



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

"Preserving Australia's Heritage"

SSAA (Qld) Inc Hunting & Conservation Division

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HUNTING & CONSERVATION NEWS ***March 2007 Edition***

Old State Co-ordinator's Note

Dear Members,

Over the last couple of months I have had many discussions with Geoff Jones and Mark Woods with regards to my continuing as State Co-ordinator.

As a result of these discussions I would like to stand down from the position of State Coordinator of H&C Qld. I feel the time has come for me to make a proper decision to allow us to move forward with more certainty. As you are all aware the challenges of coping with a new business and the health problems that I have faced with my Father's fight with asbestos related cancer along with my own problems relating to my injury from Timor have led me to take a back seat over the last 2 years.

I remain deeply committed to what we are achieving and wish to remain on the committee and provide assistance and support when I can but for the foreseeable future I cannot give the kind of time to the role that its importance deserves. As a result I would like to hand the reigns over to Mark Woods and let him develop into the role with the sort of permanence the role needs.

As I have stated, I remain deeply committed to our path and wish to remain a valued member of the group here in Queensland. As my circumstances change I will seek to carry out a more active role where possible and provide the level of support that I was providing a couple of years ago. I want to

thank you all for your support, friendship and camaraderie especially through the last 2 years which has been one of the most challenging of my adult life.

Regards
Brett Robertson
Old State Co-ordinator

Welcome to New Members

We look forward to seeing you out at our Training and Development weekends and on the various activities in the coming months.

New Faces in the Central Region

Please welcome **Bill Sandeman** on board. He will be responsible for coordinating projects and conducting Accreditation courses in Emerald and surrounding areas. Bill is a Certificate IV Trainer and has been a H&C member for 3 years and has quite an extensive hunting background, originally coming off the land. If you are in Bill's area and have not done your Accreditation course or have a possible contact please call Bill on 07 49877855 or mobile 0429 877 855.

Membership Renewal

It has come to that time of the year again. Everyone please remember that your fees are due by March 31st. A membership renewal form is attached which has the address on it.

For those with family members there is a Family rate of \$65, but remember that they need to be S.S.A.A. members as well.

Please write your email and phone number clearly so that we can contact you for upcoming short notice activities.

Advertising

We are trialling an advertisements page at the end of the newsletter, for anything members have to sell. These items do not have to be firearms related.

However, if you are listing any firearms related items, you need to include your Firearms Licence Number and the Serial Number (if applicable).

At this stage there will be zero cost, but if you are wishing to make a small donation towards the running costs of putting out the newsletter it would be appreciated.

The Committee

Conservation Matters

Rufous Bettong - *Aepyprymnus rufescens*
A member of the potoroidae family
Other Common Names: Rufous Rat-kangaroo

Those of you who have been out on the Avocet Project will have seen these beautiful creatures living alongside our Bridle-Nailtail Wallabies. We thought we would tell you a bit more about them.

Size: head and body length 375-390mm, tail length: 338-387mm, weight: males up to 3kg and females up to 3.5kg, Distinguished from other macropods of comparable size by reddish-brown fur and hairy muzzle

The Rufous Bettong is now perhaps the most widely distributed potoroid, although this was not the case prior to European settlement. It occupies a variety of habitats from coastal eucalypt forests, through tall, wet sclerophyll, to low, dry open woodlands westward of the Great Dividing Range. It seems to only occupy areas with a sparse or grassy understorey.

Nests are built of fibrous vegetation in a shallow excavation and consist of conical dome with a single entrance. These are generally placed against a log, tree or grass clump but may be in open ground. Up to five nests may be used at any one time and new nests are added as old ones are abandoned on a regular (monthly) basis. The Rufous Bettong emerges from its nest about 40 min after sunset and spends the night browsing on herbs and grasses and digging for roots and tubers. Often, entire plants including flowers, seeds, root and leaves are devoured. Occasionally, it eats exudates from trees such as *Melaleuca nervosa*. Relatively more time is spent feeding on roots and tubers during dry times when browse is sparse. In areas where underground fungi are abundant, these also contribute to the diet. Bones of dead animals are visited and chewed on a regular basis. Although not usually needing to drink free water, the Rufous Bettong has been known to do so during drought.

