedded, some feeding. They were all safe for now, as we wanted to scope the place out for trophy stags before taking any meat animals. A short distance on, we bumped a young red stag (accidentally spooked it) with two does, on the uphill side of the track, of course. He was only a young 3x4 and we allowed them all to go on their merry, romantic way.

We moved slowly, stopping frequently to glass the gullies and clearings above and below the track before locating another chital doe out feeding in an open paddock. One moment she was slowly mooching along and the next she was gone! If I hadn't been watching her at the time, I wouldn't have believed that a full-grown deer could just vanish in the middle of an open grass paddock. For reasons only known to her, she decided to lay down in the long grass and all that could be seen of her was her large ears. It took several minutes for me to point her out again to Terry, even though he had also been watching her moments before. On the walk back to camp just before dusk, we spotted another mob of four red hinds out in the open country below, but no more stags of any persuasion.

Before dawn the next morning we were up and ready to go. We could hear several red stags in the neighbouring property roaring their heads off and a solitary chital stag giving the odd roar in the open country in front of the homestead. We again stayed up high on the ridge where we had a clear view of



Stags were still roaring in the basin behind camp after the author took his 5x5.

RED ROAR

the open country below. As the sun crested the eastern horizon, several mobs of hinds, both red and chital were out feeding in the open country below, as well as one small band of fallow does. It's amazing how well you can see from an elevated position with a good pair of binoculars - mine being 10x Leica Geovids and Terry using his 10x Swarovskis. After you have hunted with a good pair of binos, it's hard to imagine how you ever did without them, and you appreciate them even more as you and your eyes get older. As we headed back towards camp, a lone chital stag, possibly the one we'd heard roaring earlier, let out a bellow in the open valley below. We both scanned the general area with our binos until Terry locked on to a reasonable chital stag, heading our way about 500yds out. He definitely showed promise, about the same size as Terry's last chital stag, but wasn't nearly as big as the one I'd taken a couple years earlier. It would have been possible to 'ambush' him, but we decided to let him go and let him grow. Maybe next year.

It was all fairly quiet when we got back to camp, when a couple red stags in the neighbour's place started to crank up. We quickly made our way to a slightly elevated position not far from camp where we could glass the area they were in and used Terry's electronic deer caller to see if we could call one out of the bush. A short while later, we located two separate mobs of deer, each with reasonable 5x5 stags in charge. They would answer the caller, but had no intention of coming any closer, let alone jumping the fence into our block.

“When the afternoon hunt came around, it was time to decide...”

When the afternoon hunt came around, it was time to decide if one of us would try for a meat animal, as we would be heading home the following morning. Terry located a lone, young chital stag feeding lower down and it was decided that he'd be a candidate for the freezer. We sidled the ridge a little further to get in front of him and to have the breeze in our favour before

heading down a gully, one ridge over from him. As we crested the ridge about where we thought he'd be, Terry spotted him feeding about 100yds away. I had my old Ruger



The Barnes 130grn TTSX still weighed 128.6 grains after travelling the length of the young chital stag.












Brad felt the Barnes projectile under the skin of a hind leg during the carry out.

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RED ROAR

.270 up on the shooting sticks and, as he presented a clear shot, I gently squeezed off a shot. The Barnes Vor-Tx 130grn TTSX hit the young stag in the right shoulder, dropping him instantly. He was in lovely condition and, as anyone who has eaten chital knows, he would definitely be good chewing. During the walk out, with the stag's antlers on my shoulders and his back legs slung from my shooting sticks, I felt a lump under the skin of his left hind leg, which we later found to be the Barnes TTSX 130grn projectile that had travelled through about 1m of flesh and bone, virtually in a straight line. It was a steep climb back up to the track and I was mighty glad when we reached camp at last light. It had been an enjoyable couple of days hunting, with fresh venison hanging in the shed and one more hunt left for the morning.

In the pre-dawn, several stags could again be heard roaring close by. Terry cranked up his electronic caller and, as we scanned the bush edge with our binos, we were both pleasantly surprised when a stag answered to our right, in a basin behind camp. As the light improved, we finally located him, bedded on an open ridge about 400yds away with several girls in tow. Even at that distance, it was evident that he possessed quite reasonable antlers and was at least a 5x5 with good tops. Terry didn't have to ask me twice if I'd like to have a crack at him, so we backtracked around the hill to approach him from above.

As is often the case with deer, we were spotted by a hind as we tip toed towards his location. At no more than 70yds, he quickly

rose from his bed and high-tailed it directly away from us across the open paddock, only stopping to look back to see what had startled him as he got to the bush edge. I took a rest from the top of a wooden fence post, estimating the distance at around 200yds. The 'hunter hold' reticule of the Trijicon 'Huron' 3-9x40 danced around a little before settling on his heart/lung area as I squeezed off the shot. I heard the meaty thump of a solid hit, as the stag leapt forward over the three-strand barb fence, uphill into the scrub.

Seconds later, as the noise of the shot dissipated, we heard the unmistakable sound of a big animal crashing to the ground and roll down the slope. "He's down, Terry, let's go and find him." I ranged the shot at 205yds before walking down to where we saw him jump the fence. It wasn't long before we



The 'Universal Game Caller' always got a good reaction from any stag that heard it.

"Terry didn't have to ask me twice if I'd like to have a crack at him..."



Fresh chital venison on the ground. Now, the carry out.

found his deep gouged hoof prints going uphill in the soft soil, then a few splatters of blood. As I scanned the low scrub above, I made out his antlers sticking out of the grass. The 130grn Barnes Vor-Tx TTSX had given complete penetration, taking out both lungs, causing a quick and humane death to this mountain monarch.

I never grow tired of hunting red stags in the roar, as there's something very special about their primordial bellowing that draws me back year after year, a connection that only a deer hunter could understand. Enjoy the hunt! 🍷

"...we heard the unmistakable sound of a big animal crashing to the ground and roll down the slope."

In the world's FIREARM SPOTLIGHT

By Sam Talbot

Once every few years, Queensland's NIOA flings open its doors and welcomes dealers from across Australia and New Zealand to show off all its new products. In May, we attended the 2025 NIOA Trade Show alongside representatives from around Australasia, the USA, and Europe to see all the latest and greatest new offerings and news.

Among the biggest announcements: NIOA has become the exclusive distributor for Ruger and Marlin Firearms in Australia and New Zealand. The new partnership promises faster distribution and improved support, including repairs and warranty services for local customers.

Ruger representative BJ Hoeting revealed during his presentation that the company has averaged about 1.6 million firearms produced annually during the past five years. He also noted that since Ruger's 2020 acquisition of Marlin, they've been working hard to ramp up production of Marlin lever-actions and will continue to focus on centrefire models over rimfire for the time being. "We're doing it as fast as we can without sacrificing quality," he said.

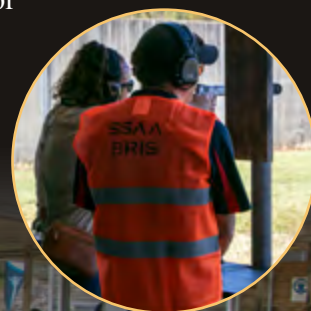
A busy afternoon was spent at SSAA Belmont testing the latest firearms and optics.

Rob Nioa opened the two-day event in front of about 200 dealers.

NIOA also locked in exclusive distribution deals with Perazzi, as well as Italian ammunition giants Fiocchi Ammunition and Baschieri & Pellagri, plus Lyalvale Express from Great Britain.

In a show of commitment to the Australian market, Fiocchi CEO Paolo Salvato gave a live presentation from Italy at 2:30am local time. Closer to home, NIOA's Keith Grundy confirmed that Australian staff will now receive training directly from Perazzi's master gunsmiths. He also reminded attendees that custom Perazzi shotguns, which are highly configurable and purpose-built, carry a 7 to 14-month order time following custom fitting at NIOA's new Perazzi showroom.

The second half of the event took place at the SSAA Belmont range, where some of these new offerings were put through their paces for the first time. *The Report* team had the opportunity to try out several of the products, and full reviews are now underway so stay tuned for full reviews in this issue and upcoming ones. ☺



POLICE GRATEFUL FOR QUICK THEFT REPORT

Queensland police have thanked a licensed firearms owner for his rapid reporting of a break in at his property that led to the theft of their firearms.

"We are grateful the licensed firearms owner regularly monitored the security of their firearms and quickly reported the matter to the police," North Brisbane District Inspector Matthew Blunn said.



"The Queensland Police Service takes firearm safety seriously and investigators left no stone unturned to quickly identify the offenders and locate the stolen weapons to keep the community safe."

It will be alleged the offenders broke into the property, which was being renovated, and went to "significant efforts to force the compliant gun safe open". Detectives undertook rapid and thorough investigations, leading to the arrest of three men and the recovery of all stolen firearms, which had been hidden in a shipping container in Richlands.

North Brisbane CIB Detective Senior Sergeant Danial Moore said it was an important reminder for shooters to regularly monitor firearms security and to report anything suspicious to police.

The police's recognition that the victim in this case had stored his firearms properly and had done nothing to attract the theft makes a welcome change to the victim blaming licensed shooters can often bear the brunt of. ☺

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A fluted bolt with removable handle, hand painted carbon stock and ceracoated metal work come together in the 2020 Boundary to make an attractive package that shoots as well as it looks.



By Neil Schultz

Handgun shooters have been familiar with the Springfield name and their classic 1911 pistols that have been an American favourite since the early 1900s. Chambered in .45ACP, the Springfield 1911 was the mainstay of the US military for a century.

In 1968 the US government closed its firearms manufacturing facility at Springfield. Unwilling to lose the legacy of that famous institution, the Reese family resurrected the name in 1974 to continue producing the historically significant firearms of the era. Those were the aforementioned 1911 pistols along with the M1 and M14 auto loading rifles, all familiar to millions of shooters as a consequence of their military use.

Fast forward to 2020 and Springfield Armory's first foray into bolt action sporting rifles, with their 2020 Waypoint. The Waypoint was an instant hit with US shooters for long-range target disciplines. The Waypoint was followed by the Redline, a lighter rifle designed with the hiking hunter in mind, sporting a radical stock design. Answering the call from hunters for a more traditional design in a light package, Springfield released the latest model in their 2020 series, the Boundary.

At first glance

When *The Report* was offered a 2020 Boundary for review, I jumped at the chance to put it through its paces. On opening the box, I thought, ho hum yet another bolt action sporter, certainly a handsome firearm but does it offer anything to set it apart from the crowd? Closer inspection and handling the rifle put the gleam back into my eye. The Boundary is a light rifle, hitting the scales at just 3.1kg without a scope. Springfield's signature 2020 action is fitted with a 50cm (20") fluted stainless steel barrel and both are ceracoated in a matt grey that partners nicely with the rogue camo pattern of the stock. The test rifle was chambered in the ever-popular .308, sporting a 1:10 twist, tipped with a radial muzzle brake. An AG Sportsman carbon fibre stock features M-Lock slots under the foregrip for easy mounting of a bipod or other accessories. These stocks are hand painted and look as good as they are practical. The fluted bolt features dual locking lugs, a 90-degree throw and runs very smoothly in the action. In keeping with the traditional design, ammunition is housed in a four-round internal magazine with a hinged floor plate.



The Boundary's claimed .75 MOA was comfortably attained and exceeded.

Trigger time

The test rifle arrived just prior to a planned hunt in the New England Ranges so no bench rest testing could be undertaken. As supplied, the TriggerTech trigger broke at a little under 4lb and although adjustable down to 2.5lb, I decided to shoot it as it was. The trigger was crisp, breaking cleanly with no discernible creep. In spite of the Boundary's light weight, it was quite pleasant to shoot, with the radial brake obviously doing its job in lessening felt recoil.

