



New Zealand Deerstalkers' Association
Wairarapa Branch Incorporated

Newsletter for **April 2026**

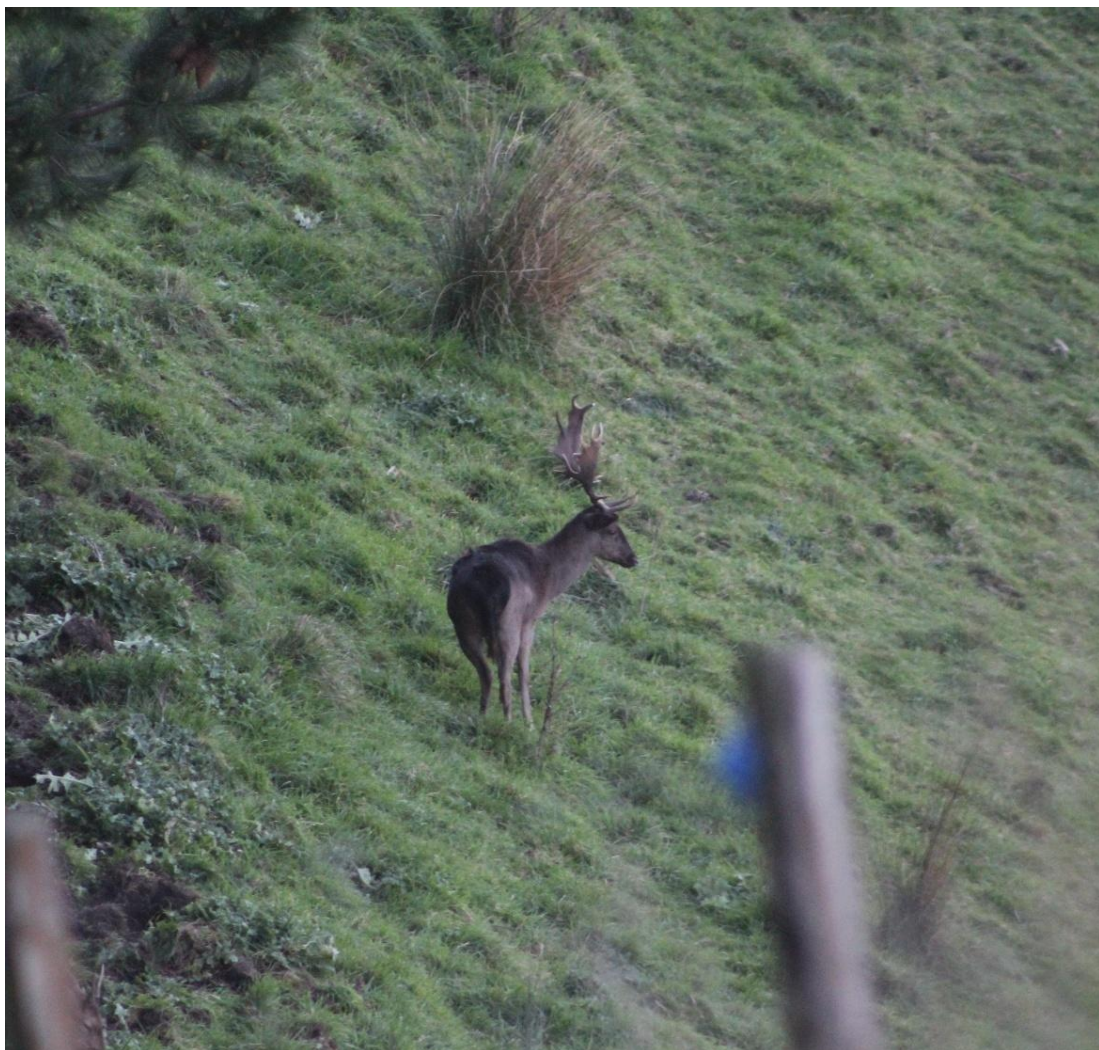



Photo credit **Clair Hodgins** Fallow buck

Contacts

President	Lloyd Rayner	027 608 0325
Vice President	Gary Warren	027 282 1112
Secretary	Liz Nicholson	027 224 2556
Treasurer	Sean Roberts	021 822 802
Deer Park	Aidan Bichan	027 432 3410
Range Officer	Alex Beesley	
	Dave Bashford	027 459 5477
	Derek Williams	027 656 8897
Range & Shooting	Derrick Foley	027 231 4846
Parkvale Hall Booking	Andrew Dennes	andrewdennes71@gmail.com 022 323 6993 please use this number for bookings and enquiries
LandSAR	Luke Johnson	027 630 7640
	Murry Clark	
	Pete Cunningham	021 190 9468
Deer Park	Philip Gray	027 474 0717
Newsletter	Richard O'Driscoll	021 141 1472
	Shane Dougan	027 247 4484
	Mark Wellington	027 770 0065
Memberships	Liz Warren	027 304 9689
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 2025 to September 2026 – prize of \$50 Stories and photos to the newsletter editor at wairarapanzda@gmail.com

Previous newsletters (back to July 2018) are available on our website:
www.wairarapanzda.org.nz/newsletters

Calendar

No committee or general meetings in April = gone hunting!		
Wed 6 May	2026	Committee meeting. Parkvale Hall 7:30 pm.
15-17 May	2026	Wanganui meat hunt. Full.
Wed 20 May	2026	General meeting. Parkvale Hall 7:30 pm. Lloyd's wild adventures in Africa.



Annual General Meeting Wednesday 25 March 2026

About 30 members attended.

President's Address Andrew Dennes

Andrew began his address with a minute's silence for Branch member Joe Hansen who passed away during the year.

He then thanked the committee and other members for their contributions during the year. Notably:

- Sean Roberts for his work around adoption of our new constitution.
- Liz Warren for her membership role.
- Andrew Wilkinson and Paul Sayer for organising Wanganui hunts.
- Range officers Alex Beesley and Derrick Foley. Andrew noted that the indoor shooting event was well supported but we need to encourage greater participation in outdoor shooting and clay target events.
