



Sporting Shooters' Association of Australia (Qld) Inc.
Conservation and Wildlife Management Division



"Preserving Australia's Heritage"

SSAA (Qld) Inc. Conservation and Wildlife Management Division
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CONSERVATION & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT (Qld)

June 2018 Newsletter

Message from the CWM President

Our Condolences

Mark Woods' partner, Glenys-Julie (1962-2018) passed away suddenly and unexpectedly last Saturday from a cardiac tamponade.

On behalf of CWM executive and members, I would like to express our deepest sympathy to Mark Woods.

Glenys was a great mate and partner to Mark. They shared a mutual passion for wildlife which saw them involved in numerous research and other projects to do with various species. Some of these projects included the Bridled nail Tail Wallaby, the Northern hairy Nosed wombat, the Night parrot, Birds of Australia, the Bilby Foundation. Glenys-Julie was a member of CWM for over

15yrs and spent a lot of time with other lady members making them feel welcome on our training days.

Her passion for wildlife included her graduation with Honours in an Environment Science degree.

Many people will sadly miss Glenys and also her great contribution to CWM and wildlife.

Position Vacant – Accreditation Officer SEQ

Many of you in the South East no doubt undertook your accreditation out at Ipswich under the tutorage of Owen McIntyre. Owen has done a fantastic job in stepping up to the plate about every 6 weeks to hold these days for new members. Due to the rising numbers he would like some assistance from others.

Ideally, we are looking to train up others to share the role so that it doesn't all fall on Owen's shoulders.

Essentially the role is one of assisting to 'onboard' new members whilst imparting our culture.

Please call me to discuss.

Trip Leader Training

Trip leader training is scheduled for ;

Cairns – 30June & 1 July.
Mackay – 21& 22 July.
South East region – TBA.

Damien Ferguson
President (Mob - 0402 424 424)
damien.ferguson@hotmail.com

South East Report

Moonie now comprises 9 near or adjacent properties. All have a variety of feral animals including pig, fox, cat, hare, Indian Mynah and some with goat. Due to the logistics of manning these properties they are divided into three areas of operation, each with their own teams.

I was heading a four man team onto one of the areas during April. The 'home' property was extensively covered with a mature sorghum crop about to be harvested after our visit. One property was entirely covered in grass so high, an elephant would have been useful to be able to hunt successfully. The third property was easily accessible by roads or perimeter tracks inside the paddocks, although some were very rough. All had remnant patches of natural Brigalow or windrows between or around fields. We hunted all three properties with mixed results correlating with the height of the grasses.

The 'home' property had one fallow field and it was the source of numerous sightings of fox during each night's hunting. We walked the Brigalow patches during the day and had good results. Brett and I each shot a pig on the first day. That night while driving up the central road through a Brigalow patch, we surprised a mob of pigs and piglets and Brett nailed three before they scattered into the bush. We also took out a couple of foxes. The next day Ray and Alan arrived and they set up their ute for the nights hunt. They had not been on this property before so went out



and to talk with the owners about any recent sightings.

That night all four of us went out to hunt using the thermal set up on Ray's ute. The camera wirelessly projected a thermal image onto a tablet above the dash and a green laser mounted parallel with the camera gave the shooter a direction to the target. Once the shooter was ready, the spotlight was turned on and a shot taken.

for an orientation drive. That night they hunted on the adjacent properties while Brett and I stayed on the 'home' property.

Day 3. Brett and I walked the Brigalow patches in the morning with no sightings of our targets. During the day we scouted the adjacent properties

Alternately, if the rifle had a night vision scope attached, the light was not used.

Day 4. Brett headed home and Ray, Alan and I walked the main Brigalow stand on the 'home' property in the late afternoon. Alan on the left, Ray in the middle and I was on the right. We were about 50m apart from each other but



visible. After about 30 minutes, Alan fired a shot. He had sprung a mob of pigs. They ran right in front of Ray who dropped one. A large sow propped under a bush 10m in front of me and I took a shot through the branches with my 308 to finish her off. After checking the two kills, we reformed the line and continued on. Within a minute Alan fired again, killing a younger pig that was returning to where they had camped. We took a parallel line back through the bush and returned to the cars with no further luck. That night John arrived to make up the foursome. We hunted the adjacent properties taking out a couple of foxes. I went to bed about midnight as I was leaving the next morning, while the others continued to hunt for a few more hours.

