



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



**"Preserving Australia's Heritage"**

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## ***CONSERVATION & WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT (Qld)***

### **March 2020 Newsletter**

#### **South East Report**

**NB:** Minor editorial changes have been made to our code of Conduct

#### **General articles, stories, tips**

My name is John Thornely, (SSAA 73883) Member of CWM Qld.



Back many years ago I helped start CWM, based on the Hunting & conservation Group from S.A, in QLD. Gill Hartwig came up from SA to guide the first Qld members through the first training program. I myself was one of the first to go through the training in SA. Due to ill health I have not been able to attend many programs. But enough of that.

Back in 2016 I retired from swinging spanners and after a while boredom set in. I was lucky enough to secure a tough job, manager/caretaker of a cattle property some 450km north of Brisbane. In the first instant the manager asked me if I would be able to remove wild dogs that were playing havoc with his new born calves, I really had to think about this for about a nanosecond and told him I could probably be able to help. Little did I know that the first year was going to be really tough on rifles and supplies of bullets.

In the first 3 months, I was averaging three dogs a night, every two nights. As the property backs onto forestry land, it was a highway for them. My main medicine for these dogs was my favourite



Remington 700 BDL 22.250. This rifle is twenty two years old, been crowned a couple of times so my twenty four inch barrel is now a twenty two inch unit. I use 55gn Nozler Ballistic tip. As the dogs became light and gun shy, they moved further out, requiring a little more power. Overkill maybe, but the 257 Weatherby Mag came into its own. With a good rest, I was able to reach way out.

I had also introduced some of my traps, WTS 5 rubber jaws from Western Trapping supplies in Toowoomba. They have never let me down and I have never lost a dog or a cat for that matter. They become a little cautious of the normal attractant I had secured from the trap supplier, so tried several other products. Firstly, I used well boiled chicken, removing the fat from the water, a small amount of flesh. A little bit of flesh/fat dropped on the path where they came through sure had their attention. Six traps set one night caught five dogs and one very irate black cat that just wanted to rip me limb from limb. One night, I used sardines in oil, tuna in oil and, hard as it may be to believe, mild twiggie sticks put through the blender.

In the first year, I was able to remove over 83 dogs and 17 cats. With the drought biting and water becoming scarce, I took to setting blinds up at the major watering holes. This also became productive as far as the feral pigs were concerned. In the second year the number of dogs trailed off with only twenty four being taken, all in traps. The number of cats dropped to six in traps, and eleven to the 22.250. In the last year I have only been able

to spend about five weeks at the station. I have attached a photo of one the last three dogs taken here and hope that with luck I will be able to return to the station and attend more CWM programs. I have been able to attend a Farmer Assist program out at Blackall removing roos from an area under pest mitigation permits.

John Thornely (73883)

## 2009 - A successful stalking strategy

This one came about in a strange kind of way. Mick was along more as an observer than a hunter; that meant that if he found a stag he liked, he would shoot after everyone else had filled their freezers.



From where we were camped, we could see way across a big river flat for at least a couple of kilometres. Each morning and afternoon, deer would come out onto this river flat to feed. We spent a considerable amount of time looking for that special stag; mainly because it rained so much and we couldn't get about. Vince told us we were wasting our time trying to find

that stag as HE knew every stag on that flat, and we'd seen all of them. But THIS stag had been hiding or had come in from the bush and we were quite proud to have one up on the Boss.

When the time came to hunt Mick's special Stag, it unfolded in a very peculiar way.

It was virtually impossible to approach the stag undetected. Maybe if the stag had been by himself or even with a few hinds, it would have been ok, but being with a big mob did cause a few brain cells to go into overdrive. While the boys were trying unsuccessfully to be part of a box tree, the local station horses came up for a look. Animals can tell you a lot, if you watch them carefully,

they see things long before we pick them up, they can be a very handy pair of extra eyes.

The horses were quite friendly, and seemed to want part of the action, so we accommodated. Vince took a handful of the horse's mane and slowly guided the horse in the direction of the stag. The other horses tagged along as if they had done this before. From a

distance the hunters looked just like two Indians sneaking up on a wagon train. The horses obliged to perfection, allowing the hunters to cover some 400 yards without greatly disturbing the deer. This is the time when the heart starts to get a bit out of control, you can't seem to hold your sight picture steady and little seeds of doubt creep in.

It always seems an anticlimax, at the end of a successful stalk, to have managed to overcome a bout of nerves and pull off a good clean shot to finally have your target on the ground. And what a very nice stag he was too.

Dudley Maker

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## Time to prepare your gear

As it has been almost six months since there has been any projects with the CWM. So now is a great time to prepare your gear in readiness for when we get back into our project work.