- Dave Bashford and Liz Nicholson for their contributions and equipment at firewood working bees.
- Gary and Liz Warren and the support of Valley Plumbing for their work in the deer park renovation.
- Aidan Bichan, Phil Gray, and Ray (caretaker) for looking after deer park stock.
- Liz Nicholson, Brad Gardiner, Luke Johnson and other members for contribution to LandSAR.
- All this year's guest speakers.
- Richard O'Driscoll for newsletter.
- Hall revenue is up and positive comments from local community appreciate hall is being used.
- Wairarapa Hunting & Fishing and King & Henry for sponsorship and hosting club nights.
- Terry from Subway Masterton for catering.
- Christmas barbecue at Lloyd and Keri-Ann Rayner's.
- National conference in Invercargill.

Andrew then noted his intention to step down after three years as president. His contribution was acknowledged with applause.



Liz Nicholson, Andrew Dennes, and Sean Roberts (Photo Gary Warren)

Treasurer's Address Sean Roberts

The branch statement of accounts for 2025/26 were distributed before the AGM.

Sean noted that income was up and expenses down relative to 2024/25 with an excess of income over expenditure of \$2060. Total bank accounts were \$39,488.

Major income was from firewood (\$5,034) and hall hire (\$4,045), but we also generated significant income (\$1,695) from sale of cast antlers we had in storage.

Costs were associated with hall (rates, insurance, electricity) and deer park with further costs to come associated with deer pen extensions. Sean also acknowledged the contributions of time and equipment by Valley Plumbing.

Fencing of hall carpark was delayed while deer park was prioritised but is expected to occur in 2026.

Duncan Financial was re-appointed to review branch accounts in 2026/27.



AGM attendance (Photo Gary Warren)

Election of committee and branch officers

The 2025/26 committee (listed on front page of newsletter) will all continue in 2026/27.