Sighting in and ammo testing was done over the tray of my ute using a sandbag in field conditions. It seems that every second rifle manufacturer quotes a 1 MOA accuracy guarantee these days. Springfield Armory state that their Boundary 2020 will deliver 0.75 MOA accuracy with premium factory ammunition. I thought that's a big call, let's see if it delivers. After a couple of shots adjusting the scope, I put three shots onto the target at 100 metres to measure the grouping. Wow! That very first group in the field measured 0.365 inches. That speaks volumes for the quality of the build of the 2020 series of rifles. Just to be certain that wasn't a fluke, I fired a few more groups, all of which measured less than ½ an inch running Federal Premium 168gr hybrid hunter.

SPRINGFIELD 2020 BOUNDARY

Into the field

The property on which I took the Boundary for a hunt was very hilly, with a mix of open timbered grazing areas and thick, virgin bush. I certainly appreciated the lightness of the rifle by the time I had crested the first steep hill. After a few hills and kilometres, with no hint of a deer, a movement in the gully below snapped me to attention. Red fur showed it to be a fox and, as I was on a sheep rearing property, all foxes are taken without hesitation. Resting against a stringybark trunk, I centred the crosshairs on reynard's chest and was pleased to see him drop where he sat as the shot echoed around the hills. That would make the farmer very happy. Now, you may be thinking that a .308 is overkill for foxes, but there are no degrees of dead. Predators of both livestock and native wildlife should be dispatched with the rifle at hand at every opportunity.

I was on a mission to get a meat deer to fill the void in my freezer, so more hills and more kilometres of exercising the quads were clocked up before a distant fallow doe stepped out of the scrub. She was a long way off, so after testing the breeze, I set about closing the gap. The deer was uncooperative and continued to feed away from me, almost as quickly as I was following. Light was fading and my quarry was approaching the crest of a ridge, so I used the range finder to see if a shot was practical. Happily, at 195m, the deer was perfectly in range as I'd zeroed the Boundary to be spot on at 200m. A meat-saving shot through both lungs pancaked the little yearling just before darkness descended in the forest. By the light of my head torch, forequarters, hindquarters, backstraps, tenderloins, heart, liver and kidneys were harvested, leaving little for the crows and wedgetails. In spite of a very heavy pack, I had a smile on my old face as I trudged out of the hills to the ute where an iced coffee and muesli bar awaited.



The integral M-Lock slots of the carbon fibre stock are a useful and unique feature of the 2020 Boundary.



Accuracy adds confidence to take long shots at small targets. Note how well the rifle's finish blends into the Aussie bush.

THE VERDICT

PROS:

- Exceptionally accurate
- Comfortable to carry
- Action drilled to accept commonly available Rem 700 bases and rails
- Factory threaded (radial brake included as standard)
- M-lock slots
- QD cups for sling attachment

CONS:

Price. Retailing for more than \$4,000, this rifle won't suit those on a tight budget, but quality comes at a price.

Choice of chamberings. The boundary is only available in 6.5CM, 6.5PRC, 7mmPRC, 7mm Rem Mag, .300PRC, .300 WinMag and .308. Many of those cartridges are gaining popularity in the US but are very hard to source ammunition for in Australia. Some of our established mainstays would be attractive (.243, .30-06 and .270 come to mind).



The Boundary is an ideal rifle for deer hunters who walk the hills. Weather resistant, light and accurate.

Specs

Barrel: 20" (50cm) stainless fluted 1:10 twist

Stock: AG Sportsman carbon fibre

Bolt: Fluted 4140 tool steel

Trigger: Externally adjustable 2.5 to 5lb (1.1 to 2.25kg)

Magazine: 4 round internal

Overall length: 41" (104cm)

Weight: 3.1kg (6lb 13oz) bare rifle



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STABLE, STEADY for hunting success

Brendan Jones muses on the topic of field rests when it comes to hunting

“Scope’s way out, out by miles”, was my expert assessment of the situation. “Left? Right? Up? Down?” asked Alan, the owner of the rifle. “Not sure, it’s so far out it’s not even on paper”. Alan had a sceptical look on his face, disbelieving it could be that far off at around 50m. He took the gun, braced off an open ute door and fired. Crack! Dead on. I took the gun back and proceeded to clean miss once again, with Alan watching this time. A big laugh erupted, “You’re not even resting on anything! Try resting on

something”, he said with a chuckle. I sceptically mimicked his standing rested position off the car door on my side and proceeded to put a round on target.

As a new shooter, out on my second ever hunt, this was a foundational lesson in my shooting and hunting journey. A lesson that has stuck with me still to this day many years later. In competition shooting, your position (along with equipment) will be dictated to you. But in the field, the choice is yours. And as an ethical hunter, you owe it to your quarry to make the most accurate shot you can.

Improvised field rests need not be naturally occurring features. Leaning into an open car door gives stability and tension required to make accurate supported shots.

Stability

One of the largest ingredients when it comes to making accurate and precise shots is stability. The Cambridge Dictionary defines stable as: *Firmly fixed or not likely to move or change*. Now being ‘firmly fixed’ and ‘not likely to move or change’ sounds like something that would be very helpful in making accurate shots, wouldn’t you agree? Stability, in this context, really comes down to two main factors: centre of gravity (COG) and your level of attachment to the ground. To oversimplify, COG would be to say the closer to the ground you are, the more stable you will be. And the more attachment (or connection) you have with the ground, the more stable you will be.

So, the theory goes, if you were to stand on one leg shooting freehand you wouldn’t be able to shoot as accurately as you would laying prone with the fore-end of your rifle supported. Your stability equation made up of COG and ground connection are at polar opposites, resulting in different accuracy potentials. This reality plays out within SSAA disciplines. As shooting distance and precision requirements increase, so too does the level of stability required. This is addressed by an increase in proximity of shooter to the ground, as dictated by the shooting positions (standing, kneeling, sitting, prone), and the level of connection to the ground through stability aides allowed (post to rest against, concrete bench to sit at, bags, etc).

Stability in the field

When it comes to hunting, while there are no rules to dictate your position or rest, the terrain and vegetation can make for a shot-by-shot set of parameters you must work within to find an optimal firing solution. In tropical North Queensland, this almost entirely rules out prone in my experience due to vegetation. After years of hunting, and hundreds of animals taken, there have only been two or three times I have elected to and been able to go prone. A few shots have been sitting; many more kneeling. The majority by far have been from a standing position. If you can’t see it, you can’t shoot it. In my part of the world, grass, weeds and shrubberies dictate that as your COG lowers, so too does your visibility. The higher off the ground your COG is forced by the need for visibility, the more hunters must work to balance the stability equation, through increasing their attachment to the ground. This is achieved by adding a rest.

“the terrain and vegetation can make for a shot-by-shot set of parameters...”

Vegetation in the tropics means traditional bipods and prone shooting are not really an option for large parts of the year.

STABLE, STEADY SHOOTING FOR HUNTING SUCCESS

Improvised rests

Rests can be broken into two categories: improvised and designed. The first involves what your surroundings provide. What can you use in your immediate vicinity to stabilise a shot? Tree trunks and branches, fallen logs, termite mounds, gates and fence posts, car doors and windows, bulbar, bonnet, ATV handlebars, UTV roll bars, dam wall, or abandoned rusted-out farm machinery? The list is almost endless, limited only by your creativity and problem solving. I can honestly say I have taken shots off all those and more. Sometimes the rifle itself will be supported or in contact with the rest, other times the shooter's body is gaining support and stability from the rest, sometimes it's both.



Paul in the process of improvising a rest off a big Ghost Gum trunk. Keen-eyed readers might be able to make out half a dozen pigs digging up the far end of the billabong.

The key to getting good at this style of shooting (like all kinds) is practice - first at the range. Don't shoot exclusively off a bench; try shooting off the posts holding up the roof at the range. And get involved with SSAA disciplines that incorporate resting off posts (Field Rifle) and barricades and obstacles (Precision Rifle - PRS).

Secondly, practice in the field while hunting. When there isn't a pig or deer on the dam you painstakingly stalked in on, pretend there is. Find an improvised rest and try out acquiring a sight picture of the imaginary animal. This will start to train your brain in finding unique rests in a wide range of scenarios and be better prepared when a shot can be taken.

*“The key to getting good at this style of shooting (like all kinds) is **practice**”*



One shooter, one gumtree and three shots result in three dead pigs. The white barked gumtree back and to the left of frame, was the improvised rest.

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A selection of rests designed to help stabilise your shots in the field. Ranging from some DIY options that cost a few dollars to make, up to a high-end carbon fibre tripod with Hog Saddle clamp worth more than the rifle its holding.



Designed rests

The second category is a BYO rest. This kind of rest is more repeatable and familiar to you, especially if you train with it. The downside is it's another bit of kit to carry around.

The modern hunter is spoilt for choice when shopping for a hunting rest. They range from lightweight and short, right up to heavy-duty tripods able to clamp and hold a rifle completely on its own at standing height - and just about everything in between. Weight, bulk, speed of deploy, level of stability provided and cost are all trade-offs. As such, hunters need to determine what best suits their style of hunting, their vegetation and terrain, personal preference and budget. You can even try DIY-ing your own rest.

Like improvised rests, training with whatever you choose as a designed rest is vital. You want deploying and finding your position to become second nature. The first time you try to use it shouldn't be a few precious seconds before the trophy of a lifetime slips away.

"The modern hunter is spoilt for choice when shopping for a hunting rest."

Conclusion

Stable accurate shots are just as important in the field as they are on competition day at the range. When considering the ethics of hunting and the goal of a clean, quick kill, one might argue it's even more important. Without the rules of a range shooting discipline, hunters should look to 'cheat' and afford themselves every possible practical advantage to stabilise a shot with a rest, be it improvised or designed, or even a combination of both. That's not to say freehand sitting, kneeling and standing have no place in hunting. They definitely do and should be practiced to round-out a good hunter's repertoire. But I will almost always, situation permitting, pass up a 50 or 60m offhand shot to take the time to deploy or improvise a rest and more confidently take what has turned into a 100m, if not more, rested shot. 🎯

The ultimate cheat code for stable field shooting combining both an improvised and a BYO rest to maximise stability. In this example, Matt is using a Primos Trigger Stick tripod rest while leaning his body against the tree.

SSAA Townsville

a North Queensland icon

Since 1968, SSAA Townsville has been on the forefront of furthering the shooting sports in its local community. From being a safe haven for shooters to hosting Come-n-Try days, Lions Charity Shoots, annual school events with Ignatius Park College and events for Scouts and women and girls, the branch doesn't hold back. It is always looking for way to increase membership and make sports shooting a mainstream recreation.

In addition to being open for shoots on a regular basis to its nearly 3700 members, the branch also has established niche groups, including its 'Wheelies' cohort, which is dedicated to the club's handicapped shooters, and its 'Coffee Club' - a weekly pistol shoot aimed at retirees and shift workers who share in coffee and cake after their events. SSAA Townsville has amassed a mighty community of likeminded people who can take part in just about every SSAA pistol, rifle and shotgun discipline available.

The branch's range consists of three blocks, spanning 750 acres, with most of the complex sitting on the original 150-acre block. The latest addition is a shotgun range, which makes up the majority of the two other blocks. It is the largest Sporting Clays range open in northern Queensland. Its inaugural shoot took

place the end of May. While no imminent major works are underway, the branch is always thinking ahead on how to best cater for its membership, including conducting regular upkeep activities on the property and improving its disability provisions.

SSAA Townsville started at the Whitnell Range near Lavarack Barracks, then moved to Brook Hill past Stuart on the way to Charters Towers. It then shifted and was sub-leased to the Hervey Range Townsville Marksman Rifle Club around 1976-78. Its next and final move in 2013 resulted in its current location at Hervey Range Road, which is about a 40-minute drive from the Townsville city centre.