Hopefully each of your firearms was given a touch of oil prior to the onset of the Coronavirus, so that they didn't rust in your gun safes. Regardless, after a long period of inactivity, it is now essential that your firearms are taken out, thoroughly cleaned and oiled, including bolts and magazines. Ensuring that they are unloaded, assemble the firearm, and operate it as if you were at the range or in the field.

Take out your sleeping bag, or blankets and sheets, and give them a shake and airing, this will not only freshen them up, but evict any cockroaches,

mice and anything else growing inside that shouldn't be there. This also goes for any chairs, cots or any other gear that is stored in a bag. Little critters will always find their way into the bag and either eat stuff, or just poop everywhere.

The box that contains your plates and eating irons should also be opened, with the contents spread out, checked out, and rewashed if required. I have seen one member who was never going to get crook on a project, judging by the amount of penicillin on his gear that grew from one Moonie trip to the next. Don't forget to check the condition of gas stoves and gas bottles, rust and frayed hoses can really upset everybody's day.

Clean out your back pack, easy to say, hard to do. Left-over food packets and leaky water bottles do a vast amount of damage to your expensive gear. Make sure that the electronic gear, GPS's, range finders and torches all have the batteries removed, to prevent damage due to leakage. Remember to put the batteries in a ziplock bag back into your backpack.

First aid kits, are susceptible to wear and tear and the effects of age, with band-aid and bandages losing their sticky or becoming unwound, and creams and ointments going out of date. Do not forget to check insect repellent and sunscreens. Check scissors and safety pins and other metal tools for rust and replace as required.

Vehicle maintenance is a subject that needs to be brought up but is not elaborated on.

Finally, invest in the operator, by getting some time on the 'net or YouTube, reacquainting yourselves with the skills and procedures that need refreshing. SSAA does some great videos on field dressing and animal butchering, as well as scope mounting and firearms operations.

It all sounds so simple but, "if you don't use it you lose it", and a straightforward reminder about a technical issue about your firearms, scope management or trigger control gets the brain juices flowing, and the mind set back to where it should be.

Now is a great time to discover and fix any issues with your gear before you go out on a project.

Bob L

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## Isolation (a necessity at the moment) is the mother of invention

I always do range work before going on CWM Projects. I zero my 30:06, 243 and 223. The 30:06 is zeroed first, because for me at 72kg, it hits me hard on my light lightweight frame. In the field I point, steady the rifle to shoot and fire and mostly there is no issue with the recoil.

So I began thinking about this while in isolation. I have two outdoor vests at home. Why not convert one to a shotgun/rifle vest; so I did.

I took an impact sole from some joggers; washed and fresh. I folded it in half so it doubled in thickness. Joined the two sections with thread,

and then followed with some finer black thread from underneath to sew it in position. As with a shotgun vest for a right hander it's on the right shoulder.

I finished the job and did an almost invisible hand sewing job.

My shoulder will say "Thanks Paul" when I get to the range again.

Maybe peace at last for me with my Remington 700 BDL and 150-180 gn projectiles.

Paul M

## Ken Payne story

### Hunting at home in the Covid-19 lockdown.

Even when we are confined to our yards, we can still help the environment by removing unwanted pests. A number of years ago, due to large scale clearing in our area, we set up a watering and a seed feeder with a mesh covering the feeder to give the smaller birds a chance without being chased by the larger ones. After some time, I started to see Indian Myna birds among the many birds we attracted to the feeder.



<https://pestsmart.org.au/pestsmart-common-indian-myna/> The Mynas moved in and began to chase away some of the native birds. They also had a habit of eating our dog's food and messing on our patio furniture.



Our local Council had a pest information session on Indian Mynas that surprised us at the way these birds can take over. They stated that these birds can have up to 5 clutches of 4 chicks a year and, as they are in a flock, take over our native bird nesting logs chasing them away and restricting their breeding. Whereas the native Rosella will lay four or five eggs

and will only raise two or three chicks a year.

Mynas feed along the ground devouring beetles and insects that emerge from the mulch. The Council lecturer asked the

