



"Preserving Australia's Heritage"

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

March 2020 Newsletter

Message from the CWM Chairman

We conduct many feral animal control operations on land owned by the Qld Gov't. These projects are currently on hold due to a routine Occupational Health and Standards (OH&S) review, including in relation to CWM projects.

This OH&S review is progressing and I'd like to thank members of the CWM executive committee, our members in the regions and the SSAA Qld State executive for their work to date.

These Qld Govt project properties make up about a third of the total of the properties that we work on.

This is a great opportunity for us to think outside the box in building our projects, membership and organisation into the future.

Below are 3 ideas where we are looking to focus our efforts over the coming year.

1. Buffer Zones

CWM has built up a great reputation and working relationship with the Qld Govt

over the past 15 years. Where our projects are based on state owned land, we have progressively built buffer zones around some of these. Feral and pest animals usually inhabit many properties in an area and effective control of them is best done over as large an area is manageable. Our buffer zones have been built by developing relationships with private landholders who are neighbours to state owned land and incorporating their properties into our ongoing projects. One CWM project in southern Qld started with a Qld Gov't property and now has 11 neighbouring private properties including a privately owned Nature Refuge in our regular ongoing control work.

2. Private Property referrals

Some of our projects are based on our members bringing properties to us as they alone can't attend them often and adequately enough to effectively control pest animals. In these circumstances the introducing CWM member is the project leader and maintains the relationship with the landowner/s. They coordinate how often teams attend and who attends depending on

what skills and equipment are required. The introducing member maintains access to that property at all times as they have the relationship. Ideally CWM teams work best on larger properties or multiple properties that cover larger areas.

3. Other Stakeholders

We also conduct work on Bush Heritage Australia properties, Regional Council and private properties that have been coordinated by Natural Resource Management groups. If you have relationships with any of those and there are properties/areas that are having issues with feral animals please contact me and we can talk about the opportunities.

If you have any other suggestions please feel free to call and discuss.

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

Tripod - Moonie's 3 legged porker

This is a little unusual story of our last trip in June for the Moonie Project. As those who attended that project know, there was little action on most properties despite everyone's effort to locate feral animals with long nights behind the spotlight. Animals were scarce but the good company and laughs were plentiful.

I had the pleasure of sharing several properties with a good crew comprising 2 x Georges, Sam, Shane, and our team leader Steve. The property owner came over quite a few times for a yarn and we swapped stories, some tall and some true. After a few nights on the spotlight and a few stalks through the bush we all knew that target species weregame was scarce. Some exclusion fences had been recently erected to stop animals moving through and a new baiting station was being managed by one of the universities as part of a research project in feral pig management.

We had sighted a red deer on one of the properties and had our hopes up, but after conversations with the owner we were advised to leave it in peace as his brother in law had some venison sausages on his wish list and would take care of that for him.

What to do next was the big question. After a phone call to another team leader, also a Steve, we got access to another property for one night. This property had not seen

anyone on it at that stage so we were given the green light to have a go.

A few hours bouncing around in the back of George's ute had bagged only 1 fox after about 4 hours of effort. Bedtime for a few of the crew, but Steve, Shane and I decided to persist for a few more hours and switched over to Steve's ute. Steve was behind the wheel and spotlight; Shane was on the thermal and I was using my new rifle. The action was still slow, but Steve was keen for me to take a fox or two with the new rifle, so we persisted into the small hours of the morning. It was cold and we were glad we were all inside the dual cab ute. We had time for one last lap of a paddock before we called it quits for the night.

Suddenly Shane yelled, "Pig!" He had spotted one on the thermal and it was starting to make tracks away from us. Mine was the only rifle we had ready to go. Steve shone the spotlight onto the pig, and we could see it was hobbling a bit, so potentially injured. A quick decision to put it out of its misery was taken.

To do this pig justice I decided to place my shot just behind its right ear. The scope was cranked up to 7 X for accurate placement. As the pig hobbled at a fair pace up a small rise, I breathed out slowly and squeezed the trigger. The pig went down on the spot. Shane and I decided to do a follow up shot to ensure it was dispatched. After a comedy of attempts to get over the fence that was between us and the pig, we approached the animal lying on the ground. A shot was placed into the top of its

head for the coup de grace and we inspected it.

To our surprise the pig had only 3 legs. Our initial assessment that the pig was injured was incorrect. The pig must have sustained an injury many years ago as the front right leg had a fully healed stump. The hobbling was due to an uneven gait with only 3 legs rather than an injury.

The usual ragging about taking advantage of a pig with a disability ensued for a minute or so but everyone was pleased we had finally bagged a pig on this trip. We estimated maybe up to a 50kg boar, perhaps a few kg heavier if you allow for the 4th leg.

I am not sure how the pig was counted on the tally sheet i.e. 1 or $\frac{3}{4}$ but that was for someone else to decide. I had bagged a pig on the trip and was happy to have removed another feral from the environment.