With a club room, kitchen, meeting spaces, reloading areas, numerous toilet blocks and gun ranges, it is no wonder this branch has such a committed and active membership base. It is a well-run range providing a place shooters can come to enjoy their chosen pastime, sight in their firearms, compete, socialise, volunteer, relax, set up camp and improve their shooting skills. When next in sunny north Queensland, make a point to drop in and say 'hi' to fellow shooters at SSAA Townsville.

Contact: 0410 873 741 or townsville@ssaaqlld.org.au or visit its Facebook page. ☺



The Branch's newest addition: the largest Sporting Clays range open in northern Queensland



The Single Action stage provides a fun test for shooters.



Aerial view of the SSAA Townsville pistol and Single Action ranges.

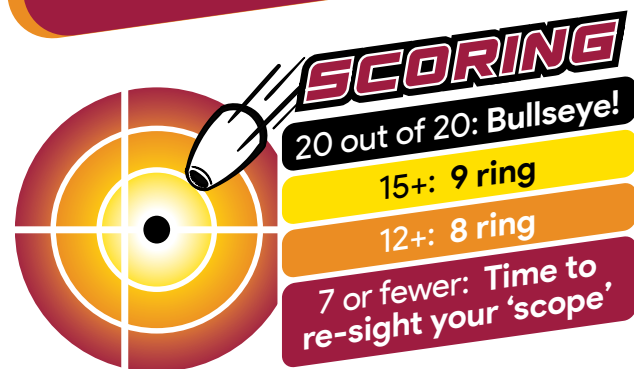
SHOOT OFF! Quiz

Welcome to the **Shoot Off Quiz!**
It's a chance to test your knowledge on firearms, hunting and the great outdoors. Whether you're a competitive shooter, or closer to a bushwalker, there's something here for everyone!

If you want more quizzing, there's a second half to our Shoot Off Quiz, including an extra 20 questions, on our website: ssaaqld.org.au

Answers can be found in the Sunset section, page 67.

Good luck and next time you are at the range, don't be shy in comparing scores... it's all about bragging rights with this one!



QUESTIONS!

- 1 In SSAA Field Rifle competitions, what are the four standard shooting positions?
- 2 In which decade was the Lithgow Small Arms Factory established?
- 3 What was the standard-issue rifle for Australian soldiers in World War I?
- 4 Which term refers to the speed of a bullet as it exits the barrel?
- 5 In SSAA Rifle Metallic Silhouette, targets consist of Chickens, Pigs, Turkeys, and _____?
- 6 What do we call a projectile's ability to overcome air resistance in flight, measured as a function of mass, diameter and shape?
- 7 What is the purpose of a cannelure on a bullet?
- 8 Which has a larger bullet diameter: 9mm Luger or .38 Special?
- 9 True or False: The .30-30 Winchester is a rimless cartridge.
- 10 According to the 'Queensland feral deer management strategy 2022-27', name two of the four deer species found in Queensland.
- 11 Which SSAA discipline emphasises the use of vintage and modern classic large-calibre rifles?
- 12 What part of a firearm strikes the primer of a cartridge?
- 13 Which Australian company manufactures the LA101 CrossOver rifle?
- 14 What material are targets typically made from in SSAA Benchrest competitions?
- 15 Which firearm manufacturer designed the Sportco Model 44?
- 16 Which Australian-made rifle was originally chambered in .310 Greener and used for military cadet training?
- 17 On which part of a firearm would you find a rib?
- 18 Which part of a firearm contains the firing pin and engages with the breech to chamber a round?
- 19 Which has a longer overall cartridge length: .300 Winchester Magnum or .300 PRC?
- 20 What event did Australian shooter Catherine Skinner win gold in at the 2016 Olympic Games?

TURTLE TROUBLE IN CAPE YORK

Digging to the 'root' of the problem

By Sam Talbot

Did you know there are only seven species of marine turtles in the world? Six of them are found in Australia and four of those nest along the shores of Cape York, Queensland: the flatback, olive ridley, hawksbill, and green turtles.

Unfortunately, Cape York is also home to Australia's largest population of feral pigs. Nest predation by feral pigs is one of the greatest dangers they face, along with other predators including dogs, goannas and even humans, all of which dig up nests and destroy or harvest the eggs. On some beaches in 2013, nest predation was as high as 100 per cent and around 70 per cent overall.

Send feedback or question ideas to news@ssaaqld.org.au

And find even more of the ShootOff, along with 20 more questions at our website – ssaaqld.org.au.

TURTLE TROUBLE IN CAPE YORK



Another one makes it out of the nest. This olive ridley will hopefully weigh around 40kg one day.

Enter the Western Cape Turtle Threat Abatement Alliance (WCTTAA), which was formed in 2013. The alliance is a partnership of six Indigenous Land and Sea owners and managers and supported by Cape York Natural Resource Management. These Indigenous rangers protect marine turtles along 800 kms of beaches from feral pigs. Their vision has been to manage the threats facing nesting turtles across the Western Cape York Peninsula.

The group has employed a range of strategies to protect the nests from predators including placing aluminium cages and conducting on-ground shooting and aerial culling.



These cages help protect against predation and the sun in the fight for conservation.



“These Indigenous rangers protect marine turtles along 800 kms of beaches from feral pigs.”



One of the aerial shoots being performed at Napranum.



WCTTAA Coordinator Manuela Fischer has been leading the charge on monitoring turtles and controlling pest species.



Kowanyama rangers monitoring Flatback.

Since the program began, aerial shooting alone has removed thousands of feral pigs a year from the area. Rangers are receiving training in humane pest destruction – both for shooting on the ground and from helicopters. During the same period, predation rates have dropped considerably. In 2021, the predation rate was below 10 per cent on some beaches and at times the rate on Flatback turtles was effectively zero.

Sally Gray, Chair of Cape York Natural Resource Management, at the recent National Feral Pig Conference at which *The Report* magazine attended, said that, away from the coast at Piccaninny Plains, aerial shooting had also proven effective. More than 9,700 feral pigs were removed from the area across 10 years, at a cost of \$35,000 a year – including helicopter hire, fuel, ammunition and other costs. Some of these costs are expected to decrease though, as more rangers become qualified to conduct aerial and ground shooting activities themselves.

Back on the Western Cape, aerial shooting is expected to continue indefinitely with funding currently supporting two shoots per group each year, making 12 in total scheduled just before and just after turtle nesting seasons.



WCTTAA Rangers are being trained in ground and aerial shooting.



The WCTTAA team taking 'steps' to save our treasured turtles.

FLOODS CAUSING MORE THAN A HEADACHE

By Tim Bannister

The record-breaking floods in Queensland have caused tens of thousands of dollars in damages to clubs, ranges and roads, knocked out or forced committees to reschedule shoots and competitions and now are giving rise to a rare tropical disease: melioidosis.

According to Queensland Health, as reported by News Corp Australia, more than 30 locals have died from the disease, with 221 cases to date so far this year. Torres and Cape, North West, Cairns and Hinterland and Townsville residents have been infected by this bacteria. It can enter the body through cuts or sores, drinking contaminated water or even by breathing it in during the wet season or flooding.

The disease is considered life threatening to those with long-term health problems or who drink alcohol heavily.

The best way to protect yourself against the disease is to cover any cuts or wounds with waterproof dressings and to wash thoroughly after any exposure to soil or muddy water, particularly your hands. ☺



The floods eroded soil from the North Queensland ranges requiring expensive earth work remediation.



Townsville vice-president Mick Norris is used to being up to his neck in it, but this time he literally was, as the floods created a river and left a valley through part of the Hervey Range landscape flats.



A flatback turtle gets comfortable in a nest on Jardine Beach.



Flatback Turtle eggs.



Success! A flatback makes it from egg to hatchling.

While aerial shooting has proven to be most effective, particularly given the rugged terrain, ground shooting also plays a vital role. Rangers will destroy pests they come across, but their focus is generally on monitoring the turtle nests, rather than actively seeking out predators.

“...their focus is generally on monitoring the turtle nests”

Last year, WCTTAA received the inaugural ‘First Nations Award for Excellence in Biosecurity’, presented by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. The award recognised the group’s outstanding contribution to biosecurity and their commitment to improving the protection of Country and people from pests, weeds and diseases.

WCTTAA continues to measure and monitor turtle activity. Their latest challenge is tracking the impact of warming temperatures, which are leading to an increased number of female hatchlings. To help address this, shaded cages are being used to not only guard against predation, but also to provide shade to cool the nests. ☺

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SVORD KNIVES

Review by Nick Rositano



Bryan Baker, Master Cutler, first started making knives as a hobby in his teenage years. After being made redundant in 1983 by his engineering firm at just 18 years of age, he decided to turn that hobby into a business. But the way he individually forged his knives meant they were expensive, so to increase his chances of making it in the New Zealand market, he had to revise his production methods and pricing. By doing so, SVORD Knives created a name for itself in New Zealand's sporting arena.

As his designs improved, SVORD Knives grew in popularity in other countries as well, including Australia, USA and several other countries. SVORD Knives are 100 per cent handcrafted in New Zealand. The knives are warranted for life against material failure, which gives you an insight on just how well made and respected these knives are. There really aren't many products in today's market which offer a warranty like this.

When I began unboxing the three knives *The Report* was sent for review, I was thoroughly impressed with the quality and craftsmanship of each knife. I was sent a Peasant Knife, a Kiwi Curved Skinner 6" and a General Purpose 6¼". Each knife has its own use, but I found the Peasant Knife to be a perfect all-rounder for its compatibility. The Kiwi Curved Skinner 6" and

General Purpose both come standard with a heavy-duty black sheath able to be attached to your belt for easy carrying. Both the Peasant and Curved Skinner feature a durable polypropylene handle available in a range of colours. All three models of knives feature Swedish high carbon tool steel blades, as a few of you would be aware that carbon steel blades are well known for having a high wear resistance, which helps keep edges sharper as opposed to stainless steel blades. Whether you are a hunter, fisherman or general outdoors person, you can well make whatever knife suit your individual circumstances.



SVORD Peasant Hunter featuring a polypropylene handle, giving the user a comfortable and steady grip! Easy to fold and pack away!



SVORD Kiwi 6" Skinner featuring a black sheath with belt holder capability.

My freezer was running low, so I decided to head out to stock up on some prime free-range venison. I put the Peasant Knife and the Curved Skinner in my pack, with the aim of landing a nice spiker or doe. I headed out early in the morning, with the glorious sounds of mother nature, which take your breath away every time. I spotted a couple fallow does feeding at around 150m away...

It was now time to do the groundwork and put both the Peasant Skinner and Kiwi Skinner to use. I decided to start the dressing process with the Peasant Skinner followed by the Kiwi Skinner. Let's just say the SVORD Knives really do make it easy work compared to some other knives on the market. The biggest tip I could offer to anybody new to hunting and who is looking at field dressing is to always sharpen your knives before or after every trip to ensure the best possible performance out of them; we all know just how difficult and more time consuming a blunt knife can make the job!

To get the best wear out of your knives, SVORD recommends using a wooden chopping board rather than a plastic one. Handwash the knife in warm, soapy water after use and then dry it thoroughly to prevent any rust. However, we know that in some cases this can be a little difficult to get every drop of water out of the blade, so if any surface rust does develop, SVORD recommends a Scotch Brite scouring pad to gently clean it away. Another good habit to get into is, if you know you won't be using the knife for a while, put a small amount of olive, gun or vegetable oil to build a protective

SVORD KNIVES



SVORD General Purpose featuring a mahogany brass handle, black sheath and belt holder capability.

layer against any rust. For sharpening purposes, a diamond sharpener or oil stone should be used. SVORD never recommends the use of a pull-through knife sharpener, as this will destroy the cutting edge of the knife and your investment. To test sharpness of a blade, I recommended slicing through a sheet of paper. A sharp blade will cut through like butter; however, if the blade is blunt, it will catch or rip. This method was passed down to me by my late father.