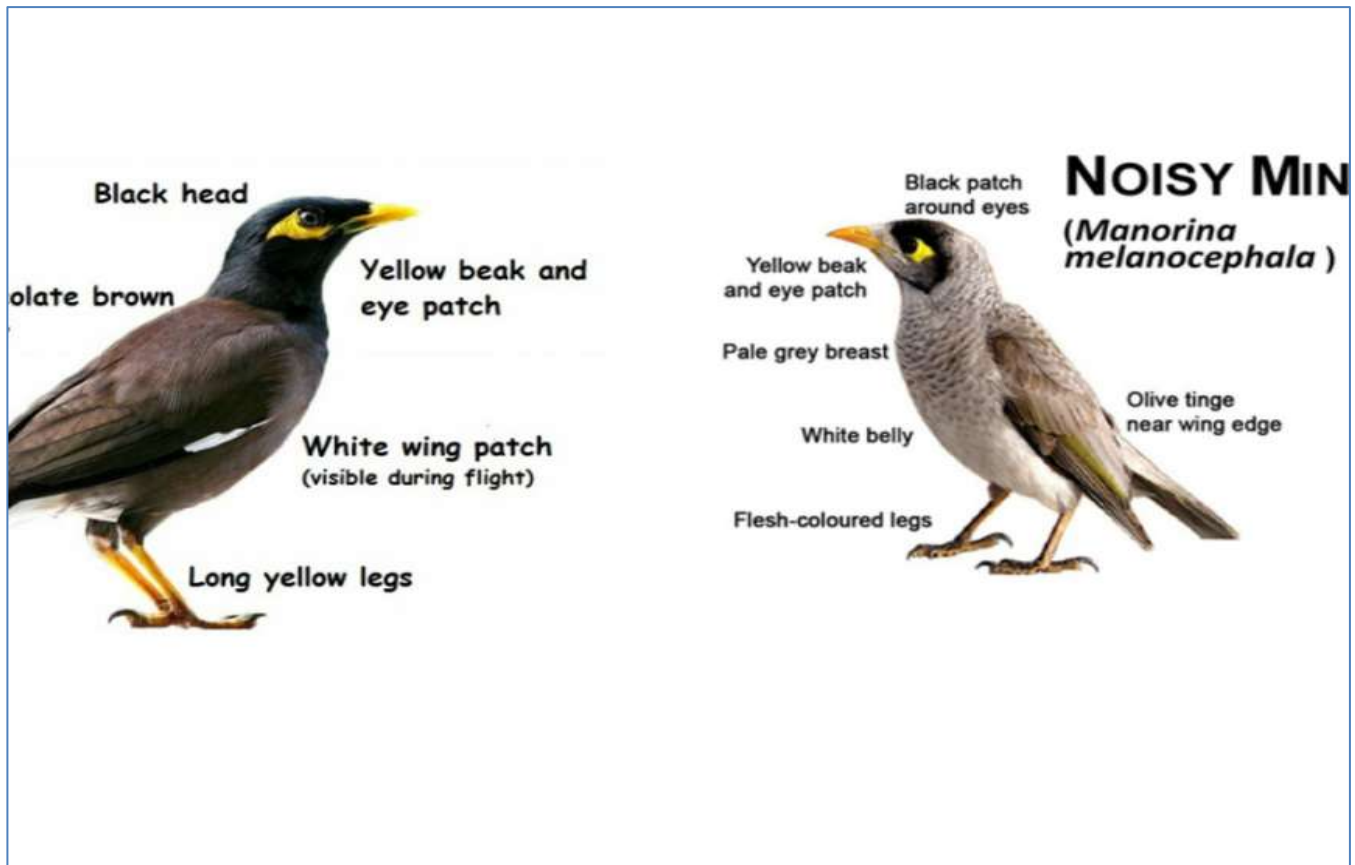
audience if anyone had seen a Christmas beetle recently. No one put up their hand. He stated that Kookaburras get about 1 in 4 insects as they emerge, but the Mynas move along in formation and get the lot. They will also attack the nests and eat the young of finches, wrens and other small birds.

The Indian Myna has the potential to spread avian malaria, damage fruit, vegetable and cereal crops.

They form large, noisy, communal roosts in suburban areas, including roof cavities, and can cause dermatitis, allergies and asthma in humans.

So about 2 years ago a friend lent me his trap and I have removed about 30 Mynas with the trap sitting on my BBQ.





With the start of the lockdown I began using my cat trap that I take on CWM projects. In the last 4 weeks, with the trap sitting on the table in my patio area, I have removed 6 more. They are a very smart bird and quickly learn what is dangerous, so I only remove them from the trap at night when the others cannot see.

I know a few of our members who are also trapping. John is one, from west of Toowoomba, who has removed many hundreds. Another is a local, Bob has caught well over 100. There are many online videos and plans on building traps and this is only one.  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=905&v=XuXRHo8NiV0&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=905&v=XuXRHo8NiV0&feature=emb_logo)

Bundaberg Regional Council offers a bounty of \$2 per head for Indian Mynas, delivered alive and unharmed. It humanely kills them and some are sent to the Snakes

Downunder Reptile Park in Childers, where crocodiles consider them a tasty treat.

It should not be confused with the slightly smaller, grey noisy miner, which is a native species.