The following officers were elected:

President: Lloyd Rayner

Vice President: Gary Warren

Secretary: Liz Nicholson

Treasurer: Sean Roberts



Past president Andrew Dennes (L) and incoming president Lloyd Rayner (R)

NZDA management hunt in the central and western Ruahines

The hunt originally scheduled for 26 Feb to 2 Mar was postponed due to poor weather forecast for fly-in and tops. The trip went ahead on backup dates of 5–9 March with Branch member Peter Setz participating (unfortunately our two other branch members who had signed up couldn't make the alternate dates).

There were over 30 NZDA members from 7 branches with over 80 hinds taken.

Peter was based at Otukota Hut and reported low deer numbers but he got a deer himself and his hut mates from Hutt Valley got another one.



Photos by Peter Setz

West coast branch hunt

Two members went on the **tahr trip to the west coast for 6–11 March 2026**. No tahr were taken but 3 nice chamois were shot and apparently a good time spent in a west coast catchment.



Dave Bashford with a couple of west coast chamois (Photo Lloyd Rayner)

Committee News and Updates

UPCOMING HUNTS

The next Wanganui trip in **May is full**.

FINANCIALS

See Treasurer's report under AGM.

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.)

HUTS & TRACKS

Mike Thrupp represents the branch at GWBN meetings. Hamish Graham represents us with the Aorangi Restoration Trust.

SEARCH & RESCUE

Please contact Luke on 027 630 7640 if you are interested in joining LandSAR

HALL

Alex who runs karate at the Hall will be running a free morning session on Tuesdays for superannuants and stay-at-home parents.

For hall bookings call 022 323 6993 or email wairarapanzda@gmail.com.

HUNTERS HELPING THE COMMUNITY

The Branch donated frozen venison mince to the Masterton Food Bank. The picture below has had over 300 likes on our Facebook page! Thanks to Garry and Liz Warren and Derek Williams for arranging this.



Liz Warren and Derek Williams at left with meat donation to Food Bank (Photo Gary Warren)

DEER PARK

The red stag and one spiker have been removed. All animals are healthy. A sub-group is arranging a working bee for fencing.

MEMBERSHIPS

National Office have emailed **invoices for 2026/27**. **Please pay your subscription as soon as invoice received** to keep up your membership benefits (insurance, eligibility for entry to competitions etc).

If you have not received an invoice please email wairarapanzda@gmail.com and we will arrange for one to be sent. If you no longer wish to be a member, please also let us know.

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 and Wednesday afternoon from 2 pm unless you're accompanied by a Gladstone WPSSC member.

Please keep to these times to avoid disappoint 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.

FUNDRAISING

The latest firewood working bee was on **Sunday 22 March**. A lovely fine day and about a dozen people showed up - lots of trailers but a limited number of chainsaws and splitters.



22 March working bee (Photo Liz Warren)

Firewood prices

- \$50 per m³ for members who actively participate in working bee on the day
- \$75 per m³ for members who don't show up (or collect their wood then disappear!)
- \$100 per m³ for non-members

What's Next for the Arms Bill

The Government has committed to changing New Zealand's firearms regulatory system. Submissions on the Arms Bill recently closed, and the Justice Select Committee is now considering those submissions. The [Select Committee](#) webpage says their report is expected on 09 June, 2026. Until the Arms Bill is passed into law, firearms licence holders must continue complying with the existing legislation.

Firearms safety in natural disasters

Firearms Safety Authority have published new information to outline the key steps licence holders can take to stay safe and ensure their firearms remain secure in emergency situations. The information covers planning ahead, what to consider if you need to evacuate, how to store firearms safely during an event, and what checks to make once it's safe to return.

The aim is to support responsible decision-making and reduce the risk of loss, theft, or damage during natural disasters.

You can read the full information on our website [here](#).

How to validate your MyFirearms account

Logging in with RealMe is only the first step. RealMe confirms who you are online, but it doesn't prove you are the firearms licence holder. That's why Te Tari Pūreke require a one-off MyFirearms validation to link your account to your actual licence.

Validation protects your information and ensures only authorised people can use MyFirearms services, including managing your details, lodging applications, and completing transfers.

How to validate your account:

1. Log in:

Go to MyFirearms and log in with RealMe. Have your mobile phone ready for the security check.

2. Open 'My Activity':

Select My Activity to open your submissions dashboard.