Day 5-7. I left for home early in the morning and Ron came in to replace me. The team continued to work the three properties until Friday when rain prevented any further movement on the properties.

The final tally for the week was 22 pigs – they had sprung another mob of pigs heading for the sorghum at night – and 11 foxes. A good week's work by all.

Ted

Townsville Report

Invitation to the Townsville Island Project

Just one view of the island



CWM Townsville invites interested and accredited CWM members to take part in the Townsville Island Project to monitor and reduce feral animals on a tropical island off the Townsville coast during the period **May to August 2018** as per the CWM (QLD) Calendar of Events.

Nominations

We are restricted to the number of members we can accommodate by the number of boats available so you are requested to email your nominations to the Trip Leader, Tony Darlington at adarlington54@gmail.com sooner rather than later.

Rockhampton Report

Bluff cats' Project

Really, it's all about the wallaby - the Bridled Nail Tail (BNT) Wallaby. In time I believe this species will be known worldwide. It is gentle, agile if it likes; above all it is trusting and evolved without introduced predators. The consequence of

this, as with other Australian fauna, is they need us to keep the gate closed. Two viable populations of the BNT wallaby remain, one just west of Rockhampton. It is an area not open to visitors - a repurchased cattle property with residual scrub, Brigalow re-growth and seasonal creeks.



The **Bridled Nail Tail wallaby** weighs in at about 4 kilogram. A Joey weighs 1-2 kilogram, unfortunately the perfect prey for cats, foxes and wild dogs.

Mid Queensland and further north, the fox population starts to feel the heat and dry conditions. Not so the feral cat, which can survive without water on the moisture gained from prey.

treatment of removing the predators is kept in mind. Most traps are set in a sand pit next to timber or



Andrew McMaster leads this project. The 'Bluff Cats' project's key objective is to reduce the effects of predation on the BNT population. This trip ran from 28 March to 1st April when rain made using the tracks a problem. The ATV and other vehicles risked cutting up the tracks so it finished a day or two early. Along to assist Andrew were Mark and his wife. Completing the detail was me - ex game boat skipper and outdoor enthusiast. I have hunted extensively and the goal of this project is perfect in all aspects.

The method of control is fascinating and methodical. Trap lines of 50 traps were set. They had to be cleared by 10:00 am next day. Humane

timbered area is also crisscrossed by wallaby and Bettong. In the event one of these marsupials gets caught in the trap, they can be released with no injuries. One of many cat scents is put on a twig which is pushed into the sand next to the trap. Cats are quite territorial and inquisitive, that's to our advantage for securing the wallabies future.

Coupled with trapping, we spotlighted each night which



Brigalow scrub. The rubber lined trap jaws are designed to hold an animal without damaging bone or skin. The scrubby and

primarily took out rabbits. The grass was a pesky rabbit height. They would scurry for cover and sit, ten to twenty meters into the grass. Both Mark and I had scrub style shotguns, and we both did OK with the rabbits. The boss, Mark, many years my junior embodies the evolution of hunting. His tactical style 243



is coupled with a comprehensive night vision scope system and a secure brace strap for offhand shooting.

We had finished our spotlighting on night three when Mark caught sight of a black cat in the vehicle lights as it slinked away from a trap. Once clear of the lights, the black cat paused and Mark picked it up with the night vision scope and dispatched it from the offhand position.

We caught two good feral cats in the trap lines; so for just three days, this was a great result. Had they remained, eating a modest Joey or wallaby a week, the havoc wreaked is obvious.

For me, this was a very worthwhile venture; both as a hunter and a fisher. I'm hooked

Paul Millist

General articles, stories, tips

In the heat of the moment

In the heat of the moment, as you are about to shoot an animal; finger ever so lightly on the trigger - is it a Cat, a Night Jar or a Bilby? Identification is one of three extremely important things that should be at the front of your mind. Yet, for a lot of hunters it seems to be somewhere down in the back of their minds or sitting in the forgotten folder. There are many reasons why this is so - buck fever, new to shooting, the desire to get something at all costs, peer pressure to take the shot, and the "she'll be right mate" attitude are some of these



Black stripe Wallaby
Macropus dorsalis

under spotlight, heavy cover low light and so on.