Home ranges are large, Males: 75-110 hectares Females: 45-60 hectares, travelling 2-4.5 km in a normal nights feeding, males spend much of their time associating with one to two females, these females associate exclusively with (and may be defended by) that male.

Gestation period 22-24 days and leaves the pouch permanently at about 112 days then remains by the mothers side for about 50 days.

Reference: Strahan R (Ed) *The Mammals of Australia*, Reed New Holland, Australia, 2002, pp.285-286.

A Conservation update

As we all seem to come from a vast array of working backgrounds, we are looking for anyone who has a degree or sound working knowledge in the many aspects of the conservation field to help us in an advisory capacity on our various projects. If you are interested in helping in this way please feel free to contact me. Alternatively, if you know someone who might be interested, but does not belong to H&C then feel free to give them my contact details (Available at the end of the newsletter.)

Remember we can collect samples from foxes we have shot, trapped or found as roadkill. Fox samples should be no older than three to four days before being put in the specimen bottle. **The kits are available from Mark Woods.** The samples should be returned to me at my home address: 22 Celosia Street, Daisy Hill, 4127.

P.S Please remember to return the vials. Don't wait for the next fox.

For more information please go to the website: www.foxDNA.animals.uwa.edu.au.

Mark Woods
Qld State H&C Training Officer.

Thoughts and hints

When hand loading, consistency in procedure and components is essential to achieving a safe and accurate load.

Muzzle direction awareness is an essential rifle safety skill.

If you use a hard case to transport your rifles, bring a soft case as well to use on location when your rifle is in a vehicle but not in immediate use.

When buying a water bladder look for one with a tap and a cover over the mouthpiece. Taps stop the mouthpiece leaking when loads are put on it. Covers do the same and keep dirt off of the mouthpiece.

Do not use high heat when cooking with a camp oven. Excessive heat followed by rapid

cooling can cause the cast iron to crack. Even cool night air can have this effect. Excessive heat also takes the coating off of your oven.

When putting positions into a GPA make sure that your GPS is set to the datum that the position was originally recorded in.

When travelling on the back of a vehicle keep as close to the front of the tray as you can. The further back you stand the greater the leverage effect when travelling over sharp bumps and it is possible to be launched in the air given a suitable bump.

A sight of interest <http://www.feral.org.au/>

Training focus

When shooting multiple shots with a bolt action rifle practise keeping your rifle up on your shoulder when working the bolt or lever action.

When you take the rifle off of your shoulder you lose time in physically removing and replacing the rifle and in reacquiring the sight picture. Continually repositioning the rifle also increases your chance of not properly shouldering your rifle.

To further assist with overall shooting effectiveness, open your other eye to keep track of the target while you are working the bolt.

This is a skill that will take a lot of practice but will come in handy when you come across a mob of ferals.

Happy Hunting
From Mark Woods
State Training and Logistics Officer

To the members of the Northern region.

Don't forget - if you think you might have a possible lead or contact for Ross Harvey, Bill Sandeman or Geoff Sloman to follow up don't hesitate to pass it on. Also, if you have some spare time to help them organise things up there please give them a call - as the southern region found out, it takes quite a few people to make it all happen. Some put a little in, some put a lot in but in the end that's what makes it all happen!

Mark Woods
Old State Training and Logistics Coordinator.

An extra set of eyes.....

You know your local area better than anyone and should be aware of what looks out of place. As members of Hunting and Conservation we should pay a little more attention to our environmental surroundings than your average hunter or bushwalker.