3. Go to Submitted Forms:

Select MyFirearms Submitted Forms to view all forms you've lodged online.

4. Find your Complete Your Profile (CYP) form:

Under My submitted other forms, select the link starting with CYP.

5. Save and print your PDF:

Download the PDF at the top of the Submission page and print it.

6. Visit a Police station:

Bring the printed form and your firearms licence card. Police will verify your identity and validate your account.

Find out more about [MyFirearms](#) on our website.



Roar safety paramount as Easter overlaps with peak period

With the roar now underway across New Zealand, the New Zealand Deerstalkers Association (NZDA) is urging hunters and all recreational users to take extra care, with Easter this year coinciding directly with the busiest period in the hunting calendar.

NZDA Chief Executive Gwyn Thurlow said the overlap will see increased numbers of hunters, trampers, and outdoor users sharing the same areas. "This is a year where we will see more people than usual in the bush at the same time. Hunters, trampers, and families will be using the same tracks, huts, and valleys. That increases the risk, and it means everyone needs to take responsibility for safety."

Mr Thurlow said the most important rule remains unchanged and must be applied without exception. "You must identify your target beyond all doubt before firing. Movement, sound, colour, or shape is not enough. If there is any doubt, do not shoot." "This is not just a guideline, it is the fundamental rule that prevents tragedy."

While the roar is the most anticipated time of the hunting year, it is also the period where incidents are most likely to occur, particularly when hunters become focused on locating and responding to roaring stags. "The roar creates excitement and urgency. Hunters are moving, calling, and responding to animals. But we must remain disciplined. You never know what is on the other end of a roar. It could be another hunter."

NZDA is also reminding hunters that incidents are more likely to occur within hunting parties than between separate groups. "Good communication and a clear plan are critical. Agree your hunting areas, stick to them, and do not deviate. We all know the temptation when a stag roars outside your zone, but breaking the plan is not worth the risk."

With more people expected in the bush over Easter long weekend, hunters are urged to assume that any movement or noise could be another person until proven otherwise, and to take practical steps to reduce risk. "Wear high-visibility blaze clothing, maintain awareness of others, and ensure everyone in your party understands the plan and their role. These are simple steps that save lives."

NZDA also reminds all hunters to follow the Firearms Safety Code and the Seven Basic Rules of Firearms Safety at all times, and to ensure they are properly prepared for conditions in the field.

NZDA is reminding hunters that thermal imaging technology must be used responsibly and never relied upon for target identification. "Thermals are a useful tool for detecting heat sources, but they do not provide enough detail to confirm what you are looking at," said Mr Thurlow. "A heat signature is not a deer. It could be another hunter or a member of the public. You must always visually confirm your target beyond all doubt before taking a shot."

While handheld thermal devices are permitted for daylight spotting on public conservation land, firearm-mounted thermal scopes and night hunting remain illegal. NZDA is concerned that misuse of this technology risks both prosecution and the reputation of the wider hunting community. "Ethical and lawful behaviour is non-negotiable. Hunters must use thermal technology correctly to ensure safety and protect ongoing access."

"Most incidents are preventable. They come back to basic rules not being followed. Even experienced hunters are not exempt from making mistakes—that's why we reinforce these messages every year." "This is one of the best times of the year to be in the hills. Plan well, hunt ethically, respect others using the outdoors, and come home safely."

For more on the 5Ps and hunter safety, go to www.nzgac.org.nz/hunter-safety.

To undertake free online modules on all aspects of hunting and firearm safety, as well as brushing up on your skills as a hunter, visit www.betterhunting.nz.



[Download the guide and get Roar-ready for 2026](#)

Toxic notification: Southern Tararua

Rentokil Initial (trading as EcoFX), on behalf of OsPRI were undertaking the **toxic component** of the **Southern Tararua - Eastern Side** aerial operation on **Monday 23rd March 2026** (weather permitting). This operation is part of the TB Free programme to protect local farms from tuberculosis infection.

Helicopters will be sowing **toxic cereal pellet bait**, along predetermined flight paths, controlled by GPS. **Pesticide to be used: Sodium Fluoroacetate (1080)**. The toxic cereal pellet bait has been dyed green in colour.

