



"Preserving Australia's Heritage"

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

September 2018 Newsletter

Message from the CWM President

Leadership Training in the regions

Four of CWM's committee members have been visiting various regional centres in Qld over the past year to deliver training. Over 50 CWM members have attended these training courses where we cover numerous topics over a day and a half, including:

- Why CWM is the 'go to' group for pest animal management for many organisations in Qld.
- Understanding our culture and why it has got us to where we are now.
- Why we look for people who are self motivated, self reliant and highly practical people.
- How best to use our skills to help protect wildlife & habitats.
- How to deal with tricky situations whilst on a project.
- Animal ecology, biology, habits and effective control techniques.

- The importance of post trip reports to our landholder partners.
- How to commence new projects.

Attendees greatly appreciate the case studies where we ran exercises on how they'd deal with challenges or issues. All case studies are based on real situations.

I'm pleased to say that CWM has an enviable track record around safety and accidents. Our only notable accidents over the years have been from car accidents either on the way to or from a project. I would like to express my thanks to everyone for contributing to these excellent statistics.

Our culture of looking for members who are skilled, ethical, practical, self reliant, motivated and respectful goes a long way to our great safety record and reputation.

Quad Bike Legislation

In the last few years quad bikes have been under the spotlight due to deaths and injury.

In previous decades horses may have been similarly implicated, but have declined in comparison as quad bikes are now used by the vast majority of farms. The Qld government has introduced new laws and guidelines in relation to quad bikes. We are in the process of developing guidelines for CWM members in regards to quad bikes. In meantime, please refer to this [WorkCover Qld page](#) for more information.

Spot Lighting Guidelines for CWM

Please read and carefully follow the spotlighting article later in this newsletter.

Damien Ferguson
President (Mob - 0402 424 424)
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South East Report

On a recent Moonie trip, the plan for the lunchtime session was walking the "gilgai's" (melon-holes) country as this generally always produces the occasional fox, but mostly pigs. The first 3 days of the trip we walked 42 km in 34-36°C temperatures.

Whilst out walking with Ken Payne, and as I was new to the property, he took the time to explain and show the places pigs look to bed down during the day to escape the heat. This can vary from tall dense tussocks of cane grass to chewed down pushed up piles of grass as well as the woeful patches of lime bush, "just make sure you walk right through the middle of the melon holes as the pigs will let you get really close before bolting". Never a truer word spoken!



There were four of us in the line, Peter, Sam, Rob and myself spread out over 50m or so when this approximately 80kg boar was flushed out from the melon-holes and was no more than a foot away from me

when it bolted from the tall grass. Now I was wearing electronic ear protection, you know, the type that amplifies sound up to a certain level, so when it let out the first deep grunt as it began to run I nearly had a trouser moment as my heart nearly exploded as the adrenaline

began to pump. With the grass taller than me the pig was 20-30m away before I got my first adrenaline fuelled shot away and missed. I lost sight of him down the next melon-hole and as he re-appeared side on to me at the top, the next shot caught him clean through the shoulders. I radioed the rest of the team in the line and found him in the next melon-hole.

This was a great beast to christen the new 30-30 Marlin. I was using 150 grain Federal ammo, a safari sling and a Vortex 1-6 scope with illuminated reticule. Half an hour later another melon-hole produced 3 pigs, this time I felt one brush my leg as it exited in front of me but it disappeared into thick bush before I could get a shot away.

Another boar was taken the next day whilst we were walking along the tree line. There was a dam at one end with a re-growth melon-hole paddock on one side and a sorghum crop on the other. Again with the aid of the safari sling from Hunting Essentials, one shot from the 30-30 in the



shoulder at 15m was enough to stop him in his tracks.

Ian and I took four pigs out of seven at night with the aid of Pulsar XD50 thermal scopes on our rifles as we stalked up to them in pitch black. Mine is on a 300 Blackout and Ian's on a heavy barrel Howa. We had another 4 pigs that night, a couple of foxes and Ian bagged a monster cat that must have weighed more than 5kg.

Thanks to Ken and Ian and all the members who make this week away an education. CWM has a vast array of members from varying walks of life and if you choose to listen and learn from them as I did, it can make a massive difference to your trip.

