



**New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association
Wairarapa Branch Incorporated**

Newsletter for **May 2025**



Photo credit **Richard O'Driscoll** Duck season

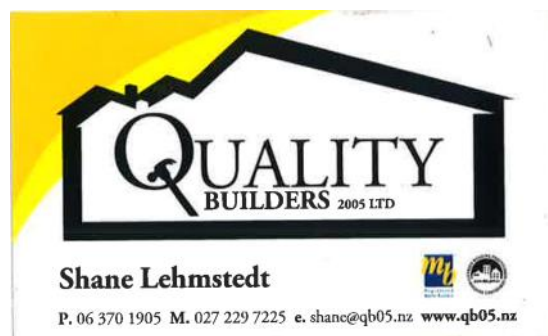
Contacts

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| | Mark Wellington | 027 770 0065 |
| | Parkvale Hall Booking | Andrew Dennes |
| | | 022 323 6993 please use this number for bookings and enquiries |
| LandSAR | Luke Johnson | 027 630 7640 |
| Website | http://www.wairarapanzda.org.nz/ | |
| Facebook  | https://www.facebook.com/WairarapaNZDA | |
| Closed Facebook page | Open only to members. You can apply to join here: https://www.facebook.com/groups/79860064354866 | |
| Newsletter Story Competition | October 2024 to September 2025 – prize of \$50 Stories and photos to the newsletter editor at wairarapanzda@gmail.com | |



Calendar

| | | |
|-------------|------|--|
| 17-18 May | 2025 | Wanganui fallow meat hunt. Full |
| Wed 21 May | 2025 | General meeting. Speaker to be confirmed – Parkvale Hall – 7.30 pm |
| 23-25 May | 2025 | Tararua fly-in trip. Going in Friday afternoon coming out Sunday. Weather dependent. Contact Andrew Dennes on 022 323 6993 to register. So far we only have one member signed up. If this is not more interest this will be cancelled! |
| Sun 25 May | 2025 | Deer Park Working Bee. Starting 8 am at Masterton Deer Park. Bring yard gardening tools (small chainsaws, hedge-trimmers, weedeater, pruning shears, rakes etc). We will be cleaning up for the newly extended deer pens. |
| Wed 4 June | 2025 | Committee meeting. Parkvale Hall – 7.30 pm |
| Wed 18 June | 2025 | General meeting. Speaker to be confirmed – Parkvale Hall – 7.30 pm |
| Fri 27 June | 2025 | Entries close for National competitions. See details later in newsletter. |
| Wed 2 July | 2025 | Committee meeting. Parkvale Hall – 7.30 pm |
| 18-20 July | 2025 | NZDA National conference Invercargill |





Hunting trip reports

March trips to Wanganui and Stewart Island went ahead.

At Wanganui, 9 members shot 33 deer.



Photos from Stewart Island trip at the end of the newsletter. Fishing, diving, and relaxing was all successful. One deer seen (allegedly) and a possum killed – no shots fired.

Committee News and Updates

FINANCIALS

Term deposits total \$23,283 with cash on hand \$12,887.

The branch bank account number for payments (firewood, etc) is 03-0687-0022096-00
(This is not the account for payment of memberships – which go direct to National Office.)

DEER PARK

A further working bee is being planned for **Sunday 25 May starting at 8 am** followed by phase 2 of the enclosure enlargement. Please bring yard gardening tools (small chainsaws, hedge-trimmers,

weed eater, pruning shears, rakes etc) and appropriate protective equipment. All animals are healthy.

FUNDRAISING

We have trees on the ground. Firewood working bees will resume in October,

HUTS

Mike Thrupp represents the branch at Greater Wellington Backcountry Network Inc meetings. Hamish Graham has been nominated by the branch to represent us with the Aorangi Restoration Trust.

SEARCH & RESCUE

There was an urban search for a missing Masterton man. Please contact Luke on 027 630 7640 if you are interested in joining LandSAR

HALL

We have accepted a weekly booking from a small group of dog agility enthusiasts which will provide regular income. The hall will be used as venue for HUNTS training 18-20 May. Committee is applying for funding to pay for plumbing work.

MEMBERSHIPS

Memberships for 2025/26 are now overdue. If you haven't yet received your invoice please contact membership@deerstalkers.org.nz

Please pay your subscriptions as there is no carry forward of memberships this year and you need to be a financial (paid) member at the time you shoot that big trophy or take that great photo for entry into Branch and National competitions.

And another reminder that your annual membership payment is to be made to the bank account on your invoice along with the required references. **DO NOT** pay into the branch's bank account.