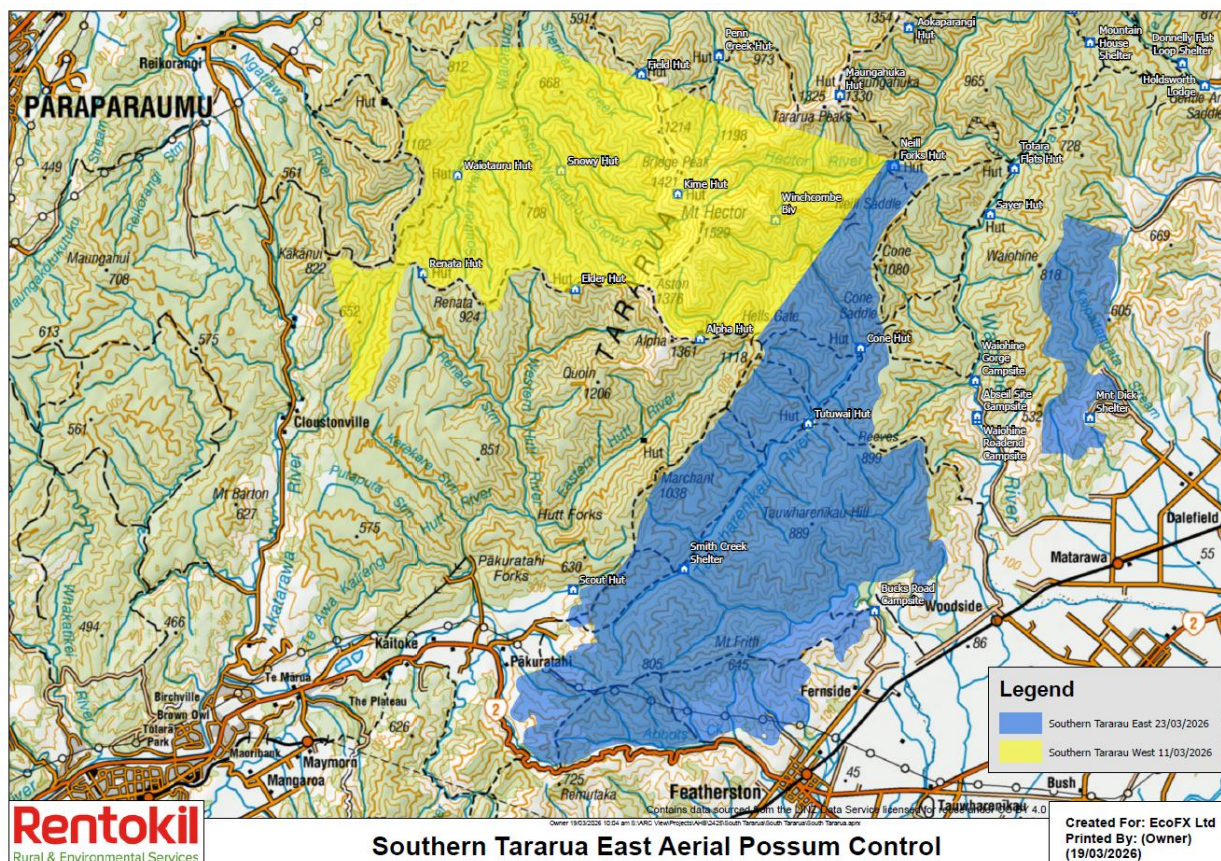
Warning signs will be put in place. A reminder to please check for signage if you are in the area. And;

- **DO NOT TOUCH** poison bait
- **WATCH** children at all times
- **DO NOT EAT** animals from this area or within the buffer zone outside the treatment boundary. The standard buffer zone is 2km for deer and pigs, 200m for rabbits, and 1km for possums.
- Poison bait or carcasses are **DEADLY to DOGS**

Observe these rules whenever you see warning signs about pesticides. The presence of warning signs indicates pesticide residues may be present in baits or animals. Risks will exist until signage is taken down. Poisoning can occur through eating baits or poisoned animals, and dogs are particularly susceptible to 1080 until poisoned carcasses have disintegrated. This takes approximately four to eight months, but can be longer, and depends on monitoring results.