Spotting a plant, weed or strange insect that you haven't noticed before could mean something is up. However just because you haven't seen it before doesn't necessarily mean it is exotic. Before we can know what's out of place, we should first learn about what is common and what species are native or common to an area of operations

Things to watch out for include:

- Birds that are slow to fly off and possibly remain on the water in close proximity to your location (may only indicate young naive birds)
- Any unusual signs such as large numbers of carcasses in a particular area for no apparent reason
- Ulcers or blisters in between hooves and or around the mouth of pigs, goats, deer and buffalo particularly the snout.
- Animals in poor condition for no apparent reason (eg when other animals of the same species are in good condition, plentiful food supply and age/injury not a factor)

- Strange nervous signs such as difficulty walking or strange gait
- Large numbers of fish kill
- Dieback in trees or shrubs of similar species

Not only are we doing our native environment a favour by getting out and culling feral species, but the C in H&C stands for conservation, and that means learning about our ecosystems and what other things we can be doing when the shooting slows down. Learn your environment, learn about what belongs and what doesn't, and go by the motto 'Look, check, ask a Vet'.

Any animal or plant diseases can be reported toll free to the Emergency Animal Disease hotline 1800 675 888.

Have a look at the website www.outbreak.gov.au and check out the pest and disease information.

Andrew Donaldson

Cooks Corner

Southern Fried Rabbit

Ingredients

Tandaco Southern Fried Chicken coating
Rabbits (preferably dead AND headshot)

Method

Bone out and cut into bite size chunks (2-3 centimeters).

Put the coating in a plastic bag then add a handful of diced rabbit and shake well until well coated.

Cook on high heat with olive oil until golden brown. Be careful not to overcook as the rabbit can go somewhat dry.

Happy Cooking,
Marks Woods

Avocet Report

Well we said that we wanted some rain up at Avocet and by god did we get it - 208mm in one storm plus other smaller showers which filled most dams. Most of the tracks have copped a fair bit of damage as well as some of the fences, so we may have a little repair work to do when we get up there at Easter and the following week. If you want to be part of a project where the whole family can participate, give Mark Woods or Bill Sandeman a call to book a place for the whole family.

The Avocet Team

Stewartdale Report

Recently we picked up one of those elusive foxes which was taken by one of our junior members and I believe you still can't wipe the smile of his face. (Congratulations – a job well done!!) We have still been taking a few hares on each activity and it has been quite encouraging to see some new members coming out to see how some of the projects are run and be part of the project. Remember if you have done your accreditation but not your Shooting qualification targets, you can still attend and get a feel for how things are done as there is plenty to be done apart from shooting (eg driving, spotlighting and observers)

David Gottschalk
SE Qld Co-ordinator and Activities Co-ordinator

Northern Regions (Townsville) Report

After a wet January, we are on the move again, although very slowly as we are still getting rainy days.

Late last year, two new members passed the accreditation course and there have been several enquiries, including some from the Burdekin.

Accreditation courses are scheduled for July and September, but other courses can be run

if numbers permit. In the meantime, we practice and have a training session every fourth Saturday at 1.00 PM at the Hervey Range Road complex. I have some offers from a variety of specialists to help with the training sessions so there will be some interesting sessions

By the time this goes to print I will have been in contact with James Cook University (Veterinary Science), CSIRO, Dalrymple and Richmond shire councils and given a presentation to Flinders Shire Councils Wild Dog Management meeting and to Department of Natural Resources and Water's regional Land Protection Officers meeting, so hopefully there will be a project up and running soon

Geoff Sloman
Townsville Training Officer

Southern Training Weekends

This will be my last time as State Training Officer, as I am stepping down to take up the State Coordinators position full-time.

I'd like to thank everyone for their support in helping to make the training weekends so successful. I have seen some vast improvements in a lot of you over the last couple of years – with many of you changing from average shooters to experienced marksmen. Some of you have gone on to take up other disciplines. This I feel has helped in the journey of trying to be the best we can be.

If you are interested in a very fulfilling role in Hunting and Conservation (Qld) then stepping into this role might be for you. As always I will be there to support anyone in whatever part they choose to play in this organisation. For us to be successful as an organisation we all must work as a team.

Now on to the fun stuff....

Our training weekend on 17th & 18th of March will be as full on as always. First up we will have First Aid with resuscitation practice with Brett Robinson. Then Phil Brooks will be giving a talk on Hunting in New Zealand – the

pros and cons, and the things you need to be aware of. We will break for lunch at 12:00 and then head down the range at 12:30 for some shotgun and rifle work, and yes, you will need most of your gun cupboard – the small, the medium and the large. We will plan on returning from the range around 7:30 – 8:00 p.m. for an evening of camaraderie.