RANGE & SHOOTING

Gladstone range is available for the use of members. Branch members get six free visits a year.

Hours for using the Gladstone range for visitors including Deerstalkers 9:30 am to 1:00 pm on Sunday unless you're accompanied by a Gladstone WPSSC member.

Please keep to these times to avoid disappointment as with new police regulations, Range Officers are required on active ranges even for casual shooting.

There is a Precision Rifle match booked on range 6 on the first Sunday of the month so late morning is recommended for that day unless you would like to join in with them which you are more than welcome to do.

New DOC Hunter Permit System

The Department of Conservation (DOC) is strengthening the open hunting permits system and making other changes that hunters have asked for. Annually, about 34,000 hunters get permits to hunt on open hunting areas on Public Conservation Land. Most get their permits by filling out the on-line application form on the DOC website.

DOC is replacing the online form with a new, more reliable, permit system optimized for mobile devices. The new system is now available.

[Get a Hunting Permit Now](#)

Additionally, permit duration will be extended from four to 12 months. Selecting hunting areas will be easier and hunters will be sent permit expiry reminders.

ALWAYS treat firearms as if they are loaded

5

ALWAYS point firearms in a safe direction

The new system will have improved security features to better protect hunter information. Hunters will need an e-mail account to get a permit or – if they don't have one - they can contact the DOC Call Centre.

Open hunting permits will remain free of charge.

How to Get a DOC Open Hunting Permit Online

To get a permit online you will need an email address. This is so DOC can email your permit to you. If you don't have an email address, call your local DOC office to get a permit.

Pick all regions or the area you want to hunt on.

You will then need to enter or verify your details. You can choose to set up an account (or sign in you already have one) or to continue as a 'guest'. If you choose to create a hunting permits account while getting your permit, it will save you time later.

If you choose to check out as a 'guest', you will still need to verify your email address via an authentication process.

Once you have read and accepted the permit conditions and confirmed your details are correct, your permit will be emailed to you.

You don't need to print your permit. Being able to present an electronic copy (for example: showing your permit on your phone) is allowed for compliance.

Video & Paper Guides for New Hunting Permit System



[Hunting Permit System Guide | Get your hunting permit with Department of Conservation New Zealand](#)

DOC Tahr Control Update



Tahr live in extreme terrain, making controlling their numbers challenging. Credit: DOC.

DOC's 2024/25 tahr control operations have wrapped up in the feral range. Just over 100 hours of aerial control was completed.

We've run our biggest-ever ground control season, with 11 operations removing around 2,000 nanny and juvenile tahr (no bulls).

The feral range is the legally defined area where tahr are allowed to be. No further DOC control operations will be run inside the feral range until July 2026; this helps hunters plan their hunts, particularly over the rut.

Outside the feral range, control is ongoing. It is a high priority to stop Himalayan tahr from spreading beyond their feral range.

Tahr Control Operations

Deer management in Ruahine Forest Park

[Ruahine Forest Park](#)'s majestic forests and delicate understories are home to taonga species, yet these ecosystems are under threat from browsing wild deer. But a new approach is taking root—one that brings communities, iwi, hunters and conservationists together to restore this cherished place.

Monitoring in Ruahine Forest Park indicated relatively high numbers of wild deer compared to national averages. Important understory plants, which help a forest regenerate and stabilise slopes, are disappearing.

To address these negative impacts, together with local iwi/hapū, DOC are drafting an adaptive deer management plan with advice from a newly established Community Deer Advisory Group. This group includes hunting, conservation, and recreation organisations. This will complement our existing work to keep wild goats out of the Park.



More woody saplings and broadleaf are present behind the fence - where wild deer and goats are excluded. These plants are important to our forests, they hold land together and increase resilience to the effects of climate change. Credit: DOC.

Basically, we're taking a flexible, science-based approach.

Trial actions are taking place this autumn, and findings will help inform our longer-term management approach:

- **NZ Deerstalkers Association hunt:** We worked with the Lower Hutt Branch to make it easier for hunters to fly by helicopter into the Western/Central area of Ruahine Forest Park. The hunt took place on 14-17 March 2025. Around 80 deer were removed. Hunters targeted hinds and the branch will provide DOC with track logs and kill way points, and hunter observations. This will help us assess the effectiveness of the hunt.
- **DOC aerial management:** In May, we will carry out aerial control in the remote and hard to access North-West deer Management Unit (MU) - an area of 12,056 hectares. This work also complements possum and rat control being carried out in the Northern Ruahine's high priority ecosystem unit, an area which contains a rich and diverse range of habitats and species. Where practical and within budget limitations, we will work with community to harvest meat from this operation.
- **Industry/WARO incentivisation:** We have contracted the commercial venison industry to harvest 300 deer, operating under normal WARO permit conditions. Lower weight deer harvest is being incentivised. The work will start May 2025 and finish when the harvest target is met.