Greg J

Townsville Report

Einasleigh Uplands Project

The Einasleigh Project is a large property about 17km north-to-south and 30km east-to-west. Paul H is the on-site manager and also the CWM project leader. CWM has some excellent resources for this project including GPS waypoints and an A1 size 1:50,000 scale map which I had printed at Officeworks. David S and I travelled there in mid-June for induction and then a four-day trip. David had previously attended the Cooktown Project and I'd been to Badjuballa/Mt Garnet project.

We travelled in convoy from Cairns arriving around 1030 and set up at the very well-appointed Sunday Creek Camp where Paul conducted a comprehensive induction and safety brief and issued us with individual GPS trackers and a sat phone. He also provided good guidance on no-go areas due to road conditions, and recent pig and cat sightings. The weather was cloudy with constant light rain/drizzle, and the temperature hovered between 14 and 24 degrees all weekend. We decided to spend the first couple of days getting familiar with the property and road network and checking out the sighting locations. After Paul's brief we spent the rest of the day exploring the central area of the property and conducted spotlighting in the Camp environs in the evening, but nothing was seen.

The next morning, we explored the central eastern area observing fresh cat and pig tracks on the roads. In the afternoon we explored the south western corner checking out some small dams but detected no recent sign. On the southern edge of Rocky Lagoon, which is right on the western boundary and few hundred metres from the Herbert River, we observed pig tracks and wallows that were a few days old. Just off the track near the lagoon we inspected a small waterhole where we found multiple recent tracks, rooting and wallows. We installed a trail cam and then proceeded to the southern crossing of a Creek where pig tracks and wallows were evident, maybe a day or two old. We backtracked to about 300m west of the small waterhole and approached on

foot from the downwind side at around 1630. We waited overlooking the waterhole for 30 mins but nothing was seen. That evening we spotlighted along the burnt edges of the tracks within a couple of kms of the camp where we saw one large black cat on the road, but it escaped into the long grass before we could react.



The following day we investigated the south eastern extremity where we left the car and walked the final two kms towards an area of previous pig sightings. This edge of the property abuts a National Park and the terrain is much steeper with denser, rain forest-like vegetation. We saw fresh dog tracks and the remains of four pigs culled by another group a couple of weeks earlier. After lunch we returned to the south west corner with a plan to park downwind of yesterday's recent sign and stalk forward. We arrived overlooking the waterhole at around 1600 just as two large sows appeared out

of the scrub from the opposite side. I took one sow with my Adler A110 using OOSG and David took the other with his Sako/Nightforce rig in 308. We took DNA samples then checked the trail cam which showed no activity. In the evening we spot lighted and used Paul's thermal along burned areas in the north east,

concentrating on where we had seen fresh cat tracks yesterday, but nothing was seen.

The next day we explored the northern area along the boundary fence, but this was unproductive. This area is very steep with multiple small escarpments. In the early afternoon we again visited the south west to investigate the northern reaches of Basalt Creek where Paul said pigs had been sighted. We walked north along the watercourse for about one km observing some recent (week old?) pig tracks and rooting near some of the many water holes along the creek

line, some of which were deep and tree shaded, and might contain water into the dry season. This could be a good area to explore once the land dries out and the smaller waterholes diminish. (Note: we returned to the project in mid-August and surprised a group of four in the creek, and got two of them).

We then backtracked to again approach yesterday's waterhole from downwind. This day was warmer than the previous day so we thought pigs might be out earlier. We again parked downwind and walked up, arriving at around 1445 where we surprised a large boar wallowing. We both shot at him (I was using my Remington 7600 in 308 with Aimpoint red dot) and, clearly hit, he took off. We followed up and found him around 30m away where he was dispatched, and we took a DNA sample. That evening Paul and his wife Leeanne kindly hosted a BBQ for us and some other BHA volunteers.

We had an excellent trip on a beautiful property. There was a lot of surface water with a proliferation of waterholes. We observed plenty of pig sign so later in the dry season might provide an opportunity to see them concentrating at the more persistent water sources. There are CWM groups here almost every fortnight but the property's size, number of watercourses and proximity to both the Herbert River and National Park mean that there is an abundance of pig-friendly habitat. We observed dog and cat sign across the breadth of the property, but they are far more difficult to find and engage. For our next trip and for others planning to visit, we learnt some important lessons:

study previous trip reports on the CWM web drive, they provide good insights into what did and didn't work; drive less and walk more along creek lines; and spend more time and be more patient at night trying to eradicate cats. Keen to get back!

John Paterson

General articles, stories, tips

Ferals feeding natives

Not so long ago there was an email sent out asking people, if they had access to a property that had rabbits, and to bring rabbits back for a wildlife carer to feed a Wedgetail eagle. I made contact with the number supplied in the email, and was put in contact with Mel Pope who runs 'Kobble Bird Shelter'. Mel has been a wildlife carer since she was young and, over the last 5 years, has been a specialist Raptor carer.

I am with a group that has access to a property around Stanthorpe which has a lot of rabbits. I try to get down to the Stanthorpe property about every 6 weeks or so. On most occasions, we are able to shoot 100 or more rabbits in an evening. One group of shooters use these animals as much as possible - eating the meat and not wasting it. Usually that is not hard, but when we get numbers like that, it is difficult to find something to do with them all. I thought what a great chance to do something with all these rabbits and save Mel some money by supplying free rabbits to feed the birds.