Now let's take a more in-depth look at some of these supposed reasons!

New to shooting

The person learning to shoot, or hunt, will not have had

I have known even some experienced hunters that struggle to tell the difference between Eastern Grey Kangaroos and Wallaroo's let alone the difference between Eastern Greys and Western



Redneck Wallaby *Wallabia rufogrisea*

drummed into them the importance of identifying your

intended target before squeezing the trigger. They do not have the experience of seeing different animals under different conditions day/ night,

Grey Kangaroos (yes the odd western grey gets a little lost and pops up here in QLD or maybe they were just on holidays). Another one is telling the difference between Black Striped Wallabies and Redneck Wallabies. This last one is one a lot of hunters struggle with but it is very important to know as they both

can live in the same area. All this comes with experience and the desire to learn the difference.

The “she’ll be right mate” attitude

The much-loved Australian idiom "she'll be right mate" when applied in certain circumstances, can sooth one's self or others in times of hardship, but this saying has no place in the context of conservation issues nor shooting/hunting practices. The environment we protect and the people we work with are too important, too precious, to believe that without discipline, dedication and care, that we can truly make a difference. This is by no means a hard line but rather a revealing that there is a need to fully understand the consequences of our decisions, focus on good education, training and harm minimization/eradication to best equip ourselves to make positive change, and what better way to begin than with an attitude of ... **"We will** do right mate" rather than"She'll be right mate".

Buck Fever

We have all had this to one degree or another, at some time in our shooting or hunting career. Everybody reacts to **buck fever** in a different way. In minor cases, it is just a pounding in the chest and a shortness of breath. In extreme cases, it has been known to induce heart attacks and have hunters do crazy things like stepping off a tree stand to run up to a fallen **buck**. This can be quite a problem for some people though some people are able to train themselves to stop or minimize it most of the time, but a few people never can.

Peer Pressure

Peer pressure can come about in different forms. It can be the simple thing of “it’s a cat, it’s a cat” coming from one or two people on the back of a truck while out spotlighting. These people may have a lot of experience shooting or appear to have a lot of experience, pushing you to trust their opinion, but what you must remember is - you are the one with the rifle and the telescopic sights so will be the one that can see more clearly and make a more informed decision. It can also come from your desire to impress one of your peers that has a lot of experience by showing how quick you can take a shot at the expense of identification and safety. There are many more reasons why you respond to peer pressure, but deep down you know we shouldn’t bow to these.

Must get it at all costs

Mentally it is a hard one as it generally comes from two areas.

First, it can be the sincere desire of the person to remove all pest animals in order to save our native animals. While this not a necessarily a bad thing, knowing when to draw the line in the sand is hard. These people will have a strong passion to save our native wildlife and in trying to do so will take risks like it’s the right colour/height so that’s good enough (this alone is far from enough to make a 100% identification).

Secondly, there is the person that does not like being beaten to the shot by anyone else, or not taking as many animals as others for fear of being seen as

an inferior hunter, or no longer the number one hunter.

As you can see there are many reasons as to why this simple golden rule – to ensure correct animal identification - falls to the back of the mind and becomes less golden. As a collective of ethically strong, conservation focused hunters, it can be personally difficult to deal with the knowledge that we have misidentified and wrongfully shot a native species. Further to this however, ramifications of our actions resulting from misidentification also have legal (fines or loss of license) and other implications that affect ourselves, workmates and our families.

So remembering to take a little extra time and make sure (100% sure) that what you have your cross hairs on is what you think it is beyond doubt the cat, pig or wild dog you think it is will save us all a lot of pain remembering it is not just you that the wrong decision will affect.

Mark Woods

Photos courtesy Wikipedia

Project communal accommodation.

One of the most rewarding pleasures of CWM activity involvement is the meeting and sharing with fellow members the common interest of organised feral animal control, and all it has to offer. However there are limits to that degree of sharing, particularly on projects of several days duration or where the accommodation is closely confined.