The Peasant Hunter retails for around \$30, which is quite affordable for a knife that is backed by a lifetime warranty. The Curved Skinner retails for \$140 and, in my opinion, is a great investment for anybody in the market for a knife that will stand the years in field dressing. The SVORD General Purpose is on the higher end of the SVORD offerings, with its mahogany handle, retailing for around \$150.

Anyone looking for a good quality knife should be sure to have a look at the SVORD range; I can assure you that you won't be disappointed. ☺



The SS Kintore loading 1,000 cases of canned rabbit from the EA Clark and Co Kingston rabbit factory in 1905. (Supplied: Kingston National Trust)

Interior of the Compton rabbit preserving cannery circa 1898. (Supplied: State Library of South Australia)



BOOM TO BURROW

The tale of Australia's canned rabbit trade

By Liz Rymill

The stench and sight of exploded cans of rotting rabbit meat across a scarred jetty in the tiny South Australian port of Kingston in 1906 is where the tale of the canned cottontail cuisine culminated for its local rabbit canning company.

The heat of the southern sun, combined with antiquated preserving techniques, led to front page news in the local newspaper.

Passengers aboard the Aconcagua bound for Britain from SA also had a less-than-pleasant voyage through the Red Sea in 1878 when 20,000 cans of rabbit meat exploded in the heat, permeating the ship and nauseating its travellers for the remainder of the trip.

But despite its grisly end mid-way through the 20th century, tinned rabbit was once in demand on the dinner plates of London's diners, and in the bellies of British

and Australian forces during World War II.

While Australia 'rode the sheep's back' to prosperity, the rabbit – despite its obvious legacy of landscape destruction – was also the backbone of many rural economies during, and for some time after, the Great Depression and in wartime.

At its peak, canning factories operated in three mainland states, as well as Tasmania.



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SSAA Queensland



A record
3,700
rabbits
bound for
the Compton
preserving
factory,
1904.

(Supplied: State Library
of South Australia)



First Fleet brings in first rabbits

Thomas Austin of Barwon Park near Geelong in Victoria is most notoriously associated with the introduction of the rabbit to Australian shores; however, the earliest record of rabbits in the country can be traced to the First Fleet and a subsequent letter from Governor Phillip to Lord Sydney in London, where he wrote he had five ‘pet’ rabbits.

As colonial settlers arrived in Tasmania and Victoria, so, too, did more rabbits.

By 1864, Thomas Austin was regularly hosting hunting parties akin to “a good old English Hunt” on his estate, breeding sporting gamebirds and – more prolifically – rabbits.

According to Austin’s reports, beaters flushed rabbits into the open out of the long grass where the guns stood on pegs at the ready. The gentleman guns shot thousands of rabbits at Austin’s shoots, but ultimately more survived and continued to multiply far beyond Barwon Park and increasingly, across Southern Australia.

In the North, and upon hearing about the success of Austin’s shooting parties, the Queensland Acclimatisation Society decided to introduce the rabbit in 1864. However, farmers expressed concern about proposals to turn some loose as they might become a nuisance.

“It was the farmers who identified the canary in the coalmine in the 1870s, and it is the farmers who have been at the coalface of the rabbit wars to this day,” says Maureen Andrews, Kingston (SA) National Trust.

“But while much of the story of the rabbit in Australia has been one of frustration and at times despair, there have been examples of great innovation and entrepreneurial spirit, too,” she adds.

Indeed, by the late 1920s, the rabbit industry was reported to be the largest employer in Australia.



Rabbit trapper Alf Ling delivers rabbits to Kingston’s rabbit cannery circa 1900.
(Supplied: Kingston National Trust)

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Glides through meat with ease – a must-have for hunters and butchers alike.

STEEL	BLADE	HANDLE	SHEATH
15N20	5 5/8"	Polypropylene	PVC



PEASANT KNIFE

The iconic folding knife trusted by many. Simple, tough, and always ready in your pocket or pack.

STEEL	BLADE	HANDLE
15N20	3"	Polypropylene



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Built in New Zealand using quality high-carbon steel and time-honoured craftsmanship, Svörd knives are trusted tools for real work in real conditions. Each blade is finished with a convex edge, which gives them their superior edge retention and durability that lasts for generations.

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Rabbit riches and ruins in rural Australia

"If you talk to people these days, the perception is that the rabbit trade was sort of a sideline during the depression. But it was much, much more than that," Maureen explains.

Between 1870 and 1970, more than 20 billion rabbits were trapped or poisoned in South Australia and Victoria for commercial purposes. While rabbit skins were a prized commodity, the meat also had its value – fresh, frozen, and even canned.

In the southern Queensland border town of Texas, Australia's last remaining rabbit processing works only ceased operation in 1992. During the 1930s the



Interior of the rabbit canning factory at Compton in 1898.
(Supplied: State Library of South Australia)

Texas Rabbit Works employed 30 men and exported three tons of frozen rabbit meat a week to England.

At its peak, there were about 15 rabbit processing centres in Australia with an export value of \$10 billion in today's money.

Tinned meat trade ended in a bang

Canned rabbit meat emerged in response to military orders from the British Admiralty, and the British and Australian Governments during World War I but had largely disappeared by the 1920s.

"The preserving industry struggled in the first two decades of the 20th century with the introduction of chilling and freezing," Maureen adds. It was also badly affected by the 1906 Chicago meat scandal, which closed the industry's largest market, England, in response.

The earliest preservatories were to be found in Southern Australia; the Rabbit Meat Preserving Company was established in 1877 in South Australia's mid north at Kapunda, processing 6,000 rabbits a day, with the tinned produce exported to London.

Other preservatories in SA opened at Eudunda, Port Augusta, Millicent and Robe — which also canned snipe and swan for export.

In Victoria, rabbit canneries operated in Euroa-Longwood, Port Fairy, Portland, Sunbury, and Colac.

In Colac, some 6,650,000 rabbits were canned over the 15 years of its operations.

But in its four years of operation, Kingston's cannery produced some 800,000 tins of rabbit meat for the export market.

"The Longwood cannery was founded in 1891 where it produced rabbit for the dinner table by canning one-and-a-half jointed rabbits in a tin with brine, which was then boiled for canning and sealed with lead solder," Ms Andrews said.

"Canned rabbit meat emerged in response to military orders"

Maureen Andrews, Kingston
SE National Trust branch
committee member.
(Supplied: Maureen Andrews)



GET A GRIP ON THE HUNT

Bog Deathgrip Clamping Tripod

When you need a steady shooting option, consider the Bog Deathgrip Aluminium Tripod. Designed to be a stable precision tripod, you'll appreciate its durability and patented clamps, which secure any firearm without scratching it, keeping your hands-free for spotting, range finding and calling in game. It can even be used to hold cameras for when you are after a different kind of shot.

This lightweight tripod features:

- Deathgrip clamping system, with rubber inserts to protect your firearm from damage
- Tilt adjustment
- 360-degree pan adjustment
- Leg angle adjustment, go from zero degrees to 85 degrees
- Rubber leg retention strap
- Cam lock for secure height adjustment
- Retractable steel spikes or rubber feet options.

The aluminium legs are built to last, withstanding the elements to keep you steady, hunt after hunt. The three angle locks allow you to easily adjust the tripod to suit shooting from a sitting, standing or even prone position. The option of the different 'feet' ensure you can use it on any terrain – including sand, rocks, snow or scrub. The controls are easy to use, making set up and take down a breeze.

Often, it is tricky to know which products to carry out in the field. If you choose to carry the Deathgrip tripod, you'll see it is a product that gives you an extra hand when needed and one that will improve your chances of a successful shot every time.

Price ranges from \$350 to \$460. ☎

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Canned rabbit from Victoria's Longwood preserving factory bound for export.

(Supplied: Kingston National Trust)

The Mount Gambier Rabbit and Meat Preserving Company opened works at Compton in 1897 where it operated for a little under 20 years, and at its height purchased about 4,000,000 rabbits a year.

An editorial proposing the canning of rabbits at Berrima Gaol, in the New South Wales Southern Highlands, appeared in the Dubbo Dispatch on 29 November 1912, stating:

The establishment of rabbit-tinning as the main operation in gaol could be made to afford a sure means of identification of timed-expired criminals. The prisoners would of course feed on the rabbits they had tinned. Rabbit is a wholesome and nourishing food, but anyone who has it all day and every day will grow tired of it, almost to the point of actual nausea...So, when the police wanted to know whether any person was a convicted crook or not, they would try him with tinned rabbit. If he turned up his nose and made faces suggestive of sickness, they would know him as a man who had lived for some time in gaol.

By the late 1940s, Australia's commitment to the canning of rabbits had all but drawn to a close. It successfully fought off a brief bout of competition

from New Zealand's Invercargill canned rabbit factory, which attempted to import its 'Bone-in canned rabbit' in the early 1950s.

But factories were falling into disrepair and numerous issues mounted around pollution to nearby waterways, and food safety.

The introduction of Myxomatosis ultimately sealed the tin lid and consigned canned rabbit to the burrows of history. ☹



Built in 1928, The Texas Rabbit Works was the last rabbit processing plant in Australia when it closed in 1992. (Supplied: Goondiwindi Region)

Book Review:

Australian and New Zealand
Knifemaking,
2nd Edition (2025), By Rod Hoare

Book review by Sam Talbot

If you're looking for a book that captures the craftsmanship and artistry of blade smithing in our region, *Australian and New Zealand Knifemaking 2025* delivers in style. Now in its second edition, this beautifully produced volume is part reference book, part inspiration and part coffee table showpiece. *The Report* magazine first met up with Rod at a knife show last year and offered to review the weighty book. We were so impressed with his knifeware knowledge and photography skills that Rod is now a regular contributor to the magazine.

With almost 300 glossy pages and more than 600 expertly shot photographs by Rod Hoare and his specialist team, it's a visual celebration of all things sharp and forged.

The book is structured in three parts. The first section profiles standout makers from Australia and New Zealand, featuring Q&As and detailed images of their work. It also highlights emerging talents and includes a special feature on 'Women forging their own path'. These stories give a personal insight into the minds and methods of some of the region's best craftspeople.

ISBN: 978-1-7636533-0-6 RRP: \$70

The second part of the book is a gallery of knife photography that borders on art. From Damascus and daggers to swords and sayas (knife sheaths), it's a museum-worthy photo essay you can leaf through like a magazine. The third section wraps up with an overview of the local knifemaking scene, including events, suppliers and educational opportunities, making it an excellent resource for anyone looking to get started.

