

The Times

N.Z. DEERSTALKERS ASSN
ROTORUA BRANCH

December 2023



Pictured: Rod Houghton
in the Whitcombe Valley

President's report.

Hello again members, last report for the year from me so I won't bore you too much. It's been a bit of a busy rush up to the end of the year with the committee hard at work building the future of the branch.

On Thursday 30th of November we joined in farewelling one of our branch life members, Rodney Houghton who sadly passed away on the 23rd of November 2023. Rod was remembered as a brilliant, kind, and loyal husband, dad, grandfather and hunting mate by those who loved and respected him. As was voiced several times, Rod loved to hunt the Okahu Valley, returning there often throughout his lifetime. Rod was definitely an important, valued member of our club and we will miss him. Our sincere condolences to his family. Rest Easy Rod.

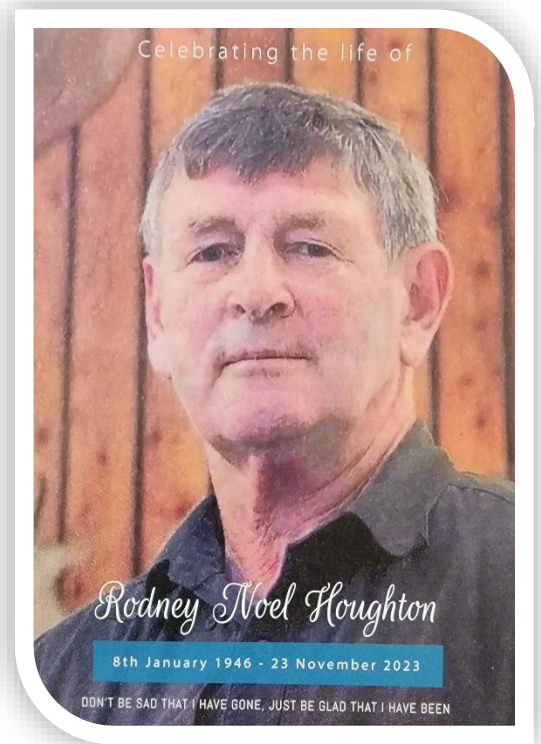
Plans are coming together well for the re-introduction of a HUNTS course to the Rotorua branch. NZDA promotes hunting as a lifetime outdoor sport through the Hunter National Training Scheme (HUNTS). The program syllabus covers the knowledge and skills to operate safely as a hunter in the New Zealand outdoors and teaches ethics of fair chase and principles of managing a sustainable game resource.

The range team has been putting on some great shoots with our end of year Kids Swazi shoot held on its postponed date of the 3rd of December, it was a great day with some very impressive shooting from the next generation deer stalkers. Alec & Wai hosted a group of 8 teens who are on a pest control course being run by Ngāti Tarawhai (Lake Okataina) out at the range in November. The group recapped on their previous training in Firearms Safety including, but not limited to the 7 Basic Rules of Firearm Safety before having a target shooting session, where they got to "have a go" with .22, .243, .308 and then a couple of static shots with both a 12-gauge semi and 12-gauge UO. A couple of the tutors have now made applications to become members of our branch. Moving into the new year Dennis and Jamie have put together a full range calendar so keep an eye out for that in your emails. Once it's finalized, it will also be posted at the range and clubroom.

A very wet November party hunt at the Makomako and Taurawharona hut sites in Te Urewera still didn't dampen the spirits of our members in the bush with a few deer shot. Our members were allowed access into the hut sites via private land through Maungapōhatu Marae, Te Mapou Papa Kainga, which is at the foot of Maungapōhatu. The party hunt coincided with a Women's Introduction to Hunting Wananga (Course/Seminar) that both Rotorua and Thames Valley Branches partnered with EastBay REAP to deliver. A very successful weekend was had with more than 20 women participating, and like the guys, a few deer were shot.

The committee has set the date for next year's AGM to be on the 1st of May 2024. This will coincide with the changeover of new range keys.

While there won't be any club events happening over the Christmas new year break, I can assure you that the committee will still be working hard for you in the background so we can head into the new year ready to go on all cylinders. In closing I would like to thank the committee and all of you that have been involved in helping with club events. It's been a big team effort, and I am very glad to have had the opportunity to be involved with you all. Thanks again and enjoy your summer hunting. *Zac*



In September, 7 of our club members spent a day with our friends at Waikato Branch where they undertook Antler, Horn and Tusk measuring training using the Norman Douglas Method, more commonly known as the Douglas Score. Mark, John, Rodney and the rest of their team put on a great day, and with a delicious lunch provided as well. The amount of knowledge these guys have is mind boggling and it's great that they are willing to share it! Congratulations to Zac, Josh, Rowan, Jeremy and Craille who are now officially Level 1 DS Measurers. Alec & Wai managed to upskill and are both now Level 2 DS Measurers. We look forward to seeing all the trophies come in for next years annual AHT competition.