All three actions combined, make a start in addressing Ruahine deer impacts. We'll continue working with the community to assess the effectiveness of each action and refine the deer management approach.





2025 National Competitions

Entries now open



NZDA members from across the country submit their finest heads and tusks for judging in the Antler, Horn and Tusk Competition. We accept entries across 13 categories, this is your chance to have your trophy recognised nationally.

Categories to Enter

- Wapiti or Fiordland Deer
- Red deer
- Sika
- Fallow
- Rusa
- Sambar
- Whitetail
- Wild Sheep
- Tahr
- Chamois
- Wild goat
- Pig tusks - drawn
- Pig tusks - undrawn

Be in To Win

Every AHT entry goes in the draw to win a MTN Gear Mountain Bipod and Rail, and each entrant will receive a MTN Gear Trophy hook just for taking part. We'd like to thank MTN Gear for their support for recreational hunters and the NZDA. You can find more of their products or [make a purchase for yourself here](#).

Entries close 5pm, Friday 27 June 2025

[Entry Forms and Details](#)

Full details, rules and Douglas Score guidance on our [website](#).

Other National Competition Categories

Entries now open with prizes to be won

The categories are:

- [Photographic and film](#)
- [Literary](#)
- [Target Shooting](#)
- [Special Awards including Young Deerstalker of The Year](#)

Full competition details and rules can be read [here](#).

Updated MyFirearms instructional videos

They are now more concise, focused on specific topics, and contain step-by-step instructions so you can follow along.

The videos available are:

- How to register
- Login and RealMe
- Saving and resuming drafts

You can find these, and more information about the MyFirearms portal here:

<https://www.firearmssafetyauthority.govt.nz/about-myfirearms>



Sika Herd of Special Interest one step closer

The NZ Game Animal Council (GAC) congratulates the Central North Island Sika Foundation on successfully submitting their Sika Herd of Special Interest (HOSI) proposal to the Minister for Hunting and Fishing.

The Minister has decided to begin the process to explore formally designating a Sika HOSI in the Kaimanawa and Kaweka Forest Parks. This is made possible under the Game Animal Council Act 2013. A herd management plan will be drafted, and consultation on that plan will follow.

A HOSI is a herd of game animals on public conservation land that has been formally designated by the Minister to be managed for hunting, while ensuring conservation values continue to be protected.

"Over the last year, the Sika Foundation, supported by the GAC, has been preparing their Sika HOSI proposal. A huge amount of voluntary time has gone into this work and it's great to see their efforts recognised through the Minister's decision," GAC Chair Grant Dodson says.

"The HOSI approach consists of proactive and consistent management of game animals that provides benefits to hunters, conservation and the wider community," Dodson says.

"The Sika Foundation has been applying the HOSI approach at a small scale over the past five years. This has seen improved forest canopy regeneration, fatter healthier sika, eight tonnes of venison donated to local foodbanks and thousands of hours of voluntary contributions to local conservation initiatives.

"The proof is in the pudding really. The Sika HOSI is an opportunity to extend the Foundation's efforts to a much larger geographical area and provide consistent and cost-efficient sika management that helps to protect the most special places in the Kaweka and Kaimanawa Forest Parks," Dodson says.

"Government resources are finite, so enabling community to undertake effective sustainable deer management goes a long way towards achieving consistent long-term outcomes for New Zealand," he said.

"The GAC looks forward to supporting the Minister, the Department of Conservation and the Sika Foundation in the next phase of the HOSI process.

"The GAC is confident that through HOSI, the Sika Foundation can achieve management of the sika herd in a way that provides substantial benefits to hunters, the local community and conservation."



