

ADA Brisbane Branch

Rubs N Roars Newsletter: June 2026



Susan Hani with a fallow doe – her first deer. Great work Susan!

As always, each newsletter cover photo winner earns a highly-coveted ADA stubby cooler. Coolers can be picked up at the next branch meeting.

*** We are always looking for fresh content for the ADA Brisbane newsletter ***

Photos, hunt stories, recipes or product reviews or perhaps you have a new idea – It's always great to hear from our members, new and old.

All article submissions received in the 2026 calendar year will go into the running to win free participation in one of the 2027 branch paid property hunts.

(Winner to be announced at the Christmas party)

To enter, send your submissions to brisbane.editor@austdeer.asn.au

Upcoming branch meetings:

- **Friday 5 June – Branch Annual General Meeting and:**
Topic: ADA Brisbane Member Steve Bailey discussing hunting in southern Africa
- **Friday 19 June – Committee Meeting** (all welcome to attend)

6:30pm for 7pm start at ADA Clubhouse @ SSAA Complex - 292 Mt Petrie Road, Belmont QLD 4153

From The President: Greg Rashford



It's been an amazing year for hunting as attested to by the number of presenters at our May meeting. The 6 presenters bagged a total of 10 animals and some lifelong memories over a very successful rut. Many thanks and congratulations go to Craig Tindale, Rob Gordon, Darryl Bulger, Brian Slatter, Greg Keegan and Craig Ashdown for the excellent presentations and stories of your hunts.

Our June 5th Meeting will feature Steve Bailey discussing the ins and outs of hunting in southern Africa. Steve has a wealth of

knowledge that he is happy to share. Anyone with a casual interest in hunting has been entertained by the stories of Bell, Selous, Sutherland, Capstick et al and will enjoy hearing more about the modern-day version of hunting safaris in this resource rich region.

Have you ever considered submitting a Newsletter article to our Editor, Michael? Submissions can be on any topic – dream hunting destination, favourite animals, recipes, product reviews, tips/tricks etc. The options are endless and it's a great way to network and establish a conversation starter. Authors of newsletter submissions published during the year will go into the draw for a free guided Fallow Deer Hunt in 2027. All we ask is that submissions include photos, graphs, tables etc to provide a better 'visual' for the article. Start drafting!

In July we have our annual Bernie Mascord centerfire competition against SSAA at Ripley. This is a fun day of shooting at animal shaped targets from 50m to 300y followed by a BBQ and presentations. Our shoot captain, Daniel, will distribute rules of the shoot and some tips for competition closer to the date.

The SSAA Belmont Field Rifle shoot on Saturday 20th June is a good opportunity to practice for this event so let's see you at 12:00pm at the Standing Post Area. For the Field Rifle shoot you will require 42 rounds plus sighters while Bernie Mascord requires 20 rounds plus sighters.

With the AGM approaching in June, this is my last edition of "From the President". I'd like to thank Branch Members and particularly Committee Members and 'extended Committee Members' for all their hard work and support over the years. I'll still be involved in Branch activities but believe it's both refreshing and good governance for occasional rotation of key roles.

Branch Directory

ADA Brisbane Clubhouse

SSAA Complex – 292 Mt Petrie Road
Belmont QLD 4153.

President – Greg Rashford

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Daniel Brogden – Ripley Comp.

Dave Cupitt – Silhouette Comp.

Norm Gibson – Shotgun Comp.

Committee

- Mitch Pocklington
- Jason Baker
- Daniel Brogden
- Joe Ford
- Michael Gronert
- Craig Tindale
- Dilan Ponnudurai

QLD Accredited ADA Scorers

- Jason Baker – 0403 166 227
- Chris Szymanski – 0416 149 886



New logo gear available from May Meeting.