Throughout the book, QR codes link to video content, directing readers to workshop tours and how-to guides. This multimedia addition creates a dynamic and interactive layer to the experience, dramatically increasing the book's content even further and makes learning knifemaking that much easier. The book is printed on thick, high-quality paper, meaning there's no risk of paper cuts, although the author could argue that's a good or bad thing given the subject matter. Whether you're a maker, collector, or just curious, there's something here to spark your interest - and maybe your next project. ☺

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Chef knife in Takefu Yu Shoku blade.
Image: SharpbyCoop

Steampunk dagger.
Image: SharpbyCoop

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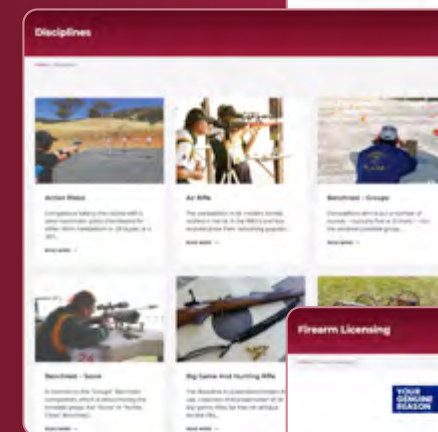
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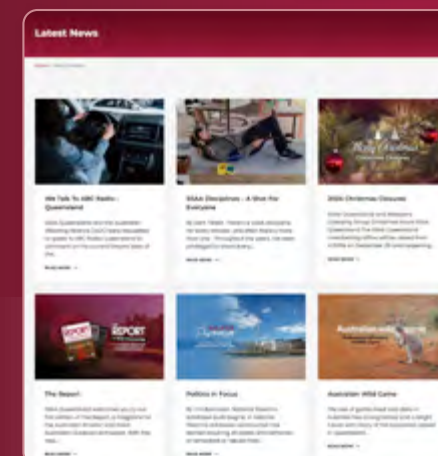
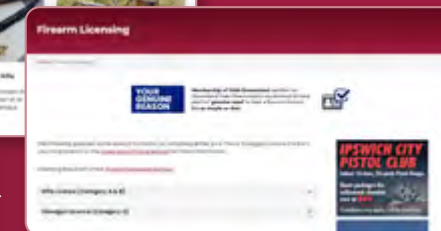
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FRONTIER FURNITURE
& TIMBER PRODUCTS

FRONTIER FURNITURE & TIMBER PRODUCTS

Getting creative with firearms

By Jennifer Martens

Exciting, creative and legal ways to preserve or simply showcase your redundant firearms while adding a special touch to your home or place of business can be done by Ryan Fisher of Frontier Furniture and Timber Products out of Stanthorpe, Queensland.

Ryan's unique approach to combining his woodworking skills with firearms came to the attention of *The Report* when Brad and Wendy, lifelong shooters from Queensland, phoned to tell us about

the project they commissioned from Frontier Furniture. They were looking for ways to preserve their old double-barrelled shotgun and two .45 Colt replicas. After discussing many options, the idea of a bushranger-themed 'resin river' dining table was decided on.

A resin river table is one where wood is paired with resin – the resin capable of encasing any manner of objects, but in this project, it was a legally decommissioned firearm and replicas, making them 100 per

"If you have an idea, chances are he can bring it to fruition."

cent police compliant and able to be admired and protected for life. "Once the resin dries, it gives the table strength," Ryan said.

Photos by Kurt Manteuffel.



FRONTIER FURNITURE

A unique shotgun wall mount sitting pride of place at the Toowoomba Bone Idol Brewery.

He carefully crafted the bushranger table over a few months, keeping the couple abreast of his progress along the way. They chose the wood base and supplied their 'treasured' items to accompany their firearms.

Ryan's woodworking includes all sorts of creations, from chairs, tables and countertops to cutting boards, pet accommodation and even a full wagon restoration. If you have an idea, chances are he can bring it to fruition. With both a sawmill and a metal shop on the premises, he can handle just about any project from start to finish. The possibilities are endless.



The resin helps ad stability and strength to the table.



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The finished commissioned River Resin dining table – a conversation starter for sure!

A proud sporting shooter, SSAA paid life member and hunter himself, Ryan’s parents said he began nailing pieces of wood together in his father’s workshop from a very young age. He comes from a long line of German wheelwrights, blacksmiths and builders and said, “If I had five lifetimes, I’d try all the trades”. Building and creating are in his DNA, so it is no wonder he combined his two passions: woodworking and firearms.

Growing up target shooting at the Belmont range, Ryan has pretty much shot every style of shooting there is, but he prefers field rifle as it simulates hunting conditions. In his youth, he spent a lot of time during

school holidays on friends’ properties hunting and helping with pest control.

Ryan first began incorporating firearms into his woodwork creations a few years ago. The idea came about when he was discussing a project with a few police officers, for whom he was building a door. Talking about options for the handle, a baseball bat was first suggested but the banter between the group quickly led to the idea of a shotgun being used as the handle. From there, it was ‘all guns blazing’ and since then, similar projects began to evolve, including rifle, shotgun or pistol door handles and wall mounts, a shotgun hatrack and resin river tables.



Taylor Family Produce commissioned Ryan to create this one-of-a-kind boardroom table...one certainly worthy of making major deals and decisions at.

“it was ‘**all guns blazing**’ and since then, similar projects began to evolve...”



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When clients come to him with an idea of any kind, he thoughtfully suggests options for their projects. Each design is custom, and Ryan's skill takes a customer's plan to the next level, producing something that is sure to be passed down for generations to come.

All sorts of Australian timber can be found on his property, so there is never a shortage of choices, but his preference is camphor for its unique colour and grain. His timber selection is not only large, it is sustainable, as most of it comes from tree loppers and would otherwise be destined to be burned or chipped. "I can tell you exactly where each piece of my wood comes from," he says. That said, some clients bring wood to him, such as one gentleman who brought him a large and tangled tree stump that was on his family's property for 40 years. "When people feel more connected to their piece, it is a nicer thing to have in their homes," Ryan says.

Ryan's clients have said he is more than a furniture maker, preferring to label him an artist. It is a title this Jack of all Trades is learning to accept. Just as an artist creates pieces to get a response out of its viewers, Ryan too relishes people's reactions, saying the best part about his job is delivery day: "Seeing the client's reaction is pretty cool." He believes incorporating firearms with his woodwork gives his pieces that extra 'wow' factor. He's hoping this aspect of his business continues to grow, as he'd love to see the public more exposed to firearms and less fearful of them.

Choosing to work with Frontier Furniture and Timber Products, you get the benefit of knowing exactly where your treasured piece has come from – whether it's a tree stump from a family property or a double-barrelled shotgun handed down from your grandfather. That knowledge adds intrinsic value money can't buy.

You might see Ryan's work in various cellar doors throughout Australia and most of his clients are either referred by word of mouth, have been privileged to see some of his work in person or they have stumbled across his growing Instagram account: @frontier.furniture

While you don't have to be a local to appreciate his talents or own a piece of his work, you can find some of his creations at the Bone Idol Brewery in Toowoomba and the High Street Barbers in Stanthorpe.

Web: frontierfurniture.com.au

The job that really started Ryan's timber + firearms venture.

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SSAA Queensland Media

A POWERHOUSE OF INFORMATION

In less than 12 months, SSAA Queensland's media has morphed from outdated websites and social media platforms to a powerhouse of information, including up-to-date and modern websites, regular e-newsletters, social media accounts and *The Report*, a bi-monthly 50-page magazine. But now, due to *The Report's* success with our members and the shooting industry, we are proud to announce that the magazine will be published monthly as of June and feature an additional 16 pages. That means we'll be able to bring you more shooting news, hunting tales and product reviews each month. *The Report* and SSAA Queensland will be your source for everything shooting related, from politics to club shoots and everything in between.

SSAA Queensland exists for our members. We are big and bold and unashamed – and we are the largest shooting organisation in the southern hemisphere. We also have big visions for our future, which is why we have taken more control of the services available to our members. We now manage our own membership services, public liability and firearms cover and our media and publications.

We have grown our team so that it includes experts in lobbying, advocacy, range development and media. Four key individuals who make up the publishing arm of the Association have amassed more than 70 years of experience in shooting media.



Here's an introduction to the team bringing you *The Report*:

CO-MANAGING EDITOR

TIM BANNISTER

Executive Director Tim Bannister brings with him a wealth of firearm association and media knowledge, having been the SSAA Inc Chief Editor of the *Australian Shooter* magazine and the inaugural CEO. He is also the longest serving federal parliamentary lobbyist for SSAA in its history, having lobbied at the local, national and even international level at the United Nations in New York. Tim is a journalist and editor by profession, having worked on Queensland newspapers and national magazines and uses those skills to help guide and build on SSAA Queensland's media, including of course, our own *The Report* magazine, of which he is Co-Managing Editor along with Jennifer Martens.

Tim grew up shooting rifles and shotguns on farms on the weekends and these days enjoys clay target and handgun competitions as well as hunting.

CO-MANAGING EDITOR

JENNIFER MARTENS

Originally from the USA, Jennifer joined SSAA Inc as an associate editor in 1999. In the past quarter of a decade, she has worked for SSAA Inc as a logistics officer, senior journalist, editor, chief of staff and is now a Co-Managing Editor and Project Manager for SSAA Queensland. Jennifer has interviewed and written about hundreds of sporting shooters, including celebrities such as Glen McGrath, Kosta Zu, Beaconsfield mine collapse survivor Todd Russell, Australian Idol star Shannon Knoll, and country music legend (OAM) Lee Kernaghan. She has also covered major shooting events throughout Australia, including the Commonwealth Games, and cast a final eye over more than 250 monthly SSAA publications during the years. If shooting news has been in the written word, she's either read it, written it or edited it for our members.

With an interest in all forms of shooting, no discipline is off the table and no shooting tale immune to her editor's eye.

SPECIALIST MEDIA OFFICER

SAM TALBOT

Sam started shooting clay targets competitively at 13 with his family, who have been shooters for generations. Along the way he won many junior competitions and has even tried his hand at every SSAA discipline. He studied law and media at university before joining SSAA Inc as Communications Officer. During this time, he also completed his Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice and was added to the Supreme Court roll.

Sam then spent time as a Breakfast Radio Host, which paved the way for production, journalism and podcasting roles with a major Australian network. He's worked with journalists around Australia, and in 2024 his team won 'Best News Podcast' at the Australian & NZ Podcast Awards.

Never content to sit still, Sam recently rounded out his technical toolkit with a Graduate Certificate in IT from QUT, adding web and data skills to his editorial arsenal. Now back in the fold at SSAA Queensland, he blends sharp legal insight, shooting experience and contemporary storytelling know-how to champion our sport and its people.

MARKETING & BUSINESS DEV. MANAGER

KAROLINE WASIAK

Karoline was introduced to shooting and hunting at 18, starting with air rifles and progressing to a .223 before trying out long-range shooting with a .308 and reloading ammunition. She also enjoys clay target shooting and is keen to try handgun shooting.

Seventeen years ago, Karoline made a big career move, leaving the corporate world—where she worked as a Sales and Pricing Analyst for one of the world's largest shipping companies—to pursue her passion in the outdoor and shooting sports industry. Armed with a degree in International Business, major in International Marketing and Minor in Politics, she jumped on the opportunity to work with SSAA Inc.

Karoline was instrumental in growing, evolving and modernising SSAA's media and publications, increasing audience engagement, expanding the reach of local and international brands, promoting businesses, organising events and being the overall industry liaison. With over two decades of professional experience in marketing, advertising sales, and business development, she blends creativity with data-driven decision-making to deliver real results.

Today, Karoline leads SSAA Queensland's advertising and marketing initiatives, driving its growth through attention to detail, organisation, strategy, industry partnerships, and an understanding of the outdoor and shooting sports. Her enthusiasm, passion, expertise, and client-focused approach make her an integral part of the team. Karoline's commitment to continuous improvement and love of data, analytics and industry insights continues to guide her contribution to SSAA Queensland, ensuring we remain at the forefront of our field.

The SSAA Queensland team is always keen to hear your feedback and ideas. Reach us at: news@ssaaqld.org.au

MONEY TALKS

Fighting animal extremists requires funding and partnerships *By Tim Bannister*

Animal activist group Animals Australia has spent almost 80 million dollars in running campaigns against hunting, kangaroo harvesting and pig and chicken farming in the past five years.

The campaigns often utilise short television and social media advertisements that personalise and humanise the animals to gain sympathy from the audience. In one recent video clip, a cute singing piglet appeals to the humans to keep him safe where in another a baby cow is given a name as it pleads not to be taken from its mother.

Australian Pork Limited's Margo Andrae, as quoted in the *Weekly Times* newspaper, said the animal activist groups were able to tap into a huge audience. She said people gave money to these groups to feel better about themselves in the hope they were helping the world to be a better place.

It is a 'Bambi loving, feel good' campaign that supposedly strives for the whole of society to be vegetarian and animals to be bred and kept for no other reason than as a noble, feel-good exercise.