I contacted Mel and told her all about what we do and that I would be happy to drop off some rabbits after I had been down there. As it was Christmas, I was limited to how many I could keep cold on my way home, where I could freeze them.

I met up with Mel and she showed me around. All the birds she has in her care range from Owls, Cockatoos, Kites, Eagles and all sorts of native birds. Mel has quite a number of birds in her care and most get released back to the wild. The few that don't get released are rehomed for breeding and education. The feeding of all these birds comes out of Mel's pocket, without any government funding she is often left to fund it herself or rely on donations. Each Wedgetail Eagle eats a rabbit a day. The average cost of rehabilitation (excluding major injuries) can be \$600 – \$1000 per animal. Mel is about to build another large specialised Raptor enclosure.

A few CWM members have now joined me to help supply rabbits to Mel. Each rabbit is required to be head shot, gutted and then frozen.

A good friend of Mel's has a wildlife education centre and they too are also looking for some rabbits to feed their raptors

If anyone has access to a property that has rabbits and is looking for something to do with them, look up your local wildlife carer or, if you are in Brisbane, call me and I can come and pick them up.

John Cosgrove
0420901197

How to locate your partner when separated on a walk.

When working in pairs in thick bush, it is easy to lose sight of your hunting partner. In this case you stop and call your partner on your radio, asking him/her if they can see you. If they cannot see you, you both need to find out where each other is before the hunt can continue.

A relatively simple way is to call out and zero in on the voices but that may drive off any target animals or you may be too far apart to hear. Another is to obtain the grid reference from each other by radio comms and, using your map, locate each other. If you do not have a map, you can still use these coordinates to get a distance and direction to each other.

This method assumes you both have the same position format and datum in your respective gps'. ie UTM (UPS) and WGS 84 or GDA 94. It is also basic to realize that the Eastings and Northings are units in metres that increase from West to East and South to North respectively. The full Eastings and Northings are seven digits long but a 0 is often not shown in front of the Eastings. One would assume that as partners you are less than 1 Km apart from each other. In which case, we only need the four right hand numbers of the coordinates.

Comparing your RHS four Easting numbers with your partner's four Easting numbers gives a difference in metres, East (if the difference is positive) or West (if the difference is negative) of you.

Similarly, the difference in the four Northing numbers between you and your partners will give a distance in metres North (if positive) or South (if negative). This gives you an indication of where your partner is relative to you. For example: your partner is 355m North of you and 180m to the East, you should head in a NNE direction to meet up.

You could of course, put your partners coordinates into your gps and use the Go to button to direct you.
Ted (Editor)

Paul's new toy

There was a time when the Bruno .22lr at 1350 FPS was the stock in trade of professional rabbit shooters. A zero at 75 yds gives a 4 inch low at 100 yds. With a Rimfire case, reloading is not necessary. There has been a better option on the block for a few years now.

It is the .17 Hornady Rimfire Magnum. It is a seriously accurate cartridge. With a 17/20 projectile and 2650fps velocity, it whistles. Zero recoil and zeroed at 100 yds, it is 2.6

no issues on brass retention for reloads. CZ offer a stunning thumbhole, varmint barrel with a classy laminated stock.

Other stock options are available and a straight pull bolt as well. My choice was the thumbhole model bolt action. This bolt is similar to my Brno CZ model 5 in 22lr. In careful hands the 17 HMR is a serious pest killer to at least 150 yds.
Paul Millist

Ken Payne story

Using drones to remotely plant trees

A fantastic idea to repopulate our forests ravaged by bushfires,

An Australian engineer is hoping to use drones to plant 1 billion trees every year to fight deforestation.

Key points:

- The drone system fires germinated seeds into soil.
- Drones can plant in areas previously impossible to reach, like steep hills.



inches low at 150 yds. As with the .22, it is a rimfire, so cases can be recycled for scrap with

The technology could also help rehabilitate land once used by mines

Deforestation and forest degradation make up 17 per cent of the world's carbon emissions — more than the entire world's transportation sector, according to the United Nations.

Burned or cleared forests release their stored carbon dioxide into the atmosphere, and land restoration experts say technology must play a big part in addressing the problem.

Dr Susan Graham has helped build a drone system that can scan the land, identify ideal places to grow trees, and then fire germinated seeds into the soil. Now based in Oxford in the United Kingdom, she is working with an international team including an ex-NASA engineer who worked on the search for life on Mars. Their company, BioCarbon Engineering, is backed by one of the world's largest drone makers'

(Extract from ABC's Science and Technology reporter Jake Sturmer). (2017).

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-06-25/the-plan-to-plant-nearly-100,000-trees-a-day-with-drones/8642766>

ABC landline Feral program videos.

There is some good info and footage on the damage done by dogs, cats, goats, rabbits, pigs, deer, brumbies, camels and carp. Each one is only about 10 min. Even shows footage of SSAA members helping in SA on the goat eradication program. The more we know the easier it is to discuss with the non-shooting community.

<https://iview.abc.net.au/show/meet-the-ferals>

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://ssaagld.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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