Sunday morning, subject to weather and providing that we have not had a lot of recent rain, we will be doing wetland restoration work. Please make sure you stick around for this as it is our very own wetlands and Bundamba Lagoon plays a significant part in the Bundamba wetlands which runs through the greater part of Ipswich Shire.

Look forward to seeing you all there.

Mark Woods
Qld State H&C Training Officer.

Upcoming Dates

Be sure to mark these dates in your diary and plan to come along. You never know – you might just be free on that date.

Hunting Activities

Attendance at activities must be arranged with the team leader as most activities will have a safe operating limit.

Avocet - Project Flashjack

Location: Avocet – Emerald

Species: Cats, dogs, foxes

Calibres: 17HMR upwards

Dates: 6th– 14th April 2007

Dates: 22nd-30th Sept 2007

Team Leader: Mark Woods

0438 098 469, 3808 4881

Stewartdale Wetlands Preservation

Mostly an afternoon/evening activity

Location: Ripley Rifle Range

Species: Dogs, foxes, cats, (hares maybe)

Calibres: centrefires to 22-250 or .22mag or 17HMR only

Dates - 2007: 3rd March

7th April

5th May

2nd June

7th July

4th Aug

1st Sept

6th Oct

3rd Nov

1st Dec

Team Leader: David Gottschalk 3849 8869

Training Activities

Southern Region

17th – 18th March 2007 – Ripley Range

16th – 17th June 2007 – Ripley Range

15th – 16th September 2007 – Ripley Range

17th – 18th November 2007 – Ripley Range

Northern Region

Townsville

24th March 2007

21st April 2007

26th May 2007

23rd June 2007

21st July 2007

25th August 2007

22nd September 2007

27th October 2007

24th November 2007

Accreditation Courses

Members of the northern region you can do your shooting qualification targets at any range as long as you are observed by a range operator or range officer and that they sign it as so

Any members wishing to do the theory part of the accreditation course should contact their Regional Training Officer as listed below

Northern Region

Townsville and surrounding area

Geoff Sloman on 4723 8852.

Cairns and surrounding area

Ross Harvey on 4057 8868 or 0418 199 505

Central Region

Emerald and surrounding area

Bill Sandeman on 4987 7855 or 0429 877 855

Southern Region

Marks Woods on 0438 098 469 or 3808 4881.

H&C Contacts

H&C QLD Office

Office: 266 Brisbane Street,
West Ipswich, Qld 4305

Phone: (07) 3202 2111

Email: handc@ssaqlld.org.au

Mark Woods

State Coordinator

Phone: 0438 098 469 or 3808 4881

Email: markwoods2@bigpond.com

Jack Kearney

Conservation Biologist

Email: wildbird@aapt.net.au

Mark Woods

Interim State Training and Logistics Co-ordinator

Phone: 0438 098 469 or 3808 4881

Email: markwoods2@bigpond.com

Owen McIntyre

State Activity Coordinator

Phone: 0417 615 505

Email: owenmcintyre@optusnet.com.au

David Gottschalk

SE QLD Activity Coordinator

Phone: 3849 8869

Email: dgottschalk@optushome.com.au

Bill Sandeman

H&C Emerald Training Officer

Phone: 49877855 or 0429 877 855

Email:

Geoff Sloman

H&C Townsville Training Officer

Phone: (07) 4723 8852

Email: geoffms@yourhub.com.au

Ross Harvey

H&C North QLD Co-ordinator

Phone: (07) 4057 8868 or 0418 199 505

Email: ross.harvey@originenergy.com.au

Doug Harvey

Phone: (07) 4057 8868

Email: ross.harvey@originenergy.com.au

Joe Pezzotti

H&C North QLD Training Officer

Phone: (07) 4062 5404

Email: joemauser98@bigpond.com

Did you receive this newsletter via Australia Post? Do you have an email address? To receive your newsletter faster and to be kept up to date with what is going on make sure that we have your email address on our mailing list! (Keep in mind there needs to be room in your mailbox to receive mail.)