The Moonie accommodation is a case in point. Three properties provide basic sleeping, eating and ablution facilities including lighting and refrigeration. Access to bathrooms requires coordination and consideration towards the rights of others to available water and gas. On a recent sweltering trip, the pressure pump to a shower was playing up, so a call sign was devised. The occupant signaled to those outside that the water flow had ceased and the pump required re priming. This symbiosis worked well for those who chose to shower!

Outdoor accommodation such as tents or trailer camping is an option at all sites for those who prefer a little independence and personal space. Well worth considering if arriving late to a project or where numbers of members are high.

If you choose to occupy the communal quarters, be acutely aware and respectful of your fellow members. Storage space is limited and so too are kitchen, eating and access to electric power outlets for group sizes of six or more. Be mindful of where and how your belongings are stowed, and the positioning and connection of portable fridges and rechargeable appliances.

Project activities proceed during all hours of the day and night and all members deserve an undisturbed sleep. Night patrol spot-lighters on return to their accommodation in the small hours should respect the early to bed - early to rise members. Similarly early risers should make every effort not to disrupt the rest necessary for the night shift. Keeping conversation, food preparation

and departure noise to an absolute minimum is essential for an enjoyable, harmonious trip.

John S

Frankenstein's pigs

Right on dark I was running through the bush in amongst a mob of pigs. On my left, 50 meters away, full size adult pigs were avalanching down the side of the creek bed that I was running through.

I was chasing a few sows that had broken away from the larger mob hoping the vegetation would clear enough to take a shot. The mob to my left closed in on me, the sound of hooves around me was like being in a horse race. I had never felt so energised, the pigs and I all running for our lives.

Eventually the vegetation and my lack of fitness got the better of me and I stopped. It is amazing how much ground you can cover while running full of adrenalin.

The pigs that had taken cover in the bushes during the confusion were starting to present themselves in the darkness as I made my way back to the buggy. I was surrounded by pigs standing no more than 20 meters away. Piglets were running just meters from my feet, other targets were standing still. Click, Click, Click - I was defenseless.

Bouncing around in the buggy had rattled the rounds to the back of the magazine and the bolt could not pick them up.

Fortunately the sound of the firing pin was enough to scare the pigs away. If only I had had the Lithgow with a 10 shot magazine with me the results would have been different. I cannot wait to do it again.

Greg

Keeping your gear

This story starts thirty years ago when I was a dive master for my organisation in Western Australia.

We would get back from a dive and somebody would invariably say that had lost a piece of their gear. Poop I can't find my gloves, my dive chart is missing, has anyone seen my compass?

Fast forward to Queensland in the future, I have taken up shooting and joined the SSAA CWM organisation. Same scenario, we get back from a hunt and the same questions are asked. Poop I can't find my knife, has any one seen my GPS.

What has changed? Nothing. The answers are the same. Black looks good, camouflage is cool, that is the way that I bought it. In my particular case, we were shooting off the back of a ute, with a shooting platform, when the driver hit a pot hole. Until I went to load my rifle, I didn't realise that my magazine had bounced off the ute and on to the track, after a quick 180 degree turn and with the aid of a spot light, the reflective tape on my magazine lit up like an idle stop and go person at a kilometer away.

The others on the ute all said how lucky I was to find my missing magazine. It wasn't

luck but a little bit of forward planning, because I know that things happen, and things get lost, and I am not rich enough to keep replacing them.

As hunters we wear blaze orange hats and patches, why? We stand out so that we can see each other, and the critters can't see the blaze orange.

So why doesn't everybody do the same with their own equipment to make it much more visible? Time, effort, or simply not knowing what to do, all could be the answer. I know that almost all of my losable equipment has either reflective tape or orange parachute cord on it. Things like my GPS have both reflective tape and orange cord to hang around my neck.

Has this stopped me losing gear? No it hasn't. But finding it again is a whole lot easier. I do understand the need for stealth, and the need to be hard for animals to see us so that we can do our job. As hunters we can achieve a whole lot more by "Ghost walking". Not by blundering through the bush discussing what is for tea with the person two meters away from you and securing your personal equipment so that it doesn't bang and rattle when you walk.

