

TWIN COAST ARCHERS



July/August 2015

A special welcome to our New Members!

Thankyou to all who let me know of their successes. For those that do not know, Email me at stgd94@gmail.com with your archery related news/pics that you want to share.

Hunters: If you intend sending pics through of bowshot game, please ensure you select the most 'clean' pictures. I.e, ones with the least blood/dirt etc... on the animal. Thankyou

Tournament News

IBO

Round 3 - Someone correct me if I'm wrong, but it does not appear as though any Twin Coast Archers attended the 3rd round of the IBO.

Round 4 - Congratulations to the following archers: Stephen Orchard (1st, Male Bowhunter Open), Samuel Orchard (1st, Youth Bowhunter Fingers), Benjamin Orchard (1st, Youth Male Release 15-17). Congratulations Team Orchard! Benjamin and Samuel also received 1st place for the Series in their respective divisions. Brenton Baker also scored 2nd place in Youth Male Release 15-17 for the series. Congratulations!

Bowhunting News

Congratulations to Samuel Orchard for scoring his first magpie - and a great shot too!
Total tallies from 1st July – 31st August include: 4 Turkeys, 12 Rabbits, 2 Hares, 1 Magpie and 13 Possums. Big Game - 2 Fallow deer for Nathan and a Wallaby for Sarah.

Club News

Committee meeting coming up - please keep an eye on your emails. You are welcome to join the committee if you are wondering...

Story Page - please do send me an archery related story and it will likely feature here, otherwise you are stuck with my stories.....

The Hunter in the Hunter Hills

By Sarah Thoroughgood

My Elite Hunter likes visiting areas where there are animals to take! Or maybe the archer behind it does...or perhaps both! We are a well matched pair. That is why this bow has taken over 600 animals/birds + a number of fish. On these

NEWSLETTER

particular outings I am writing about, I was taking the Hunter after a species of which I have a good collection of hard luck stories.

The first outing I had me, myself and I for company as Dad was at home for the week (which included the weekend). It was the weekend after the Tournament and temperatures were in the negative ratings overnight. The weather was due to be clear though. Thank goodness! Because after a cold night, just like the animals I'd be hunting, I enjoy the sunshine!!!

I'd been unsuccessful on my last visit several weekends prior, but was optimistic this one would be different. I had a plan - we'd heard goats last time we were there, so you get the idea of what my plan included...

Despite this perfect plan, I still had to get hold of the land owner whose property we use to hunt and access the DOC land. He hadn't answered his phone the 4 times I'd tried phoning over the 3 days prior. Friday morning came and I thought maybe if I called early rather than at night, he might be around. Sure enough, I phoned at 7:20am and he answered promptly! As usual, he was perfectly happy for me to be around the place.

As soon as I finished work for the day, I got my gear together and headed off. A few certain small, long eared animals leapt out from the side of the road on my way to the top of the farm. They distracted me, I keep my bow handy for such situations. Despite trying, I didn't manage to get a shot at any of them though.

Going down the other side of the hill, I drove straight past a dark decidedly possum like figure sitting perfectly still in the old rank grass. I stopped and walked back, sure enough, there was a black possum. He made a dash for the neighbours fence but made the fatal mistake of pausing before hopping through. The only broadhead arrow in my quiver was one with a once used Thunderhead Razor, too good for a possum really, but it did make history of him pretty quick.

I continued on my way. A stop in Ashburton for dinner and supplies was made. Then the long drive to the lower reaches of the Hunter Hills.

Trying to sleep in my ute didn't work, so at 5am, I finally resorted to cosying up on top of the farmers haystack. In the minus 0 temperatures, I was grateful for my -32 rated sleeping bag! I woke up just before the sun came up and noted how white the ground was. Still, it was a clear morning and I knew it'd be a nice day. The wallabies would be sunning themselves somewhere...I just had to do some exploring and find them! After a hot drink and breakfast, I headed off up into the hills.

It wasn't too long after I got out of the valley and up onto a spur that I started feeling very hot. The beanie came off promptly and the jacket zip went down. I headed higher and higher until I reached the old forestry track. Continuing on, I didn't really know where I was headed, but thought I'd just follow the track. A few old pine trees grew in the rocky slope above me and native bush graced the hillside below. I could hear billy goats chattering away down in the bush somewhere. I had to focus, wallabies were the plan for the time being. Merely a few minutes later, a couple of them thumped away above me. Lesson learned, go more carefully. Right as I thought that, I noticed one straight above me, no more than 10m away. I quietly grabbed an arrow, nocked it, silently clipped my

release aid on and eased back to full draw. It was about then that he decided he wasn't happy with something and hopped away. He didn't go that far before stopping again. The only problem was that he was behind a screen of foliage. I could still see him through it though and decided I'd try my luck. Lining up on about where I believed the killzone was, I released. 'Crack' - well that certainly wasn't the sort of hit I was after. The unscathed wallaby hopped off uphill and out of sight. I climbed up the steep bank in front of me and went to where he was standing. There lay my arrow - in no less than 3 pieces. I looked back toward where I'd taken the shot from, there was the guilty branch (in the scrub) that I hadn't seen. My arrow must have clipped it on a bad angle or something. I retrieved the nock from the ground and the other parts of the arrow, stashing them in my pack. Clambering back down the bank, I continued on - more alert. Somewhere in the dappled light above me, another wallaby departed the scene. What! These things are not easy to see!

Further up I walked. I decided to venture out into the open where the bush gave way to grass and scrub such as you find in the subalpine areas of the South Island. Nothing was moving on the face I was looking at, so I walked across the slope to the next spur. I stood in the long mountain grass, surveying the far side through my rangefinder. Straight away I noticed several wallabies sunning themselves. I hatched a plan and made my way over to their spur. It was noisy going, crawling through flax and subalpine grasses, trying to avoid the spaniard variety. That was all with a day pack on and bow in hand.

An hour and a half later, I finally made it to the patch where I'd seen the wallabies. I was sneaking so carefully, but wasn't seeing anything. Right then, one leapt out from behind the closest clump of grass and took off over the back of the spur. I couldn't believe it. Quietly, I continued to sneak my way down to the next place I'd seen one. The same thing happened, though this one thumped while departing. I heard a few others depart the scene also. Deciding it was pointless to continue, I sat down and had a bite to eat. I then had to make my way back in time to check out another spot before dark.

On my way back past the rocky area, I slowed right down. As I'd suspected, I soon spotted a wallaby. He was moving away slowly. I wasted no time nocking an arrow and sneaking closer under cover of the few tall gorse bushes between us. No sooner had I re spotted him, than he decided he was going to move off again - this time over the ridge. I continued on slowly. Once again, I spotted an alert wallaby. I eased back to full draw but he also decided he was going to move off and didn't present a clear shot on his way.

With the wallaby hot spot disturbed, I decided to try and locate the goats whereabouts for the next day. Walking down a spur, I noted a well worn slip and thought to myself 'very goat-like area'. I kept walking. I saw there was another old slip in the middle of the bush just above the creek on the other side of the gully - some 250m distant. I watched it for a while and was rewarded with a black billy coming out. Aha! I now knew where the goats were!

I made my way back to the ute and checked out the neighbours place (that I'd just gained the 'ok' to hunt). Nothing was to be seen so I returned to base.

The farmer had just come in to shift some break fences. "Any luck?" He asked on his way out. "No, but I reckon I'll get one tomorrow." I replied, telling him of my encounters with the creatures. He headed on his way and I started cooking dinner.

The sun was down and the temperature was plummeting fast. I struggled to stay warm while eating dinner. Desperate to just get in my toasty sleeping bag, I did what I felt I had to - just have a quick look for a wallaby after dark! I figured the walk may at least warm me up a bit which is always a good idea before getting into bed!

Walking briskly to the end paddock, I slowed as I approached the gate. I walked through and shone the light around. A wallaby was at the far end. Nocking an arrow, I quietly moved his way. He'd decided he wasn't having anything to do with me and promptly hopped on his way. I checked another paddock, only to have one hop straight across my light beam some 50m distant and head straight into the gorse. That was it, no more were to be seen. I don't blame them, who would want to hang around in frosty gullies when their mates were all up on the higher ridges that get the sun first thing.

Walking had warmed me up reasonably well, so I made for my sleeping bag atop the hay stack!!

The next day dawned cold but clear again. In short order, the sun got up above the trees and I knew that it was going to be a good day for wallabies. I speedily got breakfast out of the way and marched on my way. Steadily, I climbed the spur again with a feeling things might take a turn this day and I would be the one having the last laugh, not the wallabies.

Sure enough, on arrival to the 'hot spot', I nocked an arrow and slowed down to a very slow stalk. Every few metres, I scanned the hillside above me through the rangefinder. This paid off when, in amongst the rocks, I spotted a wallaby sprawled out in the sun. His ears were twitching back and forth from time to time. I knew he was only resting, not napping! It didn't take me long to sneak into a good position and ease the Hunter back to full draw. The wallaby obliged right then by sitting up, offering a somewhat clearer shot. With the top pin on his shoulder, I released. Everything happened so quick. I saw my arrow sticking up on an odd angle above a rock as the wallaby hopped away quickly. My eyes stayed on the target. He stopped about 10m away in light scrub and I thought "Now, are you going to fall over or what?" A second went by and he tried to hop off again, but ended up slipping down the hill instead, dead! As strange as it may seem, I felt like I'd shot my Masters animal all over again - I've had bad luck on wallabies in the past, but this went just like it should. Knowing there could be others in the near vicinity, I stayed where I was for a minute.

'Thump, thump, thump' Well there obviously *was* one nearby, but not anymore. I quietly snuck along the remaining section of prime wallaby sunbathing area. No more were around so I returned to get my arrow and wallaby. I noted he was only a younger one, not very big for a South Island specimen! Nevermind, he was a big game species and unbelievably, my Thunderhead was still perfectly ok after its near encounter with a mini boulder.

NEWSLETTER

With the wallaby area disturbed, it was goat time! Though, I hadn't heard any yet and it was mid day.

I headed off downhill, into the native bush. A wallaby raced off nearby, but didn't stop to receive an arrow! I continued on down through the trees. There were dead leaves all over the ground which made the going less than quiet. Soon I heard a goat bleat, so headed in that general direction.

After awhile I got to the point where I was unsure to go left or right. I could hear goats in both directions, it was a case of what ones were closer. Just then, with a surprise, I noticed a lone billy below me. I carefully turned around so I was in a position to shoot, nocking an arrow as I did. Ranging him, I found the distance I had to shoot was 42y. He turned facing away, not ideal, but not impossible. I lined up and sent the arrow on its way. I heard it clack and clatter over rocks and wondered had I actually hit him or not. The answer was made clear in short order when I heard his dying bleat off to my left - goat number 324 on deck, the 271st for the Elite Hunter alone! Amazingly, I managed to find my arrow - in one piece too!

the tournament, comradery and prize giving. Hunters turned up with all the usual paraphernalia, antlers, skins, photos and tusks. All of these items were judged in order that the best for the year can be awarded the appropriate trophy.