ADA Brisbane Branch

Containers for Change Member Details



Team Member number

C11555661



Brisbane Branch Calendar 2026

Month	Date	Event
June	Friday 5 th – 6:30pm for 7pm start	Annual General Meeting
	Friday 19 th – 7pm start	Committee meeting
	Saturday 20 th – 12pm	SSAA Field Rifle Comp – Belmont
July	Sunday 12 th	Bernie Mascord Shoot – SSAA Ripley
	Saturday 18 th	SSAA Field Rifle Comp - Belmont
August	Friday 14 th – 6:30pm for 7pm start	General Meeting
	Saturday 8 th – Sunday 9 th	Venture Hunt Fest - ADA BBQ
	Saturday 15 th – 12pm	SSAA Field Rifle Comp - Belmont
	Saturday 15 th Sunday 16 th	SSAA Shot Show Sydney
	Friday 21 st – Sunday 23 rd	Piliga State Forest Branch Hunt
	Friday 28 th – 7pm start	Committee meeting
September	Saturday 12 th	SSAA Shotgun Day and Social Drinks
	Saturday 19 th – 12pm	SSAA Field Rifle Comp - Belmont
	Saturday 19 th	Sausage Making Day at ADA Brisbane Clubhouse
October	Friday 9 th – 6:30pm for 7pm start	General Meeting
	Friday 23 rd – 7pm start	Committee Meeting
	Saturday 17 th – 12pm	SSAA Field Rifle Comp - Belmont
November	Friday 13 th	Social Drinks
	Thursday 19 th	Rimfire Silhouette Shoot - Belmont
	Saturday 21 st – 12pm	SSAA Field Rifle Comp - Belmont
December	Saturday 5 th	Christmas BBQ and Awards
	Friday 18 th – 7pm start	Committee Meeting
	Saturday 19 th – 12pm	SSAA Field Rifle Comp - Belmont



Australian
Deer
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ADA Brisbane Branch - Annual Awards 2025

- **Hunter of the Year: Greg Rashford**
- **Best Junior – no nominees**
- **Chrony – no nominees**

Marksmanship

- **Marksmanship of the Year – Peter Cohen**
- **Centerfire – Blaise Boylan**
- **Rimfire – Dave Cupit**
- **Shotgun – Chris Szymanski**

Deer

- **Red – Chris Szymanski**
- **Rusa – no nominees**
- **Fallow – Daniel Brogden**
- **Chital – Greg Rashford**
- **Sambar – no nominees**
- **Hog – no nominees**

- **1st Australian Deer – Madelein de Jager**

- **Best alternative Australian animal – No nominees**

- **Best overseas animal – Brian Slatter**

Photos

- **Hunting – Mitch Pocklington**
- **Australian Deer – Rob Harvey**
- **General Interest – Rob Harvey**

My First Deer

By Susan Hani

I never thought I'd become a hunter.

I grew up in northern California where hunting was commonplace, but not something I was ever directly exposed to, unless you count creek fishing for trout on family back packing trips. A hunting accident took the life of a close friend after high school, and I remember swearing I'd never handle a gun or have them in my house.

Over the last few years, my husband Jay and I have shared a love of fishing and with Jay now hunting deer and goats, our



house has slowly transitioned to the point where the majority of the meat we eat now comes from what we have caught or harvested in the wild. I love to cook and experiment with new recipes, and it's become increasingly more important to me to know where my food comes from, so I thought it was time to get over my past hesitations and learn to shoot.

I've thoroughly enjoyed the hunting trips I've now been on with Jay – whether it's at a private property or camping in the forest. I have shot a few rabbits and hares for meat, but I didn't know if I would ever have an interest in hunting bigger game. Deer felt like a very different step. I was getting more comfortable with my shooting though, so I was fairly sure I would be okay with taking a deer myself when the opportunity came along.

That opportunity came when we booked a trip on a property near Glen Innes that Jay had recently secured for the branch. He had only been there once before just to scout it out, but a few ADA members had already been lucky enough to hunt it early in the year.

Knowing the success they had, and from what Jay had seen during his own trips to the property, we knew it definitely held deer. There was no shortage of opportunity, and the hope was that I would get the chance to take my first deer and harvest some meat.

It was just Jay, Brian and myself on the trip. Having Brian there was really welcomed by both of us. Jay has been great at sharing his knowledge with me, but having Brian along as well, with all the experience and knowledge he brought, was invaluable.

We arrived at the property, got ourselves set up, and let the dogs out of the cars to play in the dam, which they absolutely loved. Once camp was sorted, we headed out for our first look around. That first evening we went around to a valley that Jay had seen the first time he was on the property. He figured it would hold deer, and he was right - although we drove just a little too close and spooked two deer straight away.

We thought there might still be more movement, so we set up on a hillside overlooking the valley and waited to see if anything else would come through as the sun started setting.

Earlier in the day, we had seen some goats about 700 metres away from us. While we were watching the valley, they must have decided that where we were sitting was where they wanted to settle in for the night. One after another, they streamed over the hill and settled on the opposite side, probably no more than 100 metres from us. There was plenty of opportunity to shoot one and take our first animal of the trip, but I was there for a deer.

I took the chance to do a few dry runs - aiming the rifle, getting comfortable, and making sure I was ready for when the right opportunity came along. Mostly though, we just enjoyed watching what seemed like about 20 goats come over the rise, have a feed, and disappear along the valley, all the while unaware of our presence.