Adrian

SE Qld

Many SSAA and CWM members have cut their teeth on this gem of a property, south of Ipswich. Horse shoe shaped, with high timbered ridges to the north and east; over the ridge it is adjoined by a fully timbered nature reserve. So, nominally 2-3 thousand acres in size, it is actually much larger in terms of feral animal and wild dog breeding areas. The property from the ridge to the road comprises a lake, and diminishing slopes. The area is now planted with 'koala food' eucalypt saplings in vehicle wide contours. Up in the hills, vehicle tracks disappear into gullies, around hidden waterholes and up onto the ridges.

The project leader, Owen had the 19 & 20th May organised for an assessment of the presence



of feral animals and the control of rabbit and hare. Daniel from Brisbane with his 22 magnum and 308 was the young blood, with Owen and I having 06's as backup. The afternoon faded quickly after our 1:30 pm start due to map-reading, defining boundaries and all possibilities outlined. The first option was for spotting hare and rabbit. With zero wind and a half moon rising, the rabbits and hare were skittish and no other feral animals were seen. A late show hare, at about 60 paces, ran in and out of the sapling contours and paused long enough for Daniel to dispatch it with the 22 magnum.

Sunday morning involved serious walking and checking for feral animal movements. No fire and brimstone this morning, but some serious potential exists. There had been some pig movements through the washouts and hidden waterholes, and dog tracks were found in other areas.

To get results, in my estimate; a couple of set cameras could be used to check the time of day for pig activity. Wild dogs require trapping and a discrete predator or rabbit whistle and

lots of patience. Up on the ridges, with the closeness of timber, a 30/30 or such with a 2-3x scope would be a good choice. After the walk, we cleared fallen timber from the tracks with 4WD snatch straps and muscle.

By the time Daniel and I departed we appreciated Owen's dedication to this project.

Paul Millist

General articles, stories, tips

Border Force- A radical scheme to fence in and save our native creatures

The Australian bush was once teeming with small native mammals, unique animals that are part of our natural history. Dozens of these once-common species have retreated to tiny pockets and are likely to disappear unless they can be enclosed in predator free areas.

The Bettong was once our most common marsupial; there were hundreds of millions of them,

more than all of the kangaroos. They are now clinging on, with a total population of fewer than 15,000.



The Bridled Nail-tail wallaby were once found over large areas of eastern Australia, ranging inside the Great Dividing Range from Victoria to Charters Towers in Qld. Their numbers have collapsed and were thought to be extinct until a small colony was discovered in the Central highlands of Qld in the 1970s. Their population is now estimated to be just 2300.

The Bilby was once common everywhere west of the Great Divide. The last recorded sighting of one in the wild in NSW was in 1912 near Wagga Wagga. The nearest surviving wild population is 2000km to the north near Boulia in western Qld.

The perpetrators of this decline are wild dogs, feral cats and foxes, which have turned much of Australia into a marsupial graveyard. We have already lost 30 mammal species since European colonization and a further 63 are in peril.

One solution to protect the remaining pockets of vulnerable species is to fence off enclosures, eradicate the wild dogs, cats and foxes from these sites and stock them with the marsupials. There are now six major fenced sanctuaries larger than 1000ha, 11 smaller projects and a further five large scale sanctuaries under construction. Feral proof fencing is being erected around tens of thousands of hectares of bush, which is then cleared of the introduced predators (dogs, cats & foxes) and repopulated with endangered marsupials.

There are pros and cons for these enclosures and is by no means a panacea for a final solution. The pros include that we can preserve essential pockets of the endangered species – a bit like zoos. The cons are that the cost to maintain these enclosures, of the scale required, is very expensive – up to \$50,000k per km.

Genetic variation to maintain viable populations must be carefully managed. Introduced captive bred animals must be able to cope with the prevailing environmental conditions and must be able to forage in harsh conditions.

Feral cat eradication programs have begun on five large islands, including one to rid our third largest, South Australia's Kangaroo Island, of estimated 3-5000 feral cats. Inventive ways of culling them are being trialed, including traps and traps that spray a poisonous gel onto the animal. Detector dogs have been trained to flush cats out from bush land so they can be shot. There is some

hope that biological control of cats may be available soon but as we know of from past experience, there could be unforeseen consequences. For the time being we will trap and hunt them and fence them out.

A précis taken from 'Line in the sand' by Greg Bearup, *Weekend Australian Magazine*, May 26-27, 2018. (Well worth a read. Ed)

What do I need to consider when travelling in the back of a utility vehicle for spotlight hunting purposes as a CWM member?