Weed Extra 4!!

Giant Rats Tail Grass

Invasion of the Sporobolus Species!

Once upon a time Buffel Grass took over the nation. People looked the other way, because it had such sweet qualities like: carpeting the dust with greenery; delighting the eye with its soft mauve fox-tail seed-head-puffs and feeding our bovine feed source long before any of the noxious native Aussie plants poked through in Spring. Buffel was warmly embraced as a good sport and a good sort with only a few sorts of issues... one of our mates.

Now its reign may be in jeopardy thanks to an equally alien and aggressive set of grasses – Sporobolus species... better known as Rats Tail Grasses. These guys are a little less palatable, in more ways than one.

The Giant Rats Tail Grasses (GRTs – *S. natalensis*, *S. pyramidalis* and *S. jacquemontii*), slowly inching their way up and down the coast between Cape York to the Central Coast (NSW) have almost no value as a pasture, being coarse, dry and almost without nutritive value.

Parramatta grasses (*S. Indicus* and *S. fertilis*) have sticky black seed spikes which will attach to anything, making them even more unpleasant. These species have migrated in a Southerly direction, stretching from Brisbane down to Adelaide, since the 1800's.

Where Buffel likes his red soils, Sporobolus can handle a wide range of soil types, with the potential to colonise 30% of the country and up to 60% of Queensland. Rats Tail Grasses attack strategy is simple: stick together in hardy tussocks; demoralise already weakened grasslands; quickly mop up any missed spots with INFANTry (i.e, seed drops). This infantry is nothing to sneeze at, landing as they do in numbers of the order of 2 000 to 20 000 seeds/m²! Mode of dispersal: very nicely on vehicles and in apparel and gear of native and naturalised species of Homo sapien. The seed transports well once damp as it becomes sticky and attaches to just about anything. They also

infiltrate other seed moving around legitimately as grain.

In short, if there were ever an invader to fear, Sporobolus would be among the top nominees to keep an eye on: a weed in anyone's eyes.

So a question to ponder, for all those conservationists and hunters who like to get out in the scrub, might be, '**Could I be aiding and abetting a foreign aggressive invader?**' If you cannot rightly answer yourself in this regard, remember to follow guidelines set out in the H&C Code of Practice for preventing weed spread.

It is important to know what you're dealing with. Firstly, what do these Sporobolii look like? The pictures below are close ups of Giant Rats Tail grass seed heads (those you're most likely to encounter in Southern Queensland).



GRT picture above and below courtesy QNR&W, 'Weedy Sporobolus Grass Strategy'.



handy. Know what to look for, how it is best managed and share this with those who can take action beyond our capacity.

Note from the author:

To everyone at H&C Old, it has been SUCH a pleasure working and learning with you. I'm sure you will hear of me down the track, whether in the capacity of a weedy nerd, a darn pest, or a shootin' environmentalist. Thanks for everything!!!

Kathleen Macdonald.

The most peculiar feature of this weeds line of attack is the long thin inflorescence or seed head. These appear as if the grasses literally have rat tails sticking out of them. However, Rats Tail grass looks like any other Tussock. Hence communication with landholders of weeds known to exist in an area is essential.

Finally, know the enemy inside out, not only its camouflage. The QLD 'Weedy Sporobolus Grasses Strategy' notes the following weaknesses as prime points of attack:-

1. Seed germination and establishment is sensitive to pasture competition
2. Fire can remove a significant part of the seed bank (but seedling recruitment can be significant),
3. These grasses are sensitive to glyphosate whereas some sown pastures are relatively tolerant,
4. Seed transport is largely under human control and can be reduced substantially,
5. Pasture species are available which can retard establishment, and
6. Managing pastures to retain them in good condition, can retard these sporobolus grasses.

Not all landholders will be aware of the presence of the grass.