With no deer in sight, we headed back to camp and settled in for our first night.

The next morning, we went to the back of the property where there is a great creek system. Within five minutes of walking through the creek, we saw our first buck. He was a good size. Not something you would write home about as a trophy, but Jay said that if the opportunity had come up, he might have considered taking him himself. He moved off before we had a proper chance to look him over and decide whether he was a shooter, but that was okay. The main goal of the trip was to get me my first meat doe.



We walked the whole creek without encountering another deer. There was plenty of sign that they had been coming down to drink, which made sense as it is a spring-fed creek in a fairly dry environment at the moment. But it did not seem like they were spending too much time there during the day. It felt more like the sort of place where you might bump into them coming down for a drink, rather than somewhere they would stay all day.

It was a long walk, but the scenery was beautiful. We walked up and back along the creek, checked out the hill in

the next valley over, and eventually decided it was time to head back to the cars, where our patient pooches were waiting for us.

On the way back to camp, we saw a good herd of deer holding two bucks. They were too far away for us to consider pursuing or taking a shot, and it was getting late in the morning, so we took note of where they were going and headed back to camp for a late breakfast.

We used the rest of the day to scout out a few more spots on the property. We went for walks in different directions just to get a better feel for the areas we had not seen yet. Jay and I managed to

walk up quite close to a one group and I got set up to take a doe. But the wind – which had been swirling in unpredictable directions since we arrived – shifted and in an instant, the deer were gone.

That evening was fairly uneventful, although we did see a few deer in the distance. There was not a clear opportunity, so we did not force the situation. We knew that the next day we would most likely come across them again, and by then we had a much better idea of where we wanted to be. One thing that surprised me was just how many rabbits and foxes the property held. It is definitely something Jay wants to spend more time on next trip, with a bit of spotlighting and the .22 for some plinking fun.

The next morning, we had a fairly good plan of where to go, and we set out to get my deer. We encountered our first group shortly after sunrise and got into a good position. But the Tikka rifle, as smooth as the action is, makes a fairly loud knock when the first round jumps out of the magazine and into the action. That was enough warning to spook the deer before I could get fully settled. It was frustrating, but it was also part of the learning experience. Every small sound matters, and deer do not give you much room for error.

I was starting to appreciate how difficult hunting deer is, but I was also growing confidence in my ability and desire to succeed. I was ready.

As we walked further into the property, we saw a nice mob of does grazing on a hillside a couple of hundred metres away. This was where Brian's experience really came into play. Almost instantly, he identified where they were travelling and how far along we needed to walk to intercept them at the right time and the right height on the hill. He pointed us in the right direction, and we set off.

It was a pretty steep hill but knowing this could be a great opportunity gave me plenty of motivation. True to Brian's prediction, we came up within about 140 metres of the does, and they were unaware of our presence.

Jay had recently bought a set of shooting sticks, and he quickly deployed them over the loose rocks to give me a steady platform to shoot from. I got myself set up, settled in behind the rifle, and picked out a nice-looking doe standing broadside.



I lined up, steadied my breath, and when I felt comfortable, I took the shot.

Jay was watching through his binoculars, and the doe immediately fell to the ground. He knew straight away that I had put the perfect kill shot through the vitals. I could feel the immediate emotion of the moment, but as always, you want to make sure your deer is definitely down before you celebrate too much. We walked up, and as expected, the doe had died on the spot.

Standing there beside my first deer was something I will never forget. We both knew what it meant. It was not just about taking a shot or getting an animal. This was ethical, sustainable and healthy meat we would take home and enjoy for months to come, and it was something Jay and I had shared together.

We hung the deer from a tree right there, skinned it, quartered it, and packed the meat onto Jay's backpack. He was actually keen to carry it, as he had just bought his first proper meat shelf pack. It is probably the only time you will see him volunteer to carry all of someone else's meat back down a mountain. I wasn't complaining.

Once we got back to camp and got all the meat into the fridge, I finally had a chance to take in what had just happened. I was proud of myself for overcoming fears, thankful for the practice to enable a clean shot, and appreciative of the emotional connection I felt to this beautiful animal and the responsibility of taking my own meat.

Later that night, with the pressure off, we went out for a look around with the thermal and spotlight to see what else was on the property. There were still plenty of deer around, along with a heap of rabbits and foxes.

As Jay said earlier, that is something for next time. With enough meat in the freezer, it will be nice to spend some time enjoying everything else the property has to offer.

All up, it was a great trip. The property held deer, the dogs loved the dam, Brian's knowledge (and company!) was a great asset, and I came home with my first deer and a freezer full of meat. It was a trip I will always remember.