In Queensland it is generally illegal for passengers to travel on/in any part of a vehicle that is primarily designed for the carriage of goods on any road. A road is defined in the *National Road Rules* (NRR) as being "an area that is open to or used by the public and is developed for, or has as one of its main uses, the driving or riding of motor vehicles". This definition can be narrowly or broadly interpreted, so CWM members must use good sense and judgment to determine if they reasonably believe they are on a 'road', even on private property.

If the 'road' seems to be a thoroughfare for general vehicle use/access, as opposed to a track around a paddock or road/track to a homestead etc, then it is best to err on the side of caution and not have passengers in the rear tray of the vehicle.

If CWM members are confident they are not on a NRR 'road' and wish to have passengers spotlighting and hunting from the rear of the utility vehicle, both drivers and passengers

need to remember they are still bound by the provisions of the - **Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Road Rules) Act and Regulation 2009 (TORUM), Criminal Code 1899(CC) and Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (WHS Act)** - with respect to duty of care obligations and potential liability regarding dangerous operation of a motor vehicle, drink driving, or reckless behaviour etc.

In order to mitigate liability and comply with WHSA obligations the following steps are recommended prior to utility vehicle based spotlighting activities:

- Use good sense and judgment to confirm your belief that you are not on a NRR 'road';
- Drive at no more than 25 km per hour with passengers in the rear of the utility vehicle;
- Ensure the utility vehicle has a safety cage/barrier/rail structure to restrain passengers; and
- Drivers and passengers are to comply with duty of care, traffic regulation and criminal liability obligations at all times.

Inspector Peter Assfalg
Queensland Police Service

Essential Estate Planning for Firearms Owners

Without sounding fatalistic or pessimistic, if you don't have a current will, with an appropriate indication of the beneficiary/s of your firearm/s etc, you could be leaving a potentially heartbreaking problem behind for your family/friends to deal

with. Queensland Weapons Licensing implemented a policy in 2013 in relation to the transfer of firearms from a deceased estate. The policy allows for firearms to be transferred without the need for a permit to acquire if the licence holder acquiring the weapon is the beneficiary of the estate.

Where the licence holder is not the beneficiary of the estate, they are required to make application for a permit to acquire the firearm/s. There is no guarantee that such application will be approved in all prevailing circumstances, interpretation and application of legislation and policy can be subjective at best on occasions.

Irrespective of the situation, in both scenarios the licence holder is required to provide the following documentation to Queensland Weapons Licensing:

- A full copy of the will;
- Copy of the death certificate;
- Completed Queensland Weapons Licensing Indemnity Receipt (link attached); and
- Letter signed by the beneficiary (or all beneficiaries, if more than one (1) in the will) containing:
 - Request to transfer the firearm/s to their licence or the acquirer's licence;
 - Licence details;
 - Details of genuine reason for possessing each and every firearm that they wish to acquire; and
 - Details of the whereabouts of the firearm/s (firearms are not to be held in

safekeeping with an acquirer) pending approval to acquire under this policy or via permit to acquire.

As you can see, some level of planning and effort is required to ensure that your wishes regarding disposition your firearm/s can be carried out with minimal difficulty imposed upon your beneficiaries. Whilst our mortal passing may seem a remote and undesirable outcome, inevitably unexpected accidents, illness or even alien abduction are possible scenarios that would benefit from effective estate planning and presence of a current will. I would urge you not to delay in making appropriate and sensible arrangements.

Further information can be obtained by contacting Queensland Weapons Licence Office on +61 7 3015 7777 during business hours Monday to Friday or email contact available at:
<https://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/weaponslicensing/>

Link to information regarding acquiring firearms from deceased estates:
<https://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/weaponsLicensing/acquiringWeapons/deceasedestates.htm>

Link to the Indemnity Receipt required to acquire firearm/s from a deceased estate:
<https://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/weaponsLicensing/acquiringWeapons/Documents/Weapons%20Licensing%20Indemnity%20Receipt.pdf>

Peter Assfalg

The right gear for the job

Recently I have noticed some really flash gear at the shooting range and out on CWM projects, where pigs are the main target. This gear includes rifles with long, heavy bull barrels, muzzle brakes and scopes with up to 24X magnification. While the cost of such a set-up is enough to make you weep, the question has to be asked - is it the right setup for the intended job at hand?

Unfortunately there is a lot of bad advice out there and sometimes hasty decisions are made that result in a poor caliber/rifle/scope combination being purchased. Often there has been no consideration given to the hunting conditions or the species to be controlled. With ten years' experience hunting pigs at Moonie, I now think I have the right gear for the job and wish I had received good advice when I started.