When signs are removed, this means you can resume normal activities in the area. Please report suspected vandalism or unauthorised removal of signs.

If you would like any further information about the planned operation, please contact Ian Cutler on 021 134 2674, or ecofx-office-nz@rentokil-initial.com. The factsheet can be found on the OsPRI website: <https://www.ospri.co.nz/tb-and-pest-control/aerial-operations>. With further information about 1080, including the safety data sheet on our website: <https://rentokilruralenvironmental.co.nz/1080-information-safety-datasheet/>



RPCP South Wairarapa Plains Possum Control Operation – Cyanide Use

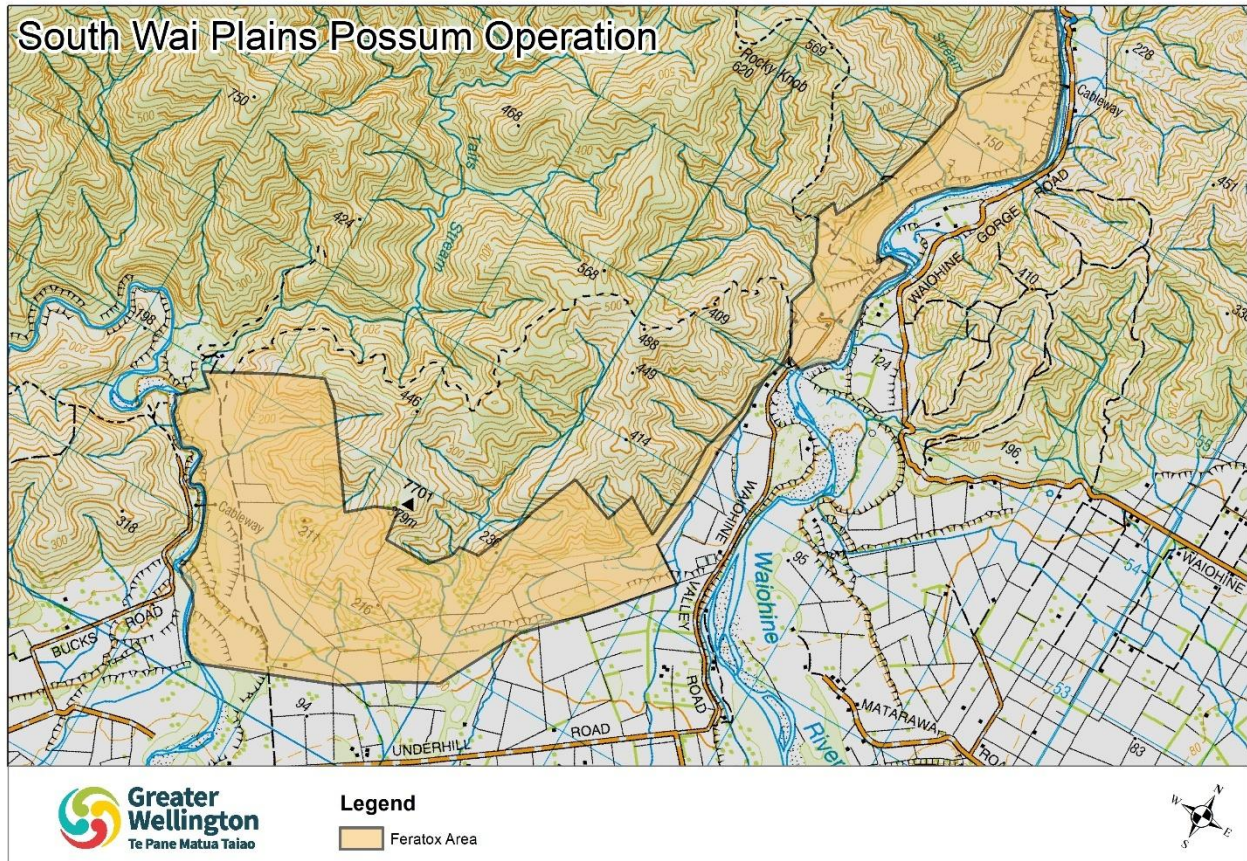
This is to notify about the proposed use of cyanide (Feratox) poison for a possum control operation. This operation is part of Greater Wellington's Regional Possum Predator Control Programme (RPCP) and is aimed at protecting our environment from possums, improving the natural biodiversity of the area and reducing threats from bovine tuberculosis to domestic stock.