Animals Australia, and similar activist groups, only survive by public donations. When you type in 'Animals Australia' into a web browser, a donation page is the first page to appear. It is the home page and makes suggestions on how much to donate, starting at \$35 and going up to \$125 either as a once off or monthly amount. You will receive a 'thank you' that you are helping create a kinder world.

The reality of a world where there is no farming, no breeding of pets and certainly no hunting or culling is far less appealing than these groups would have you believe. For a start, the human body needs protein. While there are some substitutes to meat-based protein, it would demand a massive expansion of cropping and ironically farming, thus requiring pest control. Should the world go vegetarian,

Pig farming group Australian Pork Limited funds feral pig research and control to protect its animals from devastating disease spread by the ferals.

there would be mass starvation.

Animal welfare thrives when the animals are monetised, that is, they have a financial worth.

The pork industry, for instance, values the pigs that are farmed for meat. The industry wants healthy pigs for meat production. It is in its interests to ensure Foot and Mouth and other diseases do not spread to its farmed animals. Feral pigs pass on their diseases to the farmed animals, creating a dire situation that could wipe out the industry.

That fight is one of the main reasons Australian Pork Limited funds feral pig eradication research and partners with universities and land management groups to combat the spread of feral pigs across Australia. The second National Feral Pig Conference held in Queensland this year was sponsored by the pork industry, but the fight to protect both the industry and the environment cannot be left to it alone.

Hunters play their part in controlling feral pig numbers and should be proud they are contributing to assisting the environment and protecting koalas, turtles, lambs and farming from the threats of feral pigs. Ironically, Animals Australia would have the public believe that hunters negatively impact the environment and that there is no place for them in their utopian 'Disney World' of animal equality and rights. There is even a word for giving animals human-like traits – Anthropomorphism.

Like hunting groups that publicise the good they do as environmental volunteers and pushing back on radical animal right's campaigners, farming representative organisations like the National Farmers' Federation must play a role in advocating for farming. Advocacy funding

is critical and should promote feral animal control, weed and disease control and animal welfare - not animal rights and partnering with like-minded groups.

Money talks. ☹

POLITICS IN FOCUS



Animal Australia funded a television commercial featuring a singing piglet calling for kindness.

A SECURE GUN = A SECURE SPORT

As responsible law-abiding gun owners, SSAA members would already be familiar with the requirements of safe firearm storage in Queensland and the understanding that it is the responsibility of a person that possess a firearm to take all reasonable precautions to ensure the firearm:

- is stored safely and legally
- that it is not lost or stolen
- that does not come into the possession of an unauthorised person.

But reminders of important things never hurt, so here are some of the key points, as provided by the QPS in a PDF brochure, which can be found by searching online at police.qld.gov.au

FOR CATEGORY A, B & C FIREARMS

- The container must be of a rigid structure, made of either solid steel or solid timber.
- Rigid structure refers to the strength of the container and the use of reasonable force to the sides or top of the container should not result in deflections of the panel or the container.
- The term solid, requires that the container panels are continuous (e.g. without venting/holes or perforation).
- The container must be either steel (aluminium/ alloys are not compliant) or solid timber. Species of hardwood timber and marine ply of at least 16mm are acceptable while the use of chipboard, particle board, MDF or plaster board are not.
- If the container used for storing these firearms weighs less than 150kg, it must be securely fixed to the frame or floor of a permanent building.
- The container must have a sturdy combination lock, keyed lock or keyed padlock.
- The container must be locked other than for the time to remove/replace firearms.
- Firearms must be unloaded, and the bolt must be removed or action broken for storage. The bolt is a major component part and is subject to same storage requirements as the firearm and can be stored with the firearm.

(Section 94 of the Weapons Regulation 2016 provides minimum requirements for safe storage of firearms.)

The Queensland Police Service has said it will focus on firearm safety throughout 2025, specifically 'proper firearm storage'.



CATEGORY D, H OR R STORAGE

- The container must be of a rigid structure, made of solid steel.
- Be bolted to the frame or floor of a permanent building.
- The container must have a sturdy combination lock, keyed lock or keyed padlock.
- The container must be locked other than for the time to remove/replace firearm.
- Firearms must be unloaded and the action broken for storage.

(Section 94 of the Weapons Regulation 2016 provides minimum requirements for safe keeping of Category D, H and R firearms)

When it comes to ammunition, the same brochure states: 'Ammunition must be stored in a secure container or area which is separate from the container that holds the firearms. For example, a gun safe with an internal secured area for the ammunition may be suitable.' And in the case of a high number of firearms it says: 'Should more than 30 firearms be stored at the premises, the firearms must be stored in accordance with sections 88-92 of the Weapons Regulation 2016.'

The SSAA has long been a vocal proponent of safe and compliant firearms storage, not just for the protection of the community at large, but also for the security of the sport of shooting. 'Secure Your Gun, Secure Your Sport' has been a slogan of ours for many years. Now is a good a time as any for SSAA Queensland members to conduct their own self audit. It could be while you were compliant in the past, that maybe your ammunition storage has gotten out of hand, or your gun collection has outgrown that first safe you bought. Remember, by securing your guns, you are securing your sport. And you never know, a good clean up and sort out might even reveal there is enough room in the safe for that new dream gun you have had your eye on after all. ☹



Is your H2O PH8?

Get ready
to hydrate!

By Taylah Campbell May

Whether you are at work, running a marathon or out bush hunting, hydration is vital. While any water is better than no water, PH8 not only hydrates quicker but it also replenishes your body with many natural minerals. Studies have shown that up to 80 per cent of Australian's suffer from dehydration annually. Dehydration has many serious health implications ranging from mild brain fog and cognitive impairment to cardiovascular strain.

PH8 is an Australian-founded and operated company that bottles naturally filtered water from the Yorke Peninsula in South Australia.

Its water is sourced from limestone aquifers; because of this, it is enriched with beneficial minerals. An aquifer is essentially a layer of substrate that includes rock, soils, sands and minerals that is able to efficiently hold water due to its higher permeability and porosity. These features make it an excellent storage site for groundwater that can hold water for thousands of years. Excellent water quality is often associated with water from aquifers, as they can be naturally infused with minerals. As groundwater moves through pores, fractures and joints of the rocks, it dissolves minerals thus increasing their concentration in the water. Mineral dissolution occurs naturally over time as water slowly percolates through the subsurface.

PH8 is unlike any other brand on the market, as it utilises natural geological formations to filter and infuse its water with beneficial minerals such as calcium, magnesium, potassium, bicarbonate, silica and selenium. Its water offers optimal hydration through alkaline microclusters that enable your body to absorb water faster, meaning that your cells get benefitted faster than with standard water. The alkaline minerals help to maintain your body's pH homeostatic balance. PH8 water is packed with electrolyte minerals, which provide a number of health benefits including regulation of nerve and muscle function as well as promoting and supporting healthy blood pressure and tissue repair. Additionally, selenium is a potent antioxidant that efficiently detoxifies your body. The silica content provides support to strengthen your hair, skin and nails.

This water can provide everyone with enriched hydration, but it is ideal for hunters, hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. Rapid hydration and water retention is vital, especially if you are hiking many kilometres

over rough terrain with rifles and hunting kit. It is extremely common for hunters to experience severe dehydration due to their prolonged exposure to heat, over exertion and lack of access to water. The wide range of benefits that alkaline water can provide makes it perfect for those who find themselves outside on a regular basis. Also, water with a higher pH is known to have a smoother taste, making it very palatable.

As a busy university student, I constantly find myself dehydrated, whether I am walking around campus or in the field. My experiences with PH8 confidently support all of the aforementioned benefits, including rapid and effective hydration; while using this water I experienced less severe headaches throughout the day and had less brain fog. The true test while I was using PH8 was the time I spent in the field; I spent more than five hours doing intense physical activities including hiking to field sites and rock scrambling. Throughout the entire day I felt fully hydrated, even when I was tired and exhausted. The shipping of the product was efficient and the PH8 team was flexible when I requested the delivery address be changed. I could not recommend this product and company enough.

If you want to get some PH8 water for yourself, it is available in selected supermarkets Australia-wide or you can purchase it online for fast delivery to your home or workplace. You can order it by the box or pallet load. PH8 water is available in 500mL, 1L and 1.5L bottles. ☺

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A 'BURNING' QUESTION regarding sporting ammunition

By Jennifer Martens

If you grew up watching Looney Toons cartoons, you'll remember the countless dynamite and gun powder explosions in many of the episodes. In the 1950 classic, 'Bunker Hill Bunny', Yosemite Sam and Bugs Bunny engage in a battle for control of their respective fortresses. After many failed attempts, Yosemite Sam endeavours to blow up Bug's fortress using a keg of gun powder. A series of errors sees Bugs light a trail of powder that leads to Yosemite Sam and explodes when it reaches the pile of powder in his pocket. Yes, even though a cartoon, that episode, along with countless Hollywood movie explosions involving gun powder, begs the question: What does happen when ammunition is set on fire? Does gun powder actually explode?

The Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufactures' Institute, Inc (SAAMI), established in the USA in 1926, produced a video to help give factual information to firefighters who battle fires containing sporting ammunition (gun powder), including rifle and handgun cartridges with primers, powder and bullets up to .50 calibre; and shotgun shells up to 8g, including primers, powder, and wads to hold pellets. While the video was made for firefighters, the results of the numerous tests help clear up the uncertainty surrounding a 'burning' question regarding gun powder and explosions.

SAAMI conducted tests on various types of ammunition by igniting them outside of a firearm. Overall results showed lower velocities and energies than what would be encountered if shot from a firearm.

In one test, various types of ammunition were dropped from a height of 65 feet. The results demonstrated that in this situation "sporting ammunition is unlikely to ignite". But, if by chance it did, it did not spread.

In another experiment to test burning ammunition, boxes of ammunition were shot at to see if one cartridge was accidentally ignited, would others follow? Handgun, rifle and shotgun shells were targeted. In the experiment, only a few cartridges ignited per box – except for the shotgun shells. With the shells, gunpowder erupted from the shells but did not ignite. In this experiment most of the ammunition did not ignite, but when one did, there was no chain reaction.

In a test that proved contrary to old Hollywood action films, a bonfire was set and filled with packages of ammunition. In the movies, this would usually and spectacularly result in a huge explosion. SAAMI's goal was to test the danger of the projectiles from the fire and prove that sporting ammunition does not 'explode'. 28,000 rounds of ammunition were lit on fire and began to ignite. The test proved that ammunition in a fire is intimidating and noisy, but due to its low energy, the ammunition igniting (and being projected) wasn't life threatening to firefighters in most of the situations they would encounter. The same test was conducted on ammunition without packaging. The ammunition did not burn more intensely and no explosions occurred.

Other tests included:

- blasting caps, which concluded that even under extreme pressure and friction, sporting ammunition is unlikely to ignite – and does not propagate
- a retail fire simulation, in which the fire was controlled within 10 seconds and the projectiles inside were low velocity and did not hinder the firefighters' jobs
- a semitrailer fire full of ammunition, which produced similar results to the retail fire.

SAAMI used more than 400,000 rounds of ammunition in their numerous experiments. The results of these tests proved that sporting ammunition is difficult to ignite and that it does not burn or explode when "subjected to extreme stimuli". In a fire, ammunition is loud and will launch small debris, but with its low velocity, it will not injure firefighters or prevent them from containing a fire. Water will safely extinguish any burning ammunition.

So, the answer to the 'burning question' regarding sporting ammunition and gun powder, is that it does not explode or pose "fire or accident hazards any more than other common commodities" and in fact can be less dangerous in a fire than many products found in most homes.

These experiments further demonstrate that the overall safety of the shooting sports – even in the event of extreme conditions.

To watch the full video, see: saami.org/publications-advisories/sporting-ammunition-and-the-firefighter ☺

Shooting galleries offer the opportunity to hone your skills without the crowds.