While H&C members may only practically make an impact via the 4th weakness, you never know when this insight might be

ADVERTISING PAGES

FOR SALE (Gary)

Factory Ammo		Hogue rubber grips fit Ruger Redhawk	\$10.00
.45 ACP		Pistol Rest-sighting in etc	\$25.00
20 Win RN 230 gn	\$15.00		
10 Shotshells x 2 boxes	\$10.00	Rifle Stocks	
		Genuine Ruger plastic stock from M77 MK II short action	\$40.00
Mixed box approx. 50 rounds	\$15.00	Ramline stock for Ruger M77 MK I short action (New)	\$50.00
9 mm.			
50 NORMA 118gn RN	\$20.00	Full military wood for 6.5 x 55 Swedish Mauser- includes all hardware	\$50.00
100 mixed 147gn SWC	\$20.00	Sporter stock suit 6.5x55 Swede (from military original-Acraglas Bedded, oil finish, recoil pad)	\$35.00
35 Win. 115gn FMJ	\$12.00		
15 mixed shot shells	\$5.00	Rifle and Pistol scopes	
		Tasco 4-16 x 40 Silver--as new	\$200.00
.38 S&W		Tasco 3-9 x 40 Black	\$85.00
29 145gn lead cartridges	\$10.00	Tasco 4 x 32 fixed-Black	\$35.00
21 cases		Tasco 1.5 x 20 Pistol Scope- Black	\$35.00
		Simmons 3-9 x 32 Black	\$25.00
Projectiles-.45 ACP:-		Reloading equipment	
330 CBM 175gr SWC Lead	\$30.00	Hornaday .223 full length rifle die set	\$20.00
200 Ranier 230gr RN "Lead Safe"	\$25.00	Lee .45 ACP pistol die set	\$20.00
		Lee .45 ACP Factory crimp die	\$15.00
Pistol "stuff"		Lee 9mm Factory crimp die	\$15.00
Pistol case-soft zippered	\$10.00	Lee .308 Factory crimp die	\$15.00
Cabela's "Sack-ups" pistol sack	\$5.00	Lee Load-all 12ga reloader	\$30.00
Original hard case Ruger P85	\$2.00	Lee Load-all 12ga Primer Feed	\$10.00
Original hard case Para P14	\$2.00		
Stainless .45 ACP magazines		All located at Gold Coast	
2 x 7 round	\$25.00		
Leather holster suit 1911	\$15.00		
Cordura holster suit .44 Mag.	\$10.00		
Speed loader Ruger Redhawk	\$5.00		

Call Gary 0416 833 866 any time

FOR SALE (Bryan)

Steyr Scout .223 (S/No: SC 1032849). Includes Leupold VX-II 6-18x40 Long range target in Leupold QR-w mounts. This rifle has 1in8" twist barrel ,built in tripod, spare magazine onboard and consistently shoots 55gn ballistic tips into 0.5 MOA. It has logged 358rounds fired since new. Cost well over \$3000.00 Lic no: 10078407.	\$2100.00 firm
Steyr Scout .376Steyr (S/No: SC 1004984). Includes Leupold VX-II 2-7x33 in Leupold QR-w mounts. This rifle is in as-new condition and has fired 28 rounds since new. Included are nearly 200 cases, mostly unfired. Cost around \$3000 Lic no: 10078407	\$2000.00 firm.
Mauser 98 (FN Belgium manufacture) 30-06,(S/No 2206). New matt blued	\$700.00 firm.

varmint weight barrel (fired approx 390 rds), mag-na-ported, timney adjustable trigger, bridge mount w/1inch rings, Piers synthetic stock w/recoil pad. Rifle delivered w/200 once-fired WIN cases. Lic no: 10078407.	
SMLE No4 Calibre 7.62NATO(.308). Wood in above average condition w/bore in good order. This rifle was purchased for use in military service matches but never used as I have ended up shooting sniper/tactical class with my Steyr.308. (S/No: L2291) Lic no: 10078407.	\$500.00 firm.
Leupold VX-III 3.5-10x40 Adjustable Objective, Gloss Black. VGC	\$500.00
Bushnell Yardage Pro 500 Laser rangefinder. Very little use.	\$200.00