## Lockdown: Nightmare due to lack of coffee shops, restaurants and bars or a preppers dream.

As there is now some positive news on the state of the lockdown, we have an opportunity to reflect on the sudden shut down of our lives and the uncertainty and understandable fear of this terrible virus, spreading across the country over the last few months. We can also reflect on how this has affected the conservation hunting activities that we all love and the

cancellation of projects and maintenance work. Each of us in our different lives has had to overcome challenges and yet as a group we share a common interest and bond for as a group dedicated to conservation and the eradication of feral pests we all share the attributes that make a good hunter.

A good hunter must be prepared, patient, and have attempted to anticipate the conditions as best as possible, and above all keep calm and focused. They must make the right decisions within a fraction of a second at times. I do not consider myself a prepper more a resourceful and prepared person and maybe this is why hunting appeals, a chance to put this mindset into practice. Some may think that this is splitting hairs and most of my family and friends think I am a bit of a prepper.

As I watched along with the world's media, two women having a punch up over toilet paper, I felt a little vindicated and somewhat smug, with a little voice inside saying no need to worry here, this is what you have been preparing for.

We have a big pantry fully stocked, a healthy vegie patch, chooks, beef, and the essential home brew. This sense of pride and self-assurance slowly disappeared like static gradually breaking down the reception on a radio with the message becoming more and more inaudible.

"We should pick up some; I think there is only a few rolls left in the cupboard" This statement said in passing was like a dagger to the heart. How could I let this happen and what a failure I had become nothing more than a want to be a prepper. A complete search of the house and a family meeting meant that yes, we are on rations and serious ones at that.

The next few days were quiet and with not a lot happening..A bit like a rainy day at Moonie where you know you should be doing something but just have to go with the situation at hand. Oh to be at Moonie, those clear cool nights, the green glow of the thermal and a brand new rifle still to be tested.

The endless news stories and gruesome tallies that were inescapable was getting a bit repetitive so nothing else for it, out to the shed to put the gear away that was out in preparation for Moonie.

I have most things in specific spots these days, so that a trip to Ripley, or further afield can



happen with relatively little stress, the tent, camping tables, chair, and cooking gear on one shelf and the dry food and perishable supplies in a cupboard.

As I opened this cupboard the feelings of relief, joy, and pride were immense, there on the shelf in front of me were four rolls. Of course, the camping supplies, how could I have forgotten the camping supplies, I am a prepper, after all.

Walking back into the house

with my bounty, I felt like the

true hunter gather that just brought home the food for the tribe.

Sadly those four rolls have come and gone and many more as well, the shed is as tidy as it is going to get until I finally finish building the reload room. The phone is starting to ring



again with work related matters and the shops are full of toilet paper again. I am left wondering if we have learnt anything from this. Our health system has withstood this but not without some considerable interventions and our society has been modified in ways that we could not have dreamt of in January just four months ago.

Amidst a wave of national reinvigoration of our energy, manufacturing and agricultural sectors will we turn away from the wastefulness, that more is better or that everything must be cheaper and not better quality, or will we go back to the how it was. Hopefully not, but



that could just be the prepper talking, and anyhow maybe it is time to celebrate what we did achieve as a nation. Just as you would smash a bottle of

wine on a bow of a ship, I couldn't think of a better way than to engage in some toilet paper target practice - they throw surprisingly well.

## **Some SSAA national websites and CWM Facebook URLs**

<https://www.ssaa.org.au/> If you have the time to read some of the info available to us, it is easier to have informed discussions with non-shooters to break down their perceptions.

Facebook national  
<https://www.facebook.com/ssaa-national/>

### **SSAA TV**

<https://www.ssaa.org.au/ssaa-tv> Tips on cooking (Hunting the menu), shooting and general items like reloading and buying and cleaning rifles.

This video talks about leading your shots with a shot gun – this also applies with flowing through with your shots on running feral targets  
<https://ssaa.org.au/ssaa-tv/how-to-lead-a-target-when-shotgun-shooting>

### **SSAA Gun sales**

<https://ssaagunsales.com/>  
Buying and selling at \$10 for SSAA members.

### **SSAA prize competitions**

<https://ssaa.org.au/publications/competitions> - check as some prizes are only for Hunter or handgun magazine subscribers.

You can even read your latest SSAA magazine online  
<https://ssaa.org.au/publications/australian-shooter>

SSAA Link has sad story of starving roos during the drought  
<https://vimeo.com/317189198>

The Qld SSAA also has a website <https://ssaaqld.org.au/> and Facebook  
<https://www.facebook.com/ssaaqld>

### **CWM Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/cwmqld/>



## Upcoming Activity Dates

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

<http://cwm.ssaqld.org.au/2013/index.php/calendar/2020-calendar>

## CWM Contacts

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

## 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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