URBAN INDOOR SHOOTING GALLERIES

An unsung introduction for city sporting shooters

By Peter Jackson

Despite having a number of both pistol and rifle ranges up here in sunny North Queensland, just lobbing up to a gun range can seem somewhat of a daunting prospect for some first-time shooters.

I have to say, that in all my years of shooting, I've found that gun clubs welcome new shooters with open arms and are more than happy to teach the fundamentals of firearm safety. And, more often than not, they help win over new people to the sport.

Other pathways for novice shooters, and ones that are often seen more as novelty experiences, include urban indoor shooting galleries. Take my local indoor gallery, for example, which forms part of the Australian Armoured and Artillery Museum display in Cairns. It has played a large part in introducing many local non-shooters to the skill of putting holes in paper.

As it turns out, the Museum's Shooting Gallery has sparked the fires of interest among our small neighbourhood group and now has turned into a bit of a 'thing' - a competitive 'thing' I will add.

Had I'd known what hidden skills would be unearthed, I would have left well enough alone, as I'm forced to leave in my hearing protection post-shoot to muffle all the new-found bragging.

It didn't take long before our small group was joined by more neighbours, followed by another young 20-something couple who had never fired a gun in their lives.

Just to paint a clearer picture of how these indoor shoots operate for us urbanites, it's pretty straightforward. We arrive at the Australian Armour Museum, purchase a basic shooting package, which includes 20 rounds of .22s and 10 rounds of a selection for a centrefire rifle.

In keeping with the military theme of the museum, it offers a selection of WWII era 'big bangers' such as the .303, the K98 Mauser, the Italian Carcano as well lever action and pump action rifles for use.

Then it's 'eyes and ears'; the door is shut, red light on and away we go.

Once signed in, we descend to the underground rifle range for our safety briefing and commentary about the firearm we are about to use. Once broken up into teams of two, the range officers offer further instruction on how to achieve the best results with the firearm in use. Then it's 'eyes and ears'; the door is shut, red light on and away we go.

Watching the faces of first-time shooters who have not fired a large calibre rifle before always makes me laugh a little.

For those awaiting their turn, they are pressed up on the other side of the safety glass, trying to see where the rounds are going, mentally working their scores and who gets the bragging rights for the round.

So, 18 months after this group began, this friendly shooting invitation has now turned into a 'neighbourhood thing' and is held every three months. And just like

any club, the post-shoot bragging is only eclipsed by some fairly ordinary excuses from the 'also ran' group.

We've had t-shirts printed, with the title 'Clifton Beach Lead Slingers' stamped all over them, and a trophy has been designed.

Three of our guests enjoyed their experiences so much they booked in for their A and B shooter's licence course and are looking to join a local SSAA club in Northern Queensland.

To me, these small-style shooting galleries can be somewhat of an unsung hero when looking for an optional stepping stone towards taking up shooting as a sport. They often lead to people joining an established SSAA club, which leads them to the next step in their (hopefully lifelong) shooting journey. ☺



Janelle Rinaldi uses a social day shoot at the indoor shooting gallery to brush up on her skills.



Shooting galleries like Cairns-based Australian Armour and Artillery Museum offer a supervised shooting experience for groups looking to experience historic firearms.

Wheelie Good Shooters

SSAA Townsville



By Jennifer Martens

The Wheelie Good Shooters know how to have a 'wheelie' good time!

For nearly the past five years, SSAA Townsville has been home to the 'Wheelie Good Shooters', a group dedicated to people with disabilities. Group numbers vary each week, as members often have to rely on the availability of their carers to get them to the range and assist with setting up their gear, loading ammunition and adjusting sights, but when the stars align and the shooters get to the the shooting line, it is all smiles, chatter, laughter, good times, food and of course hit targets.

Current membership ranges between five to 20, with more and more carers joining in on the fun and even getting their firearms licences, including carers Ben Alderson and Liz Bennel, who couldn't resist the lure of sending lead down range.

Julian Russell, who was SSAA Townsville Jr Vice President from 2021-2024, is now the Wheelie's Shot Captain and Range Officer. He is passionate about the shooting sports and, of course, this group, which proudly shows off their own team shirts and hats made to solidify and identify the bunch. Julian's dedication

keeps the team going. SSAA Townsville Vice President Michael Norris said, "Without Julian, this group would have probably fallen apart".

Along with Julian, Robbie Hall has been a member of the group from the start and is one of the faces you'd see most weeks on the firing line. Robbie loves shooting his .22 and .223 and finds this group to be a really good outlet for him. A keen tenpin bowler too, he recently had to have a shoulder fusion, making shooting, which he can still do despite the operation, all the more important to him.

The Wheelies have exclusive use of the range each Thursday morning, with the Shot Captain saying that 'perk' takes some pressure off the members and ensures they don't feel rushed, judged or intimidated. It also helps ease newcomers into the sport and, for regulars, serves as a stepping stone to other disciplines. For example, being a part of the Wheelies gave Julian the confidence to take up Benchrest shooting. He encourages others looking for an activity to "give shooting a go". He hopes people won't let their



Arthur Naawi says shooting, hunting and fishing play a large role in his mental health.

Shot Captain and Range Officer Julian Russell – the glue that keeps this group together.



Alan Oakes gets a helping hand from carer Liz Bennel.

disability prevent them from trying shooting, as just about anyone can do it, particularly with the many aids and adaptations that are currently available.

Shooting sports can be easily adapted with specialised equipment to accommodate various physical disabilities, including modified firearms, support stands, shooting jackets, assisted loaders, trigger adapters, and shooting chairs and tables to accommodate wheelchairs or for those with limited mobility.

One of the newest locals to visit the group is Alana Green. Alana, who has Muscular Dystrophy, was worried her vision might be an issue while shooting. However, with the help of her carer, Maram Adnan, Alana has been able to enjoy shooting, even attending a Women's and Girls Come and Try event that was scheduled just three days after her first visit to the Wheelies. Alana said she finds shooting both relaxing and challenging. "It is so exciting to hit a target," she said. She also says coming to the range helps with her mental health, describing the experience as "very therapeutic".

Shooting requires focus and concentration, which can help improve cognitive functions. It can also

assist with stress relief and give people a sense of accomplishment. Hitting a target builds confidence and self-esteem, particularly for those who have often felt their disability has limited their activities.

Kelvin Trembath, a former cattle farmer, is completely deaf in one ear and requires a hearing aid in the other. He's enjoyed shooting in the past but now finds communication with others difficult, relying on his carer and signing via Auslan sign language. Kelvin heard about the group via Dawn Wills from NQ Quality Care, a disability service and support organisation. In fact, several members of the Wheelies found out about the group via this organisation. When Kelvin applied for his firearms licence, he was told that he wouldn't qualify due to his hearing impairment. Not content to take no for an answer, Kelvin questioned the decision, pointing to other disabled shooters as well as the technology available to provide aid to both deaf and blind people. He now has his firearms licence...which provides a bit of insight into his grit, determination and competitiveness.

Another member of the group is Alan Oakes, a SSAA member and long-time shooter. Alan had a stroke a few years ago and subsequently lost all movement on

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WHEELIE GOOD SHOOTERS

his left side. But with the help of Liz, his carer, he’s able to shoot and “get out of the house and talk a lot of rubbish... like all men do,” he joked. Living nearby makes it a bit easier to attend on a regular basis and he says attending the range is a highlight of his week.

Arthur Naawi heard about this exciting shooting opportunity from Julian and says, “The first time I came out, I loved it. I love coming here.” Arthur believes fishing and shooting assist with his mental health and wellbeing. The two activities also help him improve his concentration and focus. “I feel really happy coming here,” he said. “It is fun to have a yarn; we are like a family out here.” Arthur’s carer, Chris Maiden, also shoots and fishes as well, which gives the pair much to talk about and has deepened their friendship.

Each member of the Wheelie Good Shooters lists community and camaraderie as one of the top benefits of attending the weekly sessions, pointing to the fact that most shooters genuinely love to help others, share their knowledge and tell a good tale.

While SSAA Townsville isn’t yet perfect for disabled shooters, it has put a number of aids in place, including disabled toilets,

ramps to the range, and disabled parking. Of course, the Branch is always looking for ways to improve its facilities, but funding can be difficult to obtain. However, when and if the money is there, the members have a wish-list ready, including better paths out to the targets, an indoor range and even a bus that could pick up members when carers can’t.

Most ranges can be modified to be wheelchair accessible by installing ramps, handicapped accessible toilets, suitable paths, appropriate parking, and by reducing obstacles. For ranges looking to improve their accessibility, government grants are often available and worth applying for.

In addition to the social and mental benefits of the shooting sports, shooting offers physical benefits as well, specifically improved coordination, strength and stability. The sport also gives individuals complete control over their own performance, making successes all the more satisfying.

For people such as Kelvin, who have a bit of fight or competitiveness in them, shooting offers numerous opportunities to compete, from club, state, national and even international

levels. Whatever the goal, there is something for everyone.

For those who might worry about the safety of the shooting sports, rest assured. Shooters and clubs take safety seriously. With certified Range Officers always on hand, ranges are controlled and safe environments.

Compared to other sports, shooting:

- often requires fewer modifications and can be more easily tailored to individual needs
- can be less physically demanding for those with greater disabilities
- equipment and facilities can be easier to access.

The Wheelies group mainly shoot .22 rifles at metal and paper targets. The ‘ping, ping’ heard from successful shots is a welcome sound and is a steady supply of satisfaction.

Shooting is an all-abilities sport. The benefits for juniors, women, men, and the disabled shouldn’t be overlooked. With more than 75 ranges in Queensland, there is sure to be one for you to visit.

For more information on the Wheelie Good Shooters, contact: townsville@ssaaqld.org.au or 0410 873 741. 📞

THE POST WAR SMILE NO. 4

By Paul Heiser

During the Second World War there was a shortage of seasoned walnut, the first choice for all rifle stocks for service firearms including British No. 4 rifles. As a wartime expediency, kiln dried beech and birch were substituted for walnut and post-war beech became the standard for wooden furniture. Some early post-war No. 4 Mk 2s have been noted with walnut furniture, whether this was using up old stocks of walnut or if some walnut was sourced post war is not known.

Not all kiln drying was done properly and some stocks would later warp or change dimensions, depending on the humidity. Unfortunately, the trigger was mounted to the trigger guard that

was attached to the stock and when the stock warped, swelled or shrunk, the trigger would not correctly align with the sear, causing accuracy issues due to altered trigger pull. This was noted during the war and, after cessation of hostilities during 1946, trials were held using an improved design with the trigger mounted to the receiver and this solved the accuracy issues.

The trial models of 1946 were approved for production on 31 March 1949 and commenced production in July 1949. They were designated the No. 4 Mk 2. The Mk 2 was only produced at the Fazakerley Royal Ordnance Factory (ROF) located near Liverpool.

Robbie Hall, one of the first members of the group, rarely misses a session.



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Previously a No. 4 Mk 1 converted to Mk 2 standard in 1955. Originally manufactured in Britain 1941 to 1945.

Previously a No. 4 Mk 1* converted to Mk 2 standard in 1955. Originally manufactured by Savage in the United States.

Newly manufactured August 1949, an early example.

Charles Stratton, in his *British Enfield Rifles Volume 2*, states that approximately 396,000 rifles were manufactured post war at Fazakerley. It could be questioned as to why the British Government was manufacturing bolt action rifles that by 1945 were of an obsolete design. One possible reason is that the Cold War had commenced but also possibly the government wanted to retain a corps of skilled workers and a fully operational modern manufacturing plant in case of a cold war becoming a hot war. It may have been a wise decision, as in 1950 the Canadian Government had to recommence production of No. 4 Mk Is at Long Branch due to the outbreak of the Korean War.