When hunting pigs at Moonie, it is pointless having a rifle and scope capable of shooting Bharal Sheep across valleys in the Himalayas, when the pigs you will be hunting are lurking in thick bush, at ranges rarely beyond 50m and often erupt at your feet at less than 10m. A target at such close ranges is extremely difficult to locate and follow with a high magnification riflescope, especially a moving target. A heavy barreled rifle is difficult to lug around, especially in the heat of summer, and not easily maneuverable when following a moving target.

Pigs move and they move very rapidly. They often hide out in dense vegetation and the ranges are short. There are



only seconds to react, locate your target and fire, and the action will be fast. There is no time to waste trying to focus a scope or grapple with a heavy rifle. Pigs are intelligent and they are very agile. They will not wait around and give you a second chance. When you have been hunting all day, and you are hot and tired, it can be despairing to miss the one chance you get because you are struggling with impracticable equipment.

Be correctly equipped. Carry a light rifle with a sport barrel. A rifle with an approximate weight of 3.5kg, inclusive of

scope, is about right - there are numerous makes and rifles available in this weight range. I find a scope of 2-7X magnification is ideal. In dense bush my scope is always set to 2X and target acquisition is rapid, while the 7X magnification is available if a longer shot presents itself. Others I hunt with use 1-4X magnification riflescope. Such a setup is light, quick and targets are easily located.

When it comes to caliber and bullet weight, rather go big with pigs. Do not underestimate pigs, they have tusks and they can be dangerous - I have seen them charge when wounded. Boars can be large and often

have thick, gristle shoulder pads - these pads can be 30mm thick. In addition, pigs are often covered in a layer of hard mud. A pig so fortified is a tough target and a lightly constructed bullet at high velocity is inappropriate. High velocity, hollow point bullets can cause severe surface wounds lacking penetration. I consider a 150-180gr soft point bullet traveling at about 2400-2800fps ideal – rather too much bullet than too little. In this regard there is very little point in spending a significant amount of money on a bullet suitable for one of the Big Five, when your bread and butter Pro Hunter, Interlock and Core Lokt bullets work just fine at these velocities. I have recovered Pro Hunter bullets from dead pigs with over 70% weight retention – with emphasis on dead.

We spend a substantial amount of time hunting an intelligent animal and as responsible hunters we have an obligation to dispatch them in a humane manner. Before you spend your hard earned dollars on a rifle/scope combination, make sure you have the right tools for the job.

Adrian Bulley

Hunting pigs is dangerous

<http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/hunters-risking-their-lives-to-stamp-out-feral-pigs/9917170>

Ask any farmer and they'll tell you that feral pigs need eradication because they carry disease and destroy crops. Unlike efforts to control other types of feral animals, there's a growing subculture of people

who enthusiastically do it for free. But does that put pig hunters at risk from the very diseases farmers want gone?

Pigs can be dangerous to catch, but the health hazards don't just end there. Leptospirosis, claimed the life of Alan Clarke, who died at Ipswich in 2011. It's a disease transmitted by feral pigs, cattle and rats. So be aware!!!

Ken Payne story

Driving Long Distance

Due to our chosen pastime, we are sometimes on our own having to drive long distances on straight roads where music and the white line can have a mesmerising effect. On a past Bilby project traveling 1,500 km in convoy with another member, I asked Ray via UHF,

audio book to try and was very happy with it.

I have now done 3 trips of around 4 hrs each way with different books and find myself wide awake and attentive to my driving. These books are on 8 to 9 CDs and for me play over the car stereo for up to 11 hrs. They are also available for you to download on to IPAD, Tablet, MP3 players or an IPOD Nano.

The trips seemed to flow quicker and the only downside was pulling over to change discs or when the book lasted longer than the trip. To finish the book, I then listened in 15 min lots over several days on the way in to and out of town.

We must always be aware of our limitations in trying to fit in as much hunting as possible. Working all day and then



who was on his own, how he was going keeping his attention on the driving. He mentioned he had audio books and podcasts to keep his mind active and alert. I recently went to my local council library and borrowed a Clive Cussler novel

loading up and driving to a project or shooting by day and spotlighting half the night can be very tiring. We should not be driving blurry eyed, and should endeavour to get enough sleep before driving to or departing from a project.

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.

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