I never expected to become someone who would hunt deer, but being able to take that step with Jay beside me made the whole experience very special.



The Bush Delivers

By Jason Baker

After a week of fly fishing in the Mackenzie Region's rivers and streams, I was eager to head north as news of the roar had begun to filter through the local hunting fraternity. For months, I'd felt the pull of the mountains, the roar of the red stags, their guttural bellows echoing through the valleys each autumn.

As I drove down the gravel driveway, I mentally went through my packed kit before I hit the asphalt; my Tikka 7mm REM MAG rifle cleaned and zeroed, a lightweight tent, suitable sleeping bag, compact stove, dehydrated meals, a fly tarp and a well-stocked first aid kit. Layers of merino, waterproofs, and sturdy boots were all selected for comfort and resilience.

With my favourite playlist on, I left most of my responsibilities behind me for a few days in the hills. After an uneventful two-hour drive, I found myself standing on the edge of the beech forest, boots crunching softly underfoot, heart thundering with a blend of excitement and nerves; a feeling that never loses its appeal. With the first rays of sunlight spilling over the rugged peaks, gilding the frost laden grass in hues of amber and gold. The air was crisp, crackling with the anticipation of adventure.

By late afternoon, I crested a saddle and gazed out at a remote valley, its floor painted with tussock and dotted with pockets of ancient forest. Here, in this untamed amphitheatre, the stags would come to stake their claim. I set camp near a stand of trees, careful to avoid exposed positions that might betray my presence. As dusk bled into night, and the sky came alive with stars, I lay listening to the far-off roar of a stag.



The following morning, I rose quietly before dawn, with cold fog swirling about my ankles, and my breath turning to steam. The hunt began in earnest, every sense sharpened. I moved slowly, scanning for tracks in the mud, fresh slots stamped deep by a heavy stag, and paused often to glass the ridges and clearings. The bush was alive with movement: a flash of a hind's tail, the distant clatter of stones signalling spooked goats. Several times I caught the strong, musky tang of stag on the wind, raising my hopes only to have the scent fade.



Patience became my greatest ally. I spent long hours hunkered in the shadow of boulders and dense cover, binoculars sweeping the landscape for the flicker of an ear or the glint of antler tips in the undergrowth. I watched as a group of hinds grazed contentedly, ever alert, their vigilance a reminder of the stag's wariness. The day wore on. Twice, I thought I glimpsed movement in the shadows, but both times it proved to be nothing more than a trick of the light and a gentle wind.

As the afternoon dragged out, a southerly change moved in. Clouds rolled in overhead and shortly after, rain battered the valley, making the ground slippery under foot. My boots squelched with every step, and visibility shrank to a few metres. I huddled beneath my poncho up against the trunk of an old beech tree to wait out the storm. After half an hour or more with no sign of the weather breaking, I opted to make my way back to camp.

On the third morning, sun finally broke through the clouds, painting the valley in light and hope. Renewed, and rejuvenated, I set out again, determined to make every opportunity count. The moment I'd been waiting for arrived as suddenly and unexpectedly as the weather in summer. I was glassing a ridge at mid-morning when a deep, guttural roar echoed across the valley, raising the hairs on my neck. I froze, scanning the dense bush for movement. There, just at the edge of a clearing, half veiled by mist, stood a red stag. His antlers glistening in the light, his body a vision of power and vigilance. My heart pounded so loudly I was sure he could hear each beat.

I dropped low, inching forward through the damp grass, careful not to snap a twig or disturb the wind. Every movement was deliberate, every breath measured. The stag was clearly alert, his head swung from side to side, nostrils flaring as he tested the air. I waited, barely daring to blink, as the minutes stretched into what left like an eternity. Finally, he stepped out of the cover, broadside to me, and paused to rake his antlers through a low-hanging branch, a display of dominance and wild beauty.

I set my rifle up on a solid rest. My hands were steady, though my insides churned. I allowed the crosshairs to stop floating and settle on the stag's shoulder. Time seemed to slow; the world shrank until there was only me and the stag. I exhaled, then gently squeezed the

trigger. The shot cracked through the morning hush, echoing off the surrounding mountains. The stag leapt, staggered, as his legs gave way from under him and he fell to the ground.

Relief and sorrow mingled in my chest as I approached, awe-struck by the animal's size and beauty. I knelt, offering silent thanks to the stag and to the land, acutely aware of the privilege and responsibility of the hunt. Dressing the stag was a solemn ritual, every cut made with care and gratitude. I worked methodically, ensuring that nothing was wasted, and packed out as much meat as I could carry. The antlers, a symbol of both challenge and fortune, were carefully fixed to my pack the best I could to balance what I needed to carry out.