The last No. 4 Mk 2 rifles were manufactured in 1955 and many were never issued. Fazakerley was noted for high incidences of industrial strife and was eventually closed down by an exasperated government in 1960 after completing a run of Sterling 9mm submachine guns.

The Fazakerley ROF also modified No. 4 Mk I and No. 4 Mk I* rifles to Mk 2 standards by brazing metal stirrups to the bottom of the receivers so the trigger would be mounted in the same manner as the Mk 2. Large numbers of early No. 4s were upgraded and are often encountered. The No. 4 Mk I, when converted, was designated the No. 4½ and the No. 4 Mk I* was designated the No. 4 Mk 1/3. The original designations were struck through and the new designations applied with an electric pencil. The conversion of the earlier No. 4s was deemed to be a Factory Thorough Repair (FTR) and the conversions will bear markings indicating such. A converted No. 4 Mk I will typically show new markings: No 4 Mk 1 / 2(F) FTR 51. The F in brackets is for Fazakerley, FTR is Factory Thorough Repair and the 51 is for the year 1951. I would make an observation that here in Australia the No. 4 Mk 1 / 3 is the most readily encountered conversion, with the other conversion No. 4 Mk 1 / 2 being much scarcer. An astute person will have noticed that these rifles and the Mk 2 now use Arabic rather than Roman numerals to distinguish the mark.

The Pakistani Government also manufactured approximately 40,000 No. 4 Mk 2 rifles at Wah Arsenal in the late 1950s on machinery purchased from the BSA Shirley plant after it closed post war. This figure may also include earlier model No. 4s that were upgraded to Mk 2 standards.

And so ended the .303 Lee Enfield as the standard issue service rifle. ☉

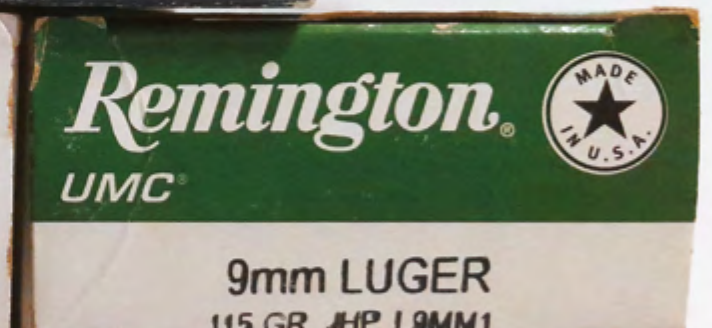
CLASSIC CARTRIDGES

The 9mm Luger By Steve Marchant

Georg Luger's semi-automatic pistol was initially chambered for the 7.65x21mm Parabellum cartridge. However, the German military required a larger calibre for their sidearm, so Luger expanded the bottleneck on the 7.65x21mm case. This resulted in a cartridge with a rimless, tapered case and a bullet diameter of 9mm.

Introduced in 1902, the 9x19mm cartridge was designated as *9mm Luger*

by the Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers' Institute (SAAMI), because it was originally designed for the Luger semi-automatic pistol. The 9mm Luger is also widely referred to as the *9mm Parabellum*. The Latin *Parabellum* means 'prepare for war' and was taken from the company motto of the first manufacturer of 9x19mm ammunition, the German munitions firm Deutsche Waffen- und Munitionsfabriken (DWM).



A wide variety of 9mm factory cartridges is available today.

CLASSIC CARTRIDGES

Also known as simply *the 9mm*, Luger’s 9x19mm cartridge has been adopted by many military forces across the globe. NATO adopted the 9mm in 1955 as their official sidearm cartridge, after which the round also became known as the *9mm NATO*. While still utilising the same sized cartridge, NATO specifications required a slightly heavier bullet, 124 grains (gr) compared to 115gr, loaded to higher pressures. In addition to sidearms, the 9mm Luger is chambered in short range assault rifles, such as the M16/AR15 and submachine guns, making it one of the oldest, yet most popular military cartridges in use today.

For modern military requirements, the 9mm has a number of important features. Its shell casing is strong, especially the head and rim. Also, its rimless design and gently tapered case body facilitates smooth stacking and feeding from single or double-stack magazines, along with reliable extraction and ejection of fired shell cases. The 9mm’s comparatively compact dimensions enable it to be chambered in smaller and lighter guns, and its manageable recoil provides for faster shot-to-shot recovery in rapid fire and multiple target situations. Moreover, the 9mm adapts well to high-capacity magazines. For example, the 9mm Browning HP35, which was adopted by military forces around the globe after World War Two, has a 13-round magazine, yet it is shorter and lighter than the USA’s Colt 1911 .45 ACP with its seven-round magazine.

Since WWII, police departments and civilians around the world have also increasingly adopted the 9mm as their primary handgun cartridge. This is because the 9mm Luger is available in dozens of semi-auto pistol designs of the highest quality, thus fulfilling the various demands of most shooters. As well as semi-auto pistols, the 9mm is chambered in revolvers, and in semi-automatic and lever action carbines. Additionally, continued

	LUGER CARTRIDGE DIMENSIONS	
	.30 Luger (7.65x21mm)	9mm Luger (9x19mm)
Bullet diameter/weight	.308”/93 grains	.355”/124grains
Neck diameter	.322”	.380”
Base diameter	.388”	.392”
Rim diameter	.391”	.393”
Case type/length	Rimless/.75”	Rimless/.754”
Cartridge length	1.15”	1.16”

improvement in 9mm bullet design has produced a better balance of expansion and penetration, providing effective power along with moderate recoil.

The increasing popularity of the 9mm Luger has generated a wide range of available cartridges for it, with projectile weights ranging from 65gr to 158gr, depending on the application; though the most popular bullet weights for sporting and defensive purposes are 115gr, 124gr, 125gr and 147gr. What’s more, 9mm Luger reloading components are readily available and comparatively inexpensive.

At the ripe old age of 123 years, the 9mm Luger/9mm Parabellum/9mm NATO/ 9x19mm/9mm is not only still going strong, it is a globally accepted standard in terms of handgun chamberings, and its popularity shows no sign of waning in the foreseeable future. 🌀



CULLING & HUNTING ETHICS

101

By Dr Ben Allen



It is often claimed that intentional animal killing is morally impermissible, bad, incorrect, wrong or unethical. People who espouse these views usually lean on a variety of ethical philosophies or frameworks to make their case, such as consequentialism (belief actions should be judged by their consequences), deontology (emphasising code of rules despite consequences) or virtue ethics (emphasising character and virtue over rules or consequences). But did you know that the same ethical frameworks typically used to condemn animal killing can also be used to argue that animal killing is instead morally permissible, good, correct, right or ethical?

Please explain.

Each ethical framework is based on a suite of different values, rules or principles intended to guide the logic or thinking associated with that framework. This is why, for example, you cannot ‘beat’ a deontological argument with a consequentialist argument; the deontologist simply doesn’t accept or subscribe to the consequentialist logic – it’s as if they are speaking two different languages.

Conversations about the ethics of killing animals are most productive when people are speaking the same ethical language. For this reason, it is helpful to understand the ethical justifications that can be made for killing animals from each of these frameworks.

There are generally ten different reasons humans kill animals, including: (1) wild harvest or food acquisition, (2) human health and safety, (3) agriculture and aquaculture, (4) urbanisation and industrialisation, (5) invasive, overabundant or nuisance wildlife control, (6) threatened species conservation, (7) recreation, sport or entertainment, (8) mercy or compassion, (9) cultural and religious practice, and (10) research, education and testing.

And there are at least eight different ethical frameworks that can be used to support each of these ten reasons, including: (1) consequentialism, (2) natural law or deontology, (3) religious ethics or divine command theory, (4) virtue ethics, (5) care ethics, (6) contractarianism or social contract theory, (7) ethical particularism, and (8) environmental ethics.

There are too many ‘reason x framework’ combinations to cover here, so let’s consider just some of the ethical support for killing invasive or overabundant species, as one example.

Someone who advocates for *consequentialism* might say that the welfare consequences of killing invasive species are excessive or that it produces unacceptable amounts of harm (e.g. lethal control of predators on livestock farms). But a consequentialist response might be that killing a relatively small number of predators can save a relatively large number of livestock from harm, or that predator control leads to a net reduction in animal suffering.

Someone who advocates for *deontology or animal rights philosophy* might say that killing invasive species violates their rights to life and humans have a duty to respect that right. A deontological response might be that animals are irrational beings and therefore have no ‘claim’ on any rights at all; but ignoring this point, our duty to protect a large number of (native) animals from avoidable suffering and death also overrides the right of a small number of (invasive) animals not to be killed.

Someone who advocates for *virtue ethics* might say that a virtuous person would show compassion and respect by refraining from killing overabundant species, such as aerial culling of kangaroos or horses before they die of starvation via drought or overgrazing. But a virtue ethicist might respond by saying that the more virtuous person would not tacitly allow such animal suffering if they had the means to reduce it, or it would be uncompassionate not to kill them.

Many more examples might be given, there is a lot more nuance to each of these, and volumes have been written about the subject, so the devout consequentialist, deontologist, or virtue ethicist may not be convinced in each case or may find some other reason to condemn animal killing.

But the key point is simple: many forms of intentional animal killing have ethical support from a variety of ethical frameworks, so those involved in animal killing need not fear that they are somehow acting unethically. In many cases, it is demonstrably unethical to refrain from animal killing. 🌀

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Prep: 30 min Time: 50 min Serves: 4

WHAT YOU'LL NEED

1kg Spring Ridge Venison Rack or hunt your own

For the marinade

- Leaves from 4 sprigs rosemary
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
- Zest 1 lemon
- 4 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp horseradish cream
- Sea salt flakes, crushed
- Freshly ground black pepper

For the plum sauce

- 6 ripe, black or red plums
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp hoisin sauce
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- Sea salt flakes, crushed
- Freshly ground black pepper

Recipe courtesy: australianmeats.com.au

HOW TO COOK IT

To prepare the plum sauce:

Preheat oven to 180°C fan force.

Cut and pit plums into quarters to make the plum sauce. Add to baking dish with caster sugar and roast in the oven for 15-20mins or until plums are soft. Remove and add to a blender along with Dijon, hoisin, ginger, lemon juice and balsamic. Whizz.

Depending on original size of your plums, add 2-3 tbsp water if you think it needs it to achieve a smooth sauce. Add to a small saucepan and warm gently over medium heat, then season to taste with salt and black pepper. Turn the heat down to very low to keep warm until serving.

To prepare the venison:

Finely chop rosemary leaves and add to a small bowl with thyme leaves, lemon zest, 1 tbsp olive oil, a good pinch of crushed sea salt flakes, and a generous grinding of black pepper. Mix thoroughly. Pat dry venison racks well with a paper towel.

Heat remaining 3 tbsp olive oil in a large frying pan set over high heat. When oil is hot, add the venison racks one by one and cook for 4-5 minutes or until evenly browned on top and sides. Remove and allow to drain on a paper towel.

When venison is cool to the touch, spread horseradish cream on top of the meat. You can add as much as you like, depending on how much you enjoy its spiciness. Top with the herb mix, patting it into the horseradish evenly.

Place racks on a baking tray and roast in the oven for 25mins. Check with a digital meat thermometer to ensure the centre reaches 57°C. Be careful not to overcook the meat. Remove and allow to rest for 10 minutes before slicing.

Serve warm, accompanied by warm plum sauce. 🍷

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SHOOT OFF! Quiz

ANSWERS

1. Standing, Sitting, Kneeling, Prone
2. 1910s
3. Lee-Enfield No.1 Mk III
4. Muzzle velocity
5. Rams
6. Ballistic coefficient
7. Crimping
8. .38 Special
9. False
10. Fallow, chital, rusa, red
11. Big Game Rifle
12. Firing pin
13. Lithgow Arms
14. Paper
15. Omark
16. Lithgow Cadet
17. Barrels
18. Bolt
19. .300 PRC
20. Women's Trap



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