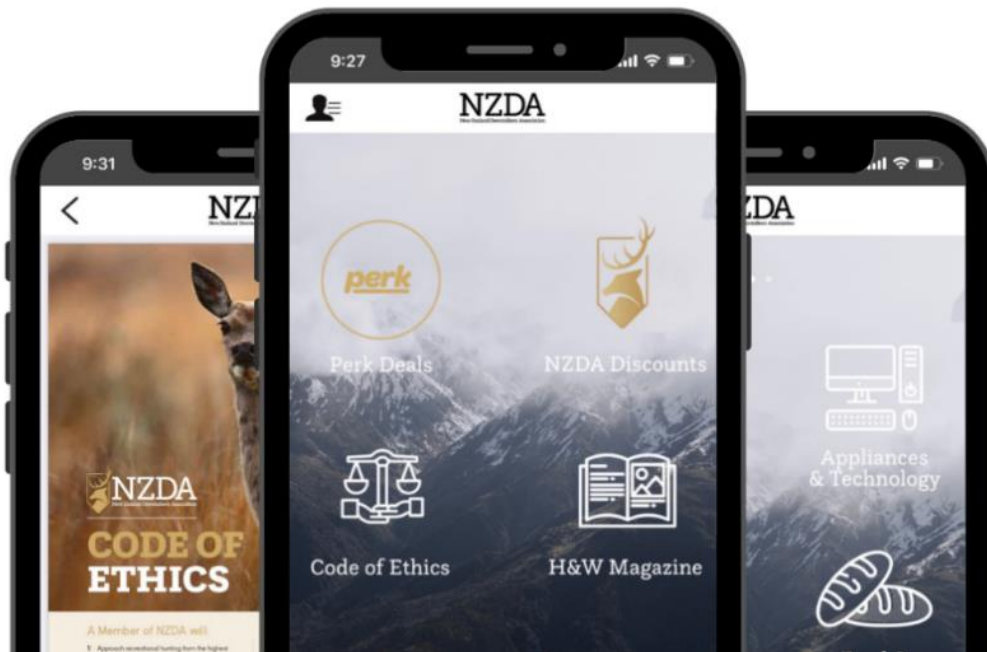
More information:

Minister for Hunting and Fishing media release www.beehive.govt.nz/release/process-consider-establishing-sika-deer-herd-special-interest-begins

GAC information about HOSI www.nzgac.org.nz/herds-of-special-interest

Central North Island Sika Foundation www.sikafoundation.co.nz

A major perk of your NZDA membership is the official app.



DOWNLOAD ON IOS

DOWNLOAD ANDROID

What you'll find inside:

- Discounts at major retailers.
- The latest edition of our quarterly Member Magazine: [NZ Hunting & Wildlife](#) - Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter
- Conference and events announcements
- [Competitions](#)
- Link to the NZDA store
- Your membership information
- [HUNTS training program](#) – training courses & certification for HUNTS Instructor

NZDA holds our government to account.

Northern Remutaka Poison Operations

The aerial pest control operation in Northern Remutaka was successfully undertaken on the 22nd of February 2025.

Pesticide used: Sodium Fluoroacetate Cereal Pellets (1080).

Bait Toxicity: We can confirm that bait is now non-toxic.

Caution Period: Bait is non-toxic; however, **the caution period is still in place**. Please take a precautionary approach. While signage is in place, risks can be eliminated by following these simple rules:

- **DO NOT** touch bait or carcasses.
- **WATCH CHILDREN** at all times.
- **DO NOT EAT** animals from this area.
- Carcasses are **DEADLY TO DOGS**.

We will email you when the caution period is complete (this can take up to 8 months after the date of application).

Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs.

EcoFX Aerial Team

Phone 07 873 8130

Email ecofx-office-nz@rentokil-initial.com

Buy, Sell, and Swap

If you have hunting or outdoor related items that you want to buy, sell, or swap, then we'll include these in the Newsletter free of charge (better than TradeMe). Send items (with picture if you wish) to wairarapanzda@gmail.com

- **WANTED .300 WSM HORNADY BRASS**
Please contact Luke on 027 630 7640.
- **.223 AMMO**
80 cents per round. Contact Aidan on 027 432 3410
- **WAIRARAPA BRANCH SHIRTS**
We have arranged to get some fancy Stoney Creek Corporate shirts printed with our branch logo. See the below link for shirt details and sizing.
<https://www.stoneycreek.co.nz/index.php?route=product/search&search=HMM-8206-TSC%20> These can only be ordered by attendance at a general meeting at a cost of \$70 per shirt (pay via electronic transfer or cash on the night). We will submit orders every couple of months.
- **NZDA MERCHANDISE** <https://nzda.shop/collections/>

BRANCH STEWART ISLAND TRIP 11 to 19 MARCH 2025, KELLYS

Photos by Liz Nicholson, Jason Huggins, & Liz Warren

No words just pictures, but by all accounts, a great trip. Thanks to Lloyd Rayner for organising this.



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Final Thoughts

Be safe be sure.
Assume it is a person not a deer.
No meat is better than no mate.
Identify your target.

Disclaimer: The contents of this Newsletter come from various sources, and the opinions or ideas expressed are not necessarily endorsed by this committee or by National Executive, nor may they reflect Branch policy.