The total control area covers 29670 Hectares, and 570 Hectares will be treated with Feratox poison. The Feratox area is located approximately 6km west of Greytown. Please see the map below for the boundary details. If you own or manage a property within this operational area, our staff would have contacted you to discuss and agree upon control methods before any possum control activity commences on the property. They will also keep you informed of progress as the operation proceeds.

The main methods of control proposed for the area includes the use of:

- Brodifacoum 50p in bait stations and Trapping
- Encapsulated cyanide (Feratox) pellets in bait-stations or biodegradable blue bait-bags. Cyanide pellets are pea size, dyed green and mixed with prefeed bait. The cyanide treatment area consists of an area covering a total area of 570 hectares.

The use of cyanide baits will commence from mid-March 2026 onwards, and RPCP are expecting the work to be completed June 2026.



Buy, Sell, and Swap

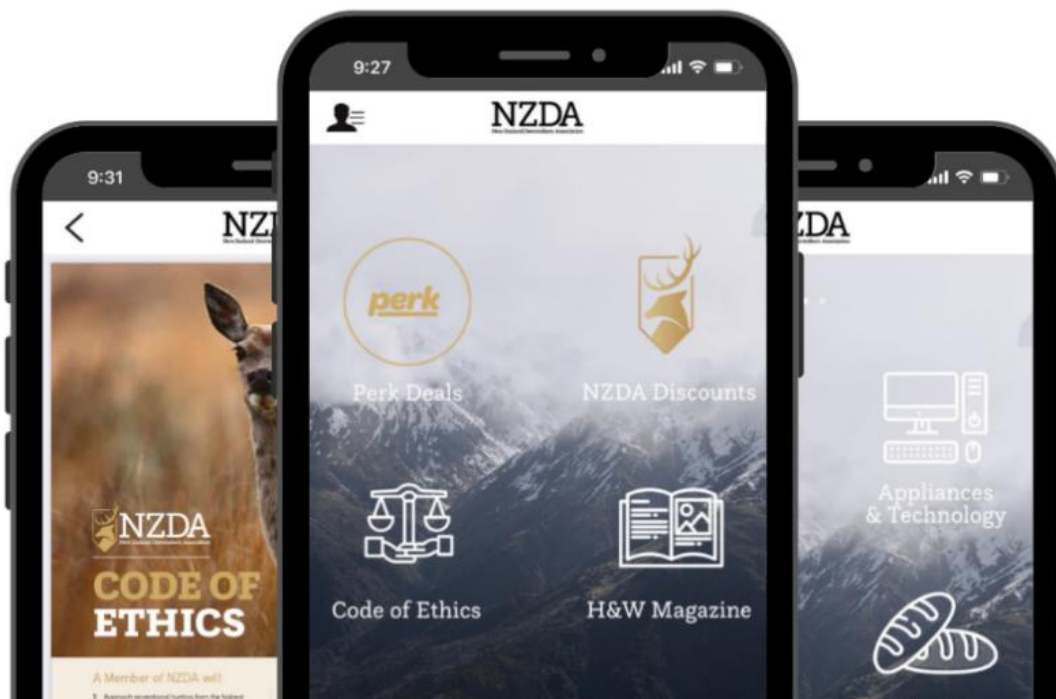
If you have hunting or outdoor related items that you want to buy, sell, or swap, then we'll include these in the Newsletter free of charge (better than TradeMe). Send items (with picture if you wish) to wairarapanzda@gmail.com

- TRAILER FOR SALE
It's registered doesn't have a warrant but I can get one. Call Neil Johnstone on 021 0736162



- 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/>

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

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.