We don't wear ghilli suits or sit in camouflaged hides, but wear a multitude of different coloured pants and shirts. We have packs with shiny zippers and buckles; we even have stainless steel rifle barrels flashing every available bit of sunlight around. So an extra bit of blaze orange hanging around your neck won't make a whole lot of difference.

I am not advocating that everyone goes out on a project looking like an overzealous mine worker, but making your gear more visible may be the difference between a bad trip away and a good trip away.

Bob L

Simplex and Duplex explained

Some of the frequencies on your UHF radios are "duplex". That means they receive and transmit on different frequencies even though they are on the same channel. This means that even if you are standing next to another radio, they can't hear your direct transmission if you are on a duplex channel, because you are transmitting on frequency "A" while they are receiving on frequency "B". This is where repeaters come in. Repeating stations do more than just boost a signal and send it on. They receive your frequency "A" and re-transmit your signal on frequency "B".

So, here's how it works: You are chatting with another person on channel 31 (duplex channel). Your transmit frequency cannot be heard directly by the other person. The signal goes to a repeating station, which re-sends the message on a different frequency that your mate receives. Your personal conversation may have travelled up to 30 km back and forth, and any radio in range of the repeating station can hear it. If you want to talk directly to your mate, use a simplex channel.

To put it more simply, SIMPLEX frequencies are person to person.

DUPLEX frequencies are person to repeater to person, even if the radios are next to each other.

Sourced from the internet.

Use of drones by CWM members

The increasing rate in drone use is well matched by their technical sophistication and misuse. Consequently, authorities are striving to eliminate the latter while allowing their steadily growing capability to be used sensibly and safely. As a first step in the development of CWM policy, the following scant detail, believed current at time of writing, may assist. Common regulations apply in most instances for both 'not for profit' pilots and those charging for their drone service. In essence, drone operation must comply with CASA regulations.

A useful website is: www.casa.gov.au/aircraft/landing-page/flying-drones-australia. A fundamental rule is: 400 feet above ground level max, no closer than 30m to people and a minimum distance from an airfield to be 3nm.

Various commercially made 'products' are available and indeed unique models may be built up by enthusiasts. Reputable suppliers (e.g. JB HI FI) sell products which are 'geofenced'. This means they are programmed to comply with current regulations including the basic requirements listed above. In using an iPhone or Android phone, this system

checks the CASA data base live. If clearance is not achieved the drone will be limited to 30 meters from the operator's location. Consequently if phone coverage is not available (probably most of our time in the bush) such a programmed drone will operate to 30 meters only!.

Drone models which are not 'geocached or fenced' can fly higher than 400 feet and can't liaise with CASA. In this case the onus is on the operator to 'do the right thing'. The problem for us is striving to define what the 'right thing' is as we facilitate the use of drones, while not contravening the strong but evolving CASA regulations.

It seems considerable care is necessary with the paperwork!
Peter F

Ken Payne story

One of our members, Derek, was recently filling his Harley at an Ipswich petrol station when he had what later turned out to be a loose battery terminal and the Harley wouldn't start.

After being unable to start it, Derek decided to push his bike clear of the pumps when another bloke walking back to his car offered to help push.

At this time Derek notices the CWM sticker on the bloke's car and, after asking a question and introducing himself, finds

that Mark is also a CWM member – what a great way to meet. The sticker is also a way to not only identify us but to get conversations going on what the CWM means. Once we get people talking, we then need to explain to them the damage the feral animals do to the environment.

The sticker is provided each time you renew your membership or when you join up.



Upcoming Activity Dates

Our calendar of activity dates is now published on our web site. Please go to:

<http://cwm.ssaaqld.org.au/2013/index.php/calendar/2018-calendar>

CWM Contacts

<http://cwm.ssaaqld.org.au/2013/index.php/contacts>

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Our Supporters

The businesses listed below support us in different ways, whether it is through direct discounts to members, donations to the Christmas Shoot, or items loaned for field use.

When purchasing items from these businesses please be sure to mention you are a Conservation and Wildlife Member (CWM) for discounts where applicable.



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