As I left the valley, I paused often to look back, the weight of the experience settling in. The hunt was not merely a pursuit of an animal, but an engagement with the bush, a lesson in patience, humility, and the strong spirit required to succeed in the bush. The lessons learned will always linger long after the bruises faded.





The Rusa Stag

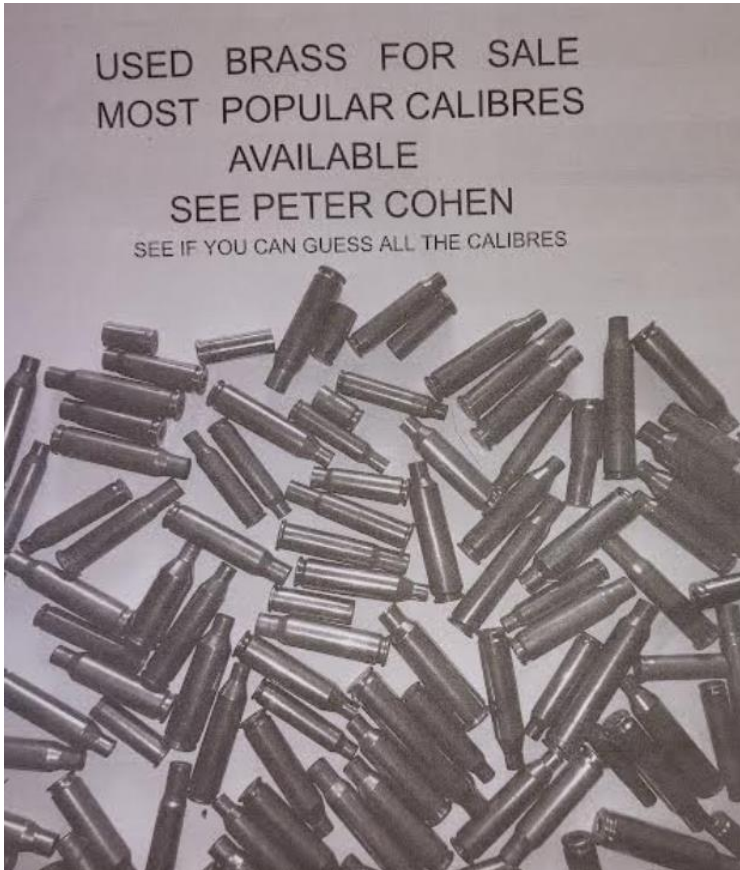
Photo and Words by Rob Harvey.

I was driving along the country road mid-afternoon when he crossed in front of my ute. He headed to a small swamp surrounded by plenty of thick cover. A few days later I approached the property owner and introduced myself, asking whether it would be possible to try and film the stag at the water's edge. I was after a mirror reflection image, something I had never achieved before, and the lady was surprised as she replied that most hunters wanted to shoot him.

So after many trips of waiting over the water's edge, it all came together just after daylight he had been out in the cover of darkness and was heading back with a hind. I waited patiently to see what would unfold... a few minutes passed then he simply walked out to the water's edge and moved along feeding. I took many photos, although the one above is probably the best. All up 132 hours of visiting the waterways to capture the mirror reflection image.

I have been back to the property a few times since and not one Rusa seen, obviously the local council shooting contractors have been active. I was indeed extremely lucky to have had the filming opportunity. I gave the landowner's a framed photo of the Rusa Stag which they enjoyed and hang on their wall.

For Sale: Projectiles – Nosler Ballistic Tip, 30 Cal, 150gn



MINCER FOR HIRE

The branch has a new mincer and sausage stuffer which is now available for our members to hire.

Cost \$10 per week with a \$50 deposit. Equipment must come back clean and in good working order (the same as when it was checked out).

Pick up and drop off from the Branch building, SSAA Belmont.

Contact Peter Cohen to arrange pick-up on 0438 774 213.

Member Hunting Book Library

Please note: There is an extensive hunting/shooting book library available to all Brisbane Branch members who attend the meetings. The library is located within the ADA building at Belmont, so just ask a member for assistance. It's an honesty system – so ALL borrowed books must be returned once finished. Speak to Peter Cohen for more information.



**Proudly supporting Brisbane Branch,
Australian Deer Association**

Broadsound Hunting Safaris Australia is owned and operated by Greg Coyne. Offering a wealth of experience, Greg's vast knowledge of the Australian big game and native wildlife, is second to none!

EST.  2019

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