Taurawharona Trickle Treat - Matt Miller

I recently joined the Rotorua NZDA when I saw they were doing a club hunt to Maungapōhatu. After 10 years in NZ, I'd recently gotten back into hunting with mates on private land, while simultaneously trying to figure out bush hunting. It's no surprise the bush was giving me some grief - it's a big difference from whitetail hunting! The point of joining the club and this particular group hunt was to meet other hunters and hunt somewhere totally new, while hopefully picking up a tip or two - and maybe a deer.

A group of about 10 of us made the trip from Rotorua to Maungapōhatu, an hour or so east of Murupara and deep in the bush of Te Ureweras. Along the way we met up with a dozen or so wāhine on a hunting wananga happening at the same time. On arrival, we were welcomed into the marae with a pōwhiri. It felt like the most authentic cultural experience I've had in NZ and was an absolute privilege.

We started the hunt by touring through the village on the quads to get to the start of the track. Paul, Dean, Sammie and I headed towards the Taurawharona hut, while the others headed to Makomako hut. We got lost a few times finding the track, but finally found a nice flat area to camp a few hours later by the river. We quickly set up camp, then Paul and I headed out to hunt a clearing for last light. I got a quick tut on bush stalking pace (I was walking too fast - go figure) until we found a nice posi to wait on the clearing.



It wasn't long until a weka popped out on the clearing. So deep in the bush, I figured he hadn't seen many humans. We stayed nice and still and he walked within a meter of us on his way through the bush. About 20 minutes later we saw the weka bolt back out across the other side of the clearing, apparently spooked by something. Not even a minute later, two deer popped out from where they spooked the weka. We had figured the chances of one deer were pretty good, but with two out there we both had an opportunity. We did the 3-2-shoot countdown, and connected with what we each felt was a good shot. Stoked! We waited for a bit with a few high fives and hell yeahs. Neither deer had made it far off the clearing, so we cleaned them up and hung them up for later. We got back to camp just after dark - happy as, and pressure off!

The weather didn't play ball the rest of the weekend with continuous rain. We were soaked but kept hunting while the rivers rose and dirtied up.



We camped a total of two nights then pulled pin a day early. Needless to say, we had some heavy packs full of saturated gear, too much uneaten food, plus now meat for the freezer.

Before setting off on the walk back, we spent some time tidying up the burnt hut site to make recovering debris easier. It was a shame to imagine all the memories that had been made at that hut, and that it didn't exist for anyone else to stay in anymore.

Big thanks to Alec and Wai and the tangata whenua for setting up the hunt and letting us pass through their land. I really enjoyed the hunt, the experience and hanging with the boys, plus it was mission accomplished - learned heaps and secured a deer in the bush! Cheers, *Matt*



Tidying up the carnage!



Taurawharona Hut as it stood pre-2022

Club gear. The club has caps available for members to purchase. There are 3 options (2 pictured below) with camo caps and black beanies now available too. They're \$20 each and are available at the social nights and Sunday club shoots. If you would like to buy a cap or two or a few more outside of this, please email Zac.Bewley@gmail.com.



Monthly Committee meeting, held the last Monday of the month at the clubrooms 7pm. Members welcome.

Club Patron		Branch Executive		
Malcolm Perry		Immediate Past President	Colin Peterson	Ph: 343 9481
Honorary Solicitor	Barry Rodgers	President	Zac Bewley	Ph: 027 674 5745
			zac.bewley@gmail.com	
Life Members		Co-Vice President	Josh McIver	
Malcolm Perry	Ph: 348 4473	Co-Vice President	Sefton Lonsdale	027 608 3089
Dennis Price	Ph: 348 4343	Treasurer	Dr. Peter Franz	
Colin Petersen	Ph: 343 9481	Secretary	Elvis Bowring	Ph: 021 066 7868
Gary Winslade			Committee Members	
			Alec McIver	Ph: 027 282 0770
Other club roles/contacts			Dennis Price	Ph: 348 4343
A.H.T & HUNTS Course	Alec McIver	Ph: 027 282 0770	Jamie Palmer	
Conservation Liaison	Jeremy Hutton		Jeremy Hutton	
Party Hunts	Josh McIver	Ph: 022 429 4433	Malcolm Perry	Ph: 348 4473
Party Hunts/Facebook	Sefton Lonsdale	027 608 3089	Mark Slade	
rnzdahunts@gmail.com			Patrick Reid	
Range Co-ordinator	Dennis Price	Ph: 348 4343	Wai McIver	Ph: 027 780 2487
Newsletter	Wai McIver	wkmciver@gmail.com		
Club Rooms (Hire etc)	Mark Slade	Mark.slade@bayleysrotorua.co.nz		

Club Contacts: Postal Address: PO Box 857, Rotorua 3040.
 Email Address: nzdarotorua@gmail.com. Website: www.nzdarotorua.org.nz

TRADING POST

Please ensure both parties sight firearms licences & that they are valid when completing firearm/ammunition transactions.

For Sale

Tikka T3X 6.5 PRC
6.5 – 20 x 40 Leupold Scope
Muzzle Brake
Fired 12 Shots
Asking Price: \$2400.00

Tikka 55 .223 Sako Barrel.
3 – 9 x 42 Nikko Diamond Scope
Suppressor, Sling & Bag.
600 rounds of Factory Ammo.
Asking Price: \$1200.00

Contact Cliff Graham on 027 421 1489 for more information.



GREAT FISH HUNTER

Challenge your eyes and find the sea creature words below.

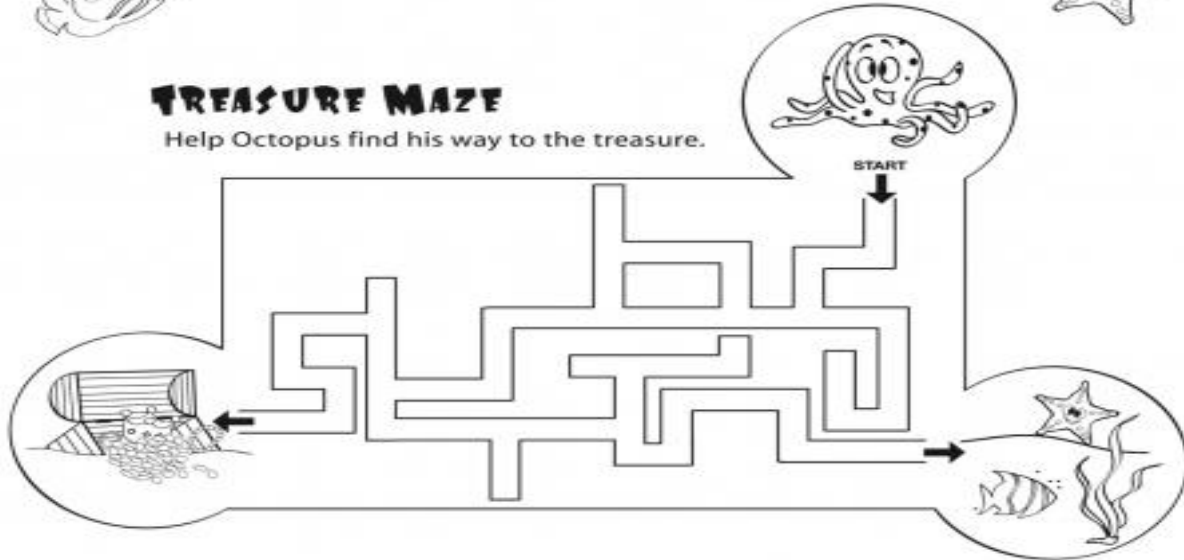
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 U Y E B V L H F H I R K K
 S W N M A N G E L F I S H
 J E L L Y F I S H A J O R

starfish whale
 turtle dolphin
 shark octopus
 jellyfish clownfish
 angelfish lobster



TREASURE MAZE

Help Octopus find his way to the treasure.



G	L	O	V	E	S	O	C	E	O	N	A	C	G
R	A	B	B	I	T	W	A	L	H	M	R	O	H
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PADDLE
 CAMO
 FISHING
 POLE
 MOOSE
 FRIENDS
 DOE
 PARTRIDGE
 HIGGINS
 RABBIT
 MUZZLELOADER
 DEER
 BUCK
 CANOE
 RIFLE
 ARROW
 TREESTAND
 HAT
 